
MEETING	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP
DATE	25 NOVEMBER 2009
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS RUNCIMAN (CHAIR), WISEMAN AND GUNNELL

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2009 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

14. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

15. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

Members received a verbal update from Mike Leitch (Yorkshire and Humber Local Government Representative) on Member Personal Development Reviews (PDR). The main points of the update were as follows:

- The Personal Development Reviews are still in progress, but overall there had been a relatively low take up.
- Completed reviews for all Members are not essential for Charter Status, but having a structure in place is a requirement.
- For those Members who have not been involved in the PDR process, it may be useful to issue a reminder letter or email.
- To encourage an increase in engagement, it may be useful to offer flexible appointments and to have reviews undertaken over the telephone to assist Members who have work commitments.
- Members commented that it may be useful for Officers to explain the importance of having a PDR in relation to Charter Status to Members, as this may encourage engagement.
- A number of Members had expressed an interest in attending the Leadership Academy residential course through their PDR's. Officers commented that it is an expensive course and they would look into a similar alternative as attended by Councillor Gunnell.

RESOLVED: That the Steering Group note the update on Personal Development Reviews.

REASON: To keep Members informed on the progress to date on Personal Development Reviews.

16. INTERIM MONITOR OF MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Members considered a report which advised them of the take up to date for events offered as part of the Member Training and Development Programme, together with a summary of feedback received from attendees for each of the events for the period June to November.

The Council is currently working towards achieving ID&eA Charter Status in Member Development by improving its approach to the provision of development opportunities for elected Members. In order to achieve Charter status the Council must put in place effective systems for recording take up and evaluating feedback relating to the development activities it provides. In January 2009, the Council introduced an annual minimum requirement for the number of development events Executive and Non Executive Members should attend. Executive Members should attend a minimum of 12 and Non-Executive Members a minimum of 8 sessions during the course of the year.

Officers updated as follows:

- The in house events have been well attended by Members, and that most Members will reach their targets by May.
- Discussions have been taking place with various departments regarding the possibility of arranging more in-house training.
- Pre Council seminars are well attended despite the timing of the sessions not being ideal for some Members.
- Officers have been actively seeking feedback for training sessions and do take on board any negative comments.

Members commented that for training sessions between 5pm and 7pm, food is unnecessary, and for lunchtime sessions, biscuits and tea and coffee are sufficient. They commented that it would be useful for Members to receive an email link to the online training booklet when they are advised of training courses.

RESOLVED: That the report be referred to the Standards Committee in line with the reporting arrangements set out in the steering group's terms of reference.

REASON: In order to comply with the monitoring arrangements set out in the Steering Group's Terms of Reference as approved by Council.

17. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CHARTER STATUS - EVIDENCE GATHERING.

Members considered a report which updated them on progress with gathering evidence for the Council's submission towards achieving IdeA Member Development Charter Status.

The Member Development Steering Group has already approved an implementation plan setting out a projected timeline and what needs to be in place in order for the Council to achieve Charter Status by Autumn 2010. Officers updated that good progress has already been made towards achieving Charter Status and towards creating a structured and supportive environment for delivering training to Members.

Annex A to the Officers report contained a table which outlines what evidence the IdeA suggests is necessary against key areas for achieving Charter Status. It highlighted where evidence is already available and where any gaps remain. Members commented on the table as follows:

- Officers and the Steering Group will need to focus on the areas that currently do not have evidence and find out how the Council can meet them.
- That Members of the Steering Group could provide Officers with extracts and/or quotes regarding external member development events they have attended as requested for section 4.1 of the IdeA guidelines. This could be in the format of a case study of approximately 500 words to be emailed to the Member Support Officer.
- Other Members may also wish to contribute to the evidence towards section 4.1 as above and section 4.2 (Learning is shared with other elected members and where appropriate officers and stakeholders).
- Section 4.3 – Investment in learning and development is evaluated in terms of benefits and impacts. Members queried whether the Council holds exit interviews for any Member who leaves the authority, as exit interviews are detailed in the table as a form of evidence. Members were advised that exit interviews would only be required if the Council should seek 'Charter Status Plus' but were not an essential form of evidence for Charter Status at present.

RESOLVED: That Members noted the current position on where evidence is or will be available for achieving Charter Status and the comments as above, be noted.

REASON: In order to comply with the requirements of the I&DeA Charter.

18. AD-HOC REQUESTS FROM MEMBERS FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT - A PROTOCOL.

Members considered a report which suggested a protocol for dealing with ad-hoc requests from Members for individual training and development events or activities outside of the Annual Core Programme or Personal Development Reviews.

In the past Members have attended a range of external conferences which have been funded by two routes. The first route is via the Standing List of Conferences budget which was held by Democratic Services. This no longer exists. The second is through the main Member Development Budget which provides for all other training. This budget is virtually all allocated given the recent approval of the Core Programme.

Officer's advised that the draft protocol attached at annex B to the report had not yet been sent to directorates for consultation. With an increasingly structured approach to Member Development emerging, it is suggested that a protocol be now agreed to clarify the position on ad-hoc requests formally. The key features of the protocol would be as follows:

- Restricting the number of activities/events each member can undertake annually.
- Bring back a revised 'standing list' of suitable external conferences as advised as being beneficial by directorates for relevant Members.
- Shared payment between Democratic Services and Directorates.
- Withdrawal of potential saving with £1000 to be permanently restored to main Member Development Budget.

Officers advised that the standing list attached at annex c had not yet been sent for consultation and at present the list contained suggestions of conferences for members.

Members made the following comments:

- If PDR's are to be used to identify Member training needs, Members who have had a PDR should be prioritised.
- Opposition spokesperson should be referenced on any standing list.
- The standing list requires updating and should be circulated to Directorates.
- Directorates should be approached with a view to meet half of the cost.

RESOLVED: That the proposed protocol be revised with the above amendments and be brought back to the next meeting of the Steering Group.¹

REASON: In order to provide a structured approach towards dealing with ad-hoc requests.

Action Required

1. That the protocol be amended to incorporate Members suggestions. AEO

19. INTRODUCTION OF ROLE PROFILES

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Steering Group in order for Members to have more time to consider the report.

20. BUDGET MONITOR

Members considered a report which summarised the position to date on expenditure against the budget available for Member Training and Development.

Member Training and Development is allocated an annual budget of £10k and an additional budget of £5k was allocated this financial year to provide the three main political groups with access to I&DeA mentor support. Annex A to the report shows a breakdown of the estimated Member Development spend to March 2010 of £10,107.00. The mentoring budget is estimated to come in slightly under £5k.

Officers sought clarification on whether there should be any more ad-hoc request for training being accepted in view of the current budget projections. Members agreed with this and acknowledged that the core programme training events would still be available and commented that many Members attend free events organised by the Police and other organisations that can still count towards their targets.

Members asked the Senior Member Support Officer to re-circulate details for the Learning Pool online training.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That Members comments be noted.
 - (ii) That Members agreed to restrict any further spending on ad-hoc requests in view of current projections.
 - (iii) That the Steering Group invite the Standards Committee to make a recommendation to Council on the available Member Development Budget.
 - (iv) That the Learning Pool information be circulated to Members.¹

REASON: In order to ensure the Council can deliver an effective Member Development Programme.

Action Required

1. Circulate Learning Post information.

AEO

Councillor Runciman, Chair

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.00 pm].