
MEETING	MEMBER SUPPORT STEERING GROUP
DATE	24 NOVEMBER 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS RUNCIMAN (CHAIR), GUNNELL AND WISEMAN
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS D'AGORNE

8. 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.

9. MINUTES

Members are asked to approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Steering Group held on 15 September 2010.

10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mike Leitch from Local Government Yorkshire & the Humber was in attendance at the start of the meeting to formally present the Steering Group with an award after the Authority's successful bid for Charter Status.

He congratulated Members and Officers for achieving Charter Status and advised that the feedback from Members had been positive.

The Chair thanked him and advised that Members believed in Charter Status and had wanted to achieve it. A formal announcement would be made at Council to inform all Members of the success and she thanked Officers for all their hard work.

11. FIRST MONITOR OF MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Members considered a report which informed them of the take up to date at Member Training and Development events offered in the first half of 2010/11, together with a summary of the feedback received.

In January 2009 Council introduced an annual minimum requirement relating to the number of development activities Executive and non-Executive Members should attend. Council agreed that Executive Members should attend a minimum of 12 development sessions and non-Executive Members a minimum of 8.

Details of Members attendance levels at events offered was detailed at Annex A of the Officers report. Members made the following comments:

- Lord Mayor and Sheriff should be denoted with an asterisk or similar as due to time constraints they can not be expected to attend the required number of events. Officers confirmed a specific training programme is offered to Lord Mayor and Sheriff every year but take up depends on the individual concerned and whether they feel they need any special training.
- Evaluation of the Core programme – in response to Members questions, Officers advised that the Core programme is assessed at regular intervals and can be subject to change to reflect changes in legislation and to avoid it becoming stale.

RESOLVED: That Members commented as above and referred the report to the Standards Committee for consideration as set out in paragraph 15 of the report.

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

12. ANNUAL REVIEW OF MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY.

Members received a report which asked them to consider any revisions they wished to make to the current Member Training and Development Policy.

In October 2009 Steering Group Members approved the introduction of a Member Training and Development Policy which outlined the structured approach the Council takes to developing its elected Members. Good practice states the policy should be reviewed annually and refreshed if necessary.

Officers outlined the report, in particular the following:

- The policy will need to be updated accordingly If the Standards Committee, which is the Steering Groups reporting line, is abolished. Officers will update the Steering Group if any changes are made.
- Protocol for Councillor attendance at conferences and external training has been trialled for a period and appears to be working, there had been no feedback to state it is not working.

Officers referred Members to the feedback received from the Charter Assessment, and recommended that Members agree to refresh the policy accordingly.

RESOLVED: That the Member Development Steering Group agreed to the refreshment of the Member Training and Development policy as outlined in the report and detailed above.

REASON: To ensure provision of a Member Development Policy.

13. CHARTER FOR MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT REPORT.

Members considered a report which put before them the charter assessment panel's report setting out in detail their findings following City of York's successful bid for Charter Status.

Following a submission of portfolio evidence, Local Government Yorkshire & Humber confirmed that York was ready for assessment against the charter standard for Member Development. On 28 September 2010, City of York Council was formerly assessed by an assessment team and was subsequently informed that it had successfully achieved the Charter. The full report, attached at Annex A, set out the comprehensive feedback received and would subsequently inform any future plans for Member Development.

Members considered the Charter Assessment report, and the areas of improvement outlined at paragraph 7 of the report and made the following comments:

- In relation to inductions for new Councillors, it would be beneficial to pre-book personal development reviews (PDR's) as part of the induction process and hold PDR's in early May for new Councillors.
- It would be useful for Mike Leitch from Local Government Yorkshire & Humber to attend an induction event.
- Highlight the benefits of mentoring/buddying to new Councillors.

Members advised that they would consider the bullet points at paragraph 7 further and email Officers with any thoughts they may have on the areas where improvements could be made.

RESOLVED: That a further report outlining ways in which the areas identified in the assessment report can be addressed be brought back to a future meeting.

REASON: To improve the standard York has set for Member Development.

14. AGEING WELL PROGRAMME OF DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT FOR YORK MEMBERS.

Members considered a report which outlined a proposal from Local Government Improvement & Development to provide elected members with a range of development support in order to meet the challenges of York's ageing population.

Officers outlined the report and advised that a programme is offered which has 4 main themes of leadership, strategic approach to engagement of older people, joined up/coordinated commissioning and the delivery of services for older people. Local Government Improvement & Development had already been approached to discuss the offer of bespoke support and the resulting proposal was attached at annex B.

Members made the following comments:

- The training would need to be relevant for all Members and not to be seen as only relevant to Executive Members.
- Possibility of a pre-council seminar on the issue before May.
- More information on what is on offer would be useful.

RESOLVED: That the Member Development Steering Group support the provision of this funded opportunity for all Members and requested Officers to look into the possibility of a pre-Council seminar, preferably before May.

REASON: To ensure provision of training for Members in this particular area.

Councillor Runciman, Chair
[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.45 pm].