

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22 JUNE 2016

Present:

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

01/16 Appointment of Chair of the Member Development Working Group for the Municipal Year 2016/17

RESOLVED – That the Portfolio Holder for Member Development, Councillor N Barker, be appointed Chair of the Member Development Working Group for the municipal year 2016/17.

02/16 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor M Gordon.

03/16 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development Working Group held on 22 March 2016 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

04/16 Evaluation Results from External Events

Future Councillors – 16 March 2016

The Working Group considered the external training evaluation report on the training course Future Councillors provided by East Midlands Council. The session was attended by Councillor Austen and Councillor Barker.

The Working Group noted that the feedback on the event had been mixed but the opportunity for engaging with the Councillor Commission was appreciated.

As discussed at the previous Working Group meeting the information on engaging with the Councillor Commission had been circulated to all Councillors.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the external training evaluation report on the Future Councillors session on 16 March 2016.

05/16 Member Development Evaluation Results

(a) Member Involvement Half Day – 22 March 2016

The Working Group considered the evaluation statistics and comments submitted by Members in respect of the Member Involvement Half Day held on 22 March 2016.

The programme consisted of a session on Chairing Skills and Rules of Procedure which was an interactive role play session. A Community Leadership Skills session was included on the programme but this was deferred at the event due to lack of time.

It was noted that the event had received positive feedback overall and the vast majority of Members either agreed or strongly agreed that the exercise was helpful and increased their knowledge and understanding on the role of Members and officers work.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the evaluation report on the Member Involvement Half Day held on 22 March 2016.

(b) Chairing Skills – 16 May 2016

The Working Group considered the evaluation report following the Chairing Skills session that was held on 16 May 2016. The session was facilitated by the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU).

It was noted that only seven Members attended the session which was a lower turnout than anticipated. As the cost of the course was £625, greater value for money would have been achieved had more Members attended the event. The training materials from the session were circulated to all Chairs and Vice Chairs after the event.

The Working Group discussed that the trainer from LGiU was well received.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the evaluation report on the Chairing Skills session held on 16 May 2016.

(c) Member Involvement Half Day – 1 June 2016

The Working Group considered the evaluation statistics and comments submitted by Members in respect of the Member Involvement Half Day held on 1 June 2016. The programme had consisted of three presentations:

- Understanding Local Authority Budgets;
- KPMG – Local Government Budgets Survey report;
- Welfare Reforms and Work Act 2016.

It was noted that all Members either agreed or strongly agreed that the information included in the programme was helpful in setting out the main elements of the event. The vast majority agreed or strongly agreed that the presentations were

helpful and increased their knowledge and understanding of the role of Members and officers work.

It was discussed that the Welfare Reform and Work Act presentation covered a lot of information and more time may have been preferred for this. Taking this into account for the future Member Involvement Half Day which includes a session on the Housing and Planning Act, a greater amount of time would be allocated for this.

The Working Group also discussed the issues with the loop system in the meeting room. Members commented that they had not experienced any issues themselves, however, the issues raised on this occasion were passed on to the Equalities Office who had already raised the matter with Estates Management.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the evaluation report on the Member Involvement Half Day held on 1 June 2016.

06/16 Revised Member Involvement Half Day Agendas and Evaluation Forms

The Working Group considered that the report which presented revised templates for Member Involvement Half Day Agendas and Evaluation Forms.

A new template had been designed for agendas for Member Involvement Half Days in order to provide more detail on what the sessions were expected to cover and how they related to Corporate Plan Priorities. This was part of an action within the Member Development Strategy Action Plan, to implement the objective of linking member learning and development with the Council's Corporate Priorities.

A new template was also designed for evaluation forms that are used for Member Involvement Half Days to provide a greater opportunity for comment on the individual sessions within the agenda and to allow Members to identify whether the objectives had been met. This was also an action within the Member Development Strategy Action Plan to review evaluation forms.

The wording used in the evaluation form was still at a draft stage and may be tweaked to improve its usage.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the revised agenda and evaluation form for the templates for Member Involvement Half Days and agrees that they be trialled at the next sessions.

07/16 Member Development Strategy Action Plan Monitoring

The Working Group considered the report monitoring the progressing achieved in implementing the Member Development Strategy Action Plan in the first quarter of 2016/17.

The Member Development Strategy 2016-2019 had been agreed earlier in the year and it included an Action Plan to implement the strategy's objectives.

The majority of actions were due to be carried out later in the year or for future years' programmes. The Working Group were advised that it was possible some of the

actions would be postponed or delayed due to the availability of officer time during 2016 as the Senior Governance Officer would be on maternity leave.

Attached to the report was a summary of the progress achieved on all of the actions included in the Action Plan.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the progress achieved in the first quarter for the Member Development Strategy Action Plan.

08/16 Member Development Annual Report

The Working Group considered the Member Development Annual Report for 2015/16. The report took a different format from previous years but contained similar information setting out the member development activities that had taken place during the year, opportunities that had been made available to Members and information on the evaluation of member development that had taken place.

Attached to the Annual Report was the programme for Member Development activities, including the Member Involvement Half Days for 2016/17. The Working Group were advised that some of the sessions were subject to change due to the availability of officers, with the schedule for July and September being altered.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group:-

- (1) Notes the Member Development Annual Report 2015/16.
- (2) Supports the submission of the Annual Report to Cabinet for its approval.

09/16 Any Other Business

The Working Group discussed the Council's new website that would be introduced later this year and proposed that a demonstration session be provided for Members. The Working Group agreed that a presentation at a Council meeting may be the most suitable opportunity for this presentation as it was likely to reach the majority of Members. In addition to this presentation, Members would also be offered one-to-one demonstrations on how to access parts of the website on their iPad which the Members IT and Training Officer would facilitate.

The Governance Team would liaise with the Communications Team in order to determine the best date for scheduling this presentation.

The Working Group also discussed the number of Members who had not yet completed an ICT induction. It was identified that this could be an issue if an audit was carried out as it was important for Members to be made aware of the ICT Charter and the limitations on what they could use their IT equipment for.

A session was being scheduled to take place after the next Council meeting in July to provide the induction to Members who had not yet undertaken one. If there were Members who did not attend this session further work would be needed to communicate with those Members individually to ensure they would complete an induction at a later stage.

Members also raised a problem with the font on the Members' Portal on the iPad which was difficult to read. The Members IT and Training Officer agreed to pursue a remedy for this issue with the ICT Service.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group:-

- (1) Requests that a presentation on the Council's new website be given at a future Council meeting with opportunities for Members to have one-to-one demonstrations being offered with the Members IT and Training Officer.
- (2) Notes the arrangements for ensuring that all Members complete ICT inductions.

10/16 Date of Next Meeting

The Working Group discussed that there was limited business to be taken to the next scheduled meeting of the Member Development Working Group on 27 July 2016 and it was therefore proposed that the meeting be cancelled and any business taken to the next meeting in September 2016.

RESOLVED – That the next scheduled meeting of the Member Development Working Group on Wednesday, 27 July 2016 be cancelled.
