

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26 APRIL 2017

Present:

Councillor N Barker – (Chair)
Councillor G Baxter MBE
Councillor A Cooper
Councillor M Gordon
Councillor J Windle
Sarah Cottam
Martin Derbyshire

34/16 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor J Austen.

35/16 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development Working Group held on 22 February 2017 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

36/16 East Midlands Councils: Regional Policy Briefing Events for Councillors 2016/2017 Programme

The Working Group considered a report of the Acting Senior Governance Officer on the East Midlands Councils Regional Policy Briefing Events for Councillors 2016/17 and the proposals for the Programme for 2017/18.

This year a total of six places were taken up for the sessions within the Programme out of a possible 12 (not including paying for additional places, this meant that the total cost of the Programme, £510, worked out at approximately £85 per place). This could still be accepted as a reasonable cost compared to the cost of other external training courses which may be at even greater distance to reach, but it would be more beneficial for Members to utilise the free places available and gain value for money.

Judging by this year's take up of the sessions the cost to us as an authority would be the same as a non-subscribed authority to the Programme.

Overall the feedback had been positive based on the low amount of feedback received. This was due to non return of evaluation forms and also there had been no interest from Members on some of the events – the EMC Migration Conference and Planning for Housing Delivery.

The Working Group were advised that the East Midlands Councils had not yet provided any details of their Programme for 2017/18, but the information would be provided to the Group when available.

Previously the benefits of the Council's participation in the Programme were:-

- Two Members could attend each of the six events. Additional places could also be booked;
- Participating Members could share their knowledge with other colleagues to help form the Council's decision making;
- The opportunity for Councillors from across the region to meet with colleagues and share experiences, information and ideas;
- The events would provide an opportunity to hear directly from policy experts on topical policy areas for local authorities.

The Programme would be provided to Members when available and the cost of participation in the Programme would be approximately £510 + VAT (same as last year). This equated to a cost of £42.50 per Councillor per session, additional places could be booked on each session at a cost of £40 per Member. The cost for a Councillor to attend the session if they were not subscribed to the Programme would be £85 + VAT.

If the Working Group supported participation in the Programme for a further year the costs would be funded from the Member Development budget for 2017/18.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group:-

- (1) Notes the review of the East Midlands Councils Regional Policy Briefing Events for Councillors 2016/17 Programme.
- (2) Wishes to support the Council's participation in the East Midlands Councils Regional Policy Briefing Events for Councillors 2017/18 Programme once this is made available to the Group at a cost of approximately £510 + VAT.

(Senior Governance Officer – Acting)

37/16 Member Development Annual Report 2016/17

The Working Group considered a report of the Acting Senior Governance Officer on the Member Development Annual Report 2016/17.

The purpose of the Member Development Annual Report was to enable Cabinet to review the Member Development work that had been undertaken during the municipal year 2016/17.

The Member Development Annual Report was attached as an Appendix and included a copy of the Member Development Training Programme for 2016/17. The report set 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.

The Working Group had received the draft Programme in January 2016 and there had been a few amendments based on the availability of officers to deliver sessions and the inclusion of new legislation, such as the Housing and Planning Act.

The Working Group were advised that the Member Development Annual Report would be submitted to Cabinet at its meeting on 7 June 2017 and any comments or amendments raised by the Group would be reported to Cabinet at that meeting.

The Chair, on behalf of the Working Group wished to thank the Acting Senior Governance Officer for the hard work carried out on delivering the Member Development Programme for 2016/17 and also thanked the Members IT and Training Officer for delivering I-pad support and training to all Members.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group:-

- (1) Notes the Member Development Annual Report 2016/17.
- (2) Supports the submission of the Member Development Annual Report 2016/17 to Cabinet for its approval.

(Senior Governance Officer – Acting)

38/16 Proposed Member Development Programme 2017/19

The Working Group considered a report of the Acting Senior Governance Officer on the Draft Member Development Programme 2017-2019. The purpose of the report was to advise the Working Group and to seek Members views and input in to the Draft Member Development Programme.

The results of the Learning and Development Needs Survey 2017-2019 were considered by the Member Development Working Group at its meeting on 22 February 2017. The survey highlighted a number of areas identified as key learning and development priorities. These results, together with topics suggested by the Governance Team and SAMT, had been used to prepare a Draft Programme for the Member Involvement sessions. This covered the period from 2017-2019.

The draft Programme was at an early stage of development and proposed sessions would depend on officer availability or the availability of external providers. Further consultation with SAMT had taken place and their views were sought to develop the Programme.

Spaces had been left in the Programme, especially the second year, to allow for topics and emerging issues to be added. Members could also raise topics they wished to be covered. If there was space this could be used or the sessions could be re-arranged. The Programme would be a living document and would be subject to change.

Other Member Development activities were delivered in addition to the Member Involvement Half Day sessions. Briefings were organised from time to time which covered emerging issues impacting on the Council and other corporate issues. Committee specific training sessions and briefings were also delivered.

Members were keen to avoid the use of external facilitators for any training provided at the Member Involvement sessions, it was felt that the relevant skills and expertise were available in house.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the draft Member Development Programme for 2017-2019.

(Senior Governance Officer – Acting)

39/16 Member Development Budget 2016/17

The Working Group considered a report of the Acting Senior Governance Officer on the Member Development Budget 2016/17. The purpose of the report was to advise of the current level of expenditure on the Member Development Budget.

The Member Development Budget for 2016/17 was £3,000, but the amount was revised to £5,000 to accommodate training identified through the Training Needs Surveys. The current spend (including commitments) was £4,721.95, however after deduction of items re-charged to Bolsover and add-on items charged in error the total spend was £3,618.45.

The Group also noted that the budget for the year 2017-2018 had been set at £3,000.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the Member Development Budget 2016/2017.

(Senior Governance Officer – Acting)

40/16 Member Development Strategy Action Plan Monitoring

The Working Group considered a report of the Acting Senior Governance Officer on the Member Development Strategy Action Plan in the final quarter of 2016/17.

When the Member Development Strategy 2016-2019 was agreed it included an Action Plan to implement strategies objectives. The details on the progress in relation to all of the actions within the Action Plan was provided to the Group as an Appendix to the report.

The majority of the actions had been carried out or were ongoing. There was a possibility that some of the actions could still be postponed or delayed due to the availability of officer time. The action regarding a follow up evaluation form had been delayed as clarification was sought from the Working Group on what the expected outcome of this action was.

The Group were advised that the actions that had been delayed were highlighted in red on the Action Plan.

Actions that had already been progressed included the implementation of the Member Development Programme 2016/17 and work on revising the Member Involvement Evaluation Form and the Agenda in order to show links to the Corporate Plan Priorities. Work on an electronic evaluation method was under way by officers in Governance and an example of this was made available to Members on screen to view and provide comments.

The new LGA E-Learning Modules had also been promoted to Members. The Members Learning and Development Needs Surveys had been completed, analysed and had been worked in to a Member Development Programme for 2017-2019.

The Group were also advised that work on the organisation of Member Development information on the members portal had now commenced in order to make access to the information easier, it was advised that the portal would require a full rebuild and work would begin in May 2017.

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

(Senior Governance Officer – Acting)

41/16 Evaluation Results from External Events

East Midlands Councils – Influencing Skills Session – 23 February 2017

The Working Group considered the evaluation statistics and comments submitted by Members in respect of an external event on Influencing Skills through the East Midlands Councils Regional Programme of Policy Events. This workshop had been designed to complement the wider Policy Briefing Programme with a Skills Focus Session recognising the importance of influence in the political context. The session was attended by Councillor J Barry and Councillor B Ridgway. A completed evaluation form from Councillor J Barry was attached to the report as an Appendix.

Feedback on the event was positive, however, the pre-event notification letter/notification could have been improved, having only scored a satisfactory result.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the evaluation results of the external training evaluation report on the East Midlands Councils Influencing Skills Session held on 23 February 2017.

(Senior Governance Officer – Acting)

42/16 Member Development Evaluation Results

Member Involvement Half Day – 21 March 2017

The Working Group considered the evaluation statistics and comments submitted by Members in respect of the Member Involvement Half Day held on 21 March 2017.

The session consisted of three presentations:-

- The Effective Ward Councillor;
- Handling Case Work; and
- Social Media Guidance.

The agenda for the session was attached as an Appendix to the report. 17 Members attended the Half Day and 14 Members completed evaluation forms at the end of the event (82%).

This was the first time that Members had led the Member Involvement Half Day. Previous meetings were led primarily by officers, this resulted in active participation and increased engagement by Members in attendance. The event was well received with the majority of Members finding the presentations informative, relevant to them and engaging. Some Members had expressed a desire to receive further training on I-pads following the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group notes the evaluation results of the Member Involvement Half Day held on 21 March 2017.

(Senior Governance Officer - Acting)

43/16 Any Other Business

There was no other business to be discussed at this meeting.

44/16 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Member Development Working Group would be held on Wednesday, 19 July 2017 at 10.00 am.
