
MEETING	MEMBER SUPPORT STEERING GROUP
DATE	13 SEPTEMBER 2012
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS DOUGLAS (CHAIR), BARNES, CUNNINGHAM-CROSS, RUNCIMAN (VICE-CHAIR) AND WISEMAN

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they might have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 July 2012 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

11. LOCAL DEMOCRACY WEEK EVENTS

Members considered a report which summarised the events and activities planned for Local Democracy Week between 15th and 21st October.

Officers provided an update and advised that events planned so far were as follows:

- Meet the Lord Mayor/Mock Council Budget Meeting for Primary School children.
- Youth Council Activities.

- Members becoming involved in York Stories which aims to encourage people to tell and share stories that are personal and unique to York.
- A talk by York Archaeological Trust on the Guildhall Yard Excavations.
- A Question Time event involving Members and Students from York University.
- Mansion House Tours will be running throughout the week.

Members suggested that York St John University should be invited to attend the Members question time and that Officers should perhaps consider another event for adults.

RESOLVED: That Members noted the proposals for Local Democracy Week and commented as above.

REASON: In order to comply with the requirements of the former I&DeA Charter and to promote engagement in and understanding of democratic activity in the year of York 800.

12. FIRST MONITOR OF TAKE UP AND EVALUATION

Members considered a report which informed them of the take up of training events offered to date, a summary of the feedback received and analysis of the take up.

Officers advised that the figures in the report reflected that it was still fairly early in the municipal year and there were still other training and development sessions to come. It was acknowledged that some Members reported external training attendances to Democratic Services and others didn't. By the end of the municipal year, it was envisaged that most Members would attain their targets.

Officers reminded Members of the discussions that had taken place at a previous meeting surrounding the Leadership Academies. Officers agreed to research what is on offer and bring an update back to the committee for further discussion on the criteria for attendance and the cost.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That Members noted the report.
 - (ii) That Officer research what sessions were available through the Leadership Academies and report back to the Committee.¹

- REASON:
- (i) In order to comply with the monitoring arrangements set out in the Support Group's Terms of Reference as approved by Council.
 - (ii) To provide the Member Support Steering Group with further information on Leadership Academies.

Action Required

1. Research Leadership Academy training courses.

TW

13. DISCUSSION ITEM - BARRIERS AND DIFFICULTIES FACED BY COUNCILLORS IN CARRYING OUT THEIR ROLE

Members participated in a discussion on the barriers and difficulties faced by Councillors in carrying out their roles.

The following comments were made:

- Having enough time is the main problem for many Councillors.
- The early evening timing of meetings and training courses are problematic especially if Councillors work outside of York.
- The scheduling of meetings often means that some weeks Councillors have too many meetings and other weeks, no meetings.
- The diverse age range and external commitments of Councillors means that a solution to the timing of meetings will never be found.
- A central diary that contains the Neighbourhood Management Unit dates and Council meeting dates would assist Members in managing their diaries.

Members commented that it would be useful to have the Head of Neighbourhood Management, the Assistant Director of Customer & Business Support Services and the Assistant Director for Communities, Culture and Public Realm attend a future meeting to discuss community contracts and the handling of members enquiries.

RESOLVED: That Officers invite the Head of Neighbourhood Management and The Assistant Director for Communities, Culture and Public Realm to a future meeting.

REASON: To discuss concerns Members have surrounding working in their Ward.

14. TRIAL PERIOD OF 360 REVIEWS - VERBAL UPDATE

Members received a verbal update on the Trial Period of the 360 Reviews discussed at the previous meeting.

Officers advised that they had sourced a provider and required 3 Members to volunteer to take part in the free trial.

Councillors Barnes, Douglas and Wiseman agreed to participate.

RESOLVED: That the above mentioned Members agreed to take part in the trial of 360 Reviews.²

REASON: To identify a suitable personal review system for City of York Members.

Action Required

2. Arrange trial of 360 Review.

TW

15. WORK PLAN

Members considered the work plan for the Committee to March 2013.

Officers advised that the review of the budget share allocated to the political groups for external events could be incorporated into the Annual Budget Monitor report at the November meeting.

Following discussions at this meeting, an update on the Leadership Academy courses either verbal or as part of the six monthly update on Training would be brought to the November meetings and dealing with Members enquiries.

Members had also requested that the Head of Neighbourhood Management be invited to the January meeting along with the Assistant Director for Communities Culture and Public Realm to discuss issues surrounding Ward Meetings.

RESOLVED: That the work plan and amendments detailed above be noted.³

REASON: In order to provide the Steering Group with a work programme for future meetings.

Action Required

3. Work Plan be amended to reflect additions/changes discussed.

TW

Councillor Douglas, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.20 pm].