

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 JUNE 2015

Present:

Councillor N Barker – (Chair)
Councillor J Austen
Councillor G Baxter MBE
Councillor A Cooper
Councillor M Gordon
Councillor J Windle

Also Present:

Matthew Kane – Governance Manager
Martin Derbyshire – Members IT and Training Officer
Sarah Cottam – Governance Officer

01/15 Appointment of Chair of the Member Development Working Group for the Municipal Year 2015/2016

RESOLVED – That Councillor N Barker be appointed Chair of the Member Development Working Group for the municipal year 2015/16.

02/15 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence from the meeting submitted as all Members were present.

03/15 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development Working Group held on 1 April 2015 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

04/15 Proposals for Members Personal Development Plans 2015/2017

The Working Group considered a report on the proposals for Members Personal Development Plans 2015-2017.

The Personal Development Plans were a key tool in assisting Members in evaluating the training they had undertaken and identifying their training and development needs for the future.

The information obtained from the Plans would form the basis of a Member Development Training Policy for 2015/17, which would be considered by this Working Group and then any recommendations submitted to Cabinet for its approval, if appropriate.

In the past, the Plans had been completed as part of an interview process with the staff from the Governance Team on a confidential basis. It was felt that this could make officers feel uncomfortable when questioning Members and was found to also be very resource intensive for staff.

It was proposed to introduce a more light touch survey to replace the Members Personal Development Plans covering all training needs for Members, asking basic questions such as:-

- What training do I require?
- What training have I undertaken in the past year?
- How would you prefer to learn in the future?

The Working Group felt the Members Personal Development Plans needed to be adjusted to our advantage and concentrate on our strengths rather than weaknesses.

It was suggested however to keep a copy of the original Members Personal Development Plan Form on the members portals for any Member that still wished to complete one.

RESOLVED That:-

- (1) Governance to circulate a letter to all Members explaining that the Personal Development Plans would be changing and a more light touch survey would be introduced shortly.
- (2) The Members Personal Development Plan Forms would still be available on the member's portal for any Member still wishing to complete one.

(Governance)

05/15 Member Development Budget 2015/2016

The Working Group considered a report on the current level of expenditure on the Member Development budget for 2015/16. The budget for 2015/16 was set at £4,000 and up-to-date £735 had been spent, £605 on Member Induction buffets in May 2015 and £130 for Andrew Towler's fees for a Member Involvement Half Day in April 2015.

The Group were advised that Members should come forward with any training needs and requests if they felt it was necessary. The budget was there to be spent as in previous years only £1,600 had been used from the £4,000 budget.

A question was raised on why Members travel expenses were not charged to the Member Development budget. The Governance Manager agreed to look into this for the Working Group.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group noted the report.

06/15 Evaluation Report for the Member Induction Sessions held on 11, 13 and 20 May 2015

The Working Group considered the evaluation report for the Member Induction Sessions that were held on 11th, 13th and 20th May 2015. The induction sessions were presented by a range of officers all covering different topics to give Members, especially newly elected Members, an introduction to the Council and the key issues that they needed to be aware of in their first two weeks of being elected.

The Working Group noted the good turn out to the first session and commended Governance on how well the sessions were facilitated.

Martin Derbyshire commented that he would have liked to have had a 20 minute slot on each of the three induction sessions to go through the I-pads with Members. This was noted for any future sessions taking place.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group noted the statistical information and comments provided by Members in respect of the Member Induction Sessions that were held on 11th, 13th and 20th May 2015.

07/15 Member Development Evaluation Results

The Working Group considered the evaluation reports in respect of the Member Involvement Half Day held on 7 April 2015, the Licensing Induction held on 4 June 2015 and the Planning Induction held on 9 June 2015.

The report detailed the statistical information and comments provided by Members on all three events. All the induction and training events were all very well received. Comments were made on concerns that other political parties did not participate in the sessions and felt that there could be implications if Members had not received training, especially on regulatory committees.

The Governance Manager advised the Group that all material from all training and induction events was made available to all Members. Until training is mandatory in legislation it could not be enforced.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group noted the statistical information and comments provided by Members in respect of the Member Involvement Half Day held on 7 April 2015, the Licensing Induction Event held on 4 June 2015 and the Planning Induction Event held on 9 June 2015.

08/15 Upcoming Learning and Development Opportunities for Members

The Working Group considered a report on the upcoming learning and development opportunities for Members. The purpose of the report was to advise Members of the series of learning and development opportunities that were available for Members to take part in and were detailed as follows:-

- East Midlands Regional Programme of Briefing Events for Councillors 2015/16;
- Councillor E-Learning Modules 2014/15;
- Newly Elected Local Councillor Training;
- Councillor Development Support from East Midlands Councils;

- LGA Leadership and Localism Development Opportunities for Councillors;
- James Button & Co Training Courses.

The Working Group were asked to note the report and to inform the Governance Team of any learning and development opportunities that may be of interest.

Councillors N Barker and M Gordon were due to attend a briefing event on Monday, 22 June 2015 in Nottingham on “What the Outcomes of the General Election mean for Local Government and Public Services in the East Midlands” through the East Midlands briefing events.

Councillor J Austen agreed to trial the Councillor E-Learning Module from home and report back to Members on progress.

The Working Group felt it would be beneficial to new Members to explore the courses provided by the Local Government Association.

Councillor N Barker commented that he hoped part of the new role of the Senior Governance Officer would be to have an eye on what is going on and advise Members of any beneficial upcoming training and development courses.

RESOLVED That:-

- (1) Councillor J Austen trial the Councillor E-Learning Modules at home and report progress back to a future meeting of the Working Group.
- (2) That the Working Group note the upcoming learning and development opportunities and to inform a member of the Governance Team of any that may be of interest.

(Governance)

09/15 Any Other Business

Martin Derbyshire hoped that Members were happy with the I-pad service that was provided. Martin advised that training was available to them on request. The Working Group commented that the new Members had not currently had any training on the I-pad applications and would prefer Martin to hold this training through one-to-one sessions.

Martin made Members aware of the new IOS9 operating system that was coming in to force in the near future and may affect the working of the I-pad and was agreed that Martin keep an eye on the situation.

10/15 Date of Next Meeting

The Working Group was requested to note that its next meeting would be held on Thursday, 30 July 2015 at 10.00 am.

(Governance)