
MEETING	MEMBER SUPPORT STEERING GROUP
DATE	14 MARCH 2013
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS DOUGLAS (CHAIR), BARNES, CUNNINGHAM-CROSS, RUNCIMAN (VICE-CHAIR) AND WISEMAN

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

32. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 28th January 2013 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

33. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

34. THE NEW 'ZONE 47/MEMBERSPHERE'.

The Head of Civic and Democratic Services gave an update on the proposed new 'Members App'.

A demonstration of the application took place and Members said that it would be useful if a tool for managing casework could be incorporated into the application. They then asked the following questions:

- Would the application would be compatible with a number of devices including tablets, laptops and smartphones?
- Would the application be able to run with all versions of Outlook.

Officers advised that they would look into the above queries.

Members agreed to email their respective groups to ask for 2 volunteers to test the application. Officers confirmed that they would invite the Green and Independent Members to take part in the trial.

RESOLVED: That Members noted the update on the Membersphere and agreed to find volunteers within their respective groups to trial the application.

REASON: To introduce an easier way of working for Members.

Action Required

1. Respond to Members on the questions around the Membersphere. DS
DS
2. Make contact with Green and Independent Members for volunteers to test the Membersphere prior to it going live.

35. FUTURE APPROACH TO MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT.

Members considered a report which presented to them a number of items for consideration in relation to the future approach to Member Development.

Members commented on the following member training issues:

- Future Core Training and Development Programmes - Members acknowledged the need for a continued programme of mandatory and statutory training and asked that officers delivering the training work to make the sessions more interesting. It was suggested that any member requests for specific training should be kept on record in order to focus and inform future training programmes. Members suggested that Audit and Governance could be included within the core programme. It was acknowledged that following the update at the last meeting, Officers were continuing to work with the University of York to develop an accredited programme for Members. Members also asked that Policy

Cafes and Pre-Council Seminars remain in the programme as they are particularly well attended.

- External Training and Development - Officers confirmed that the pots of money allocated to the individual groups for training and development would be available again this year if Steering Group Members were happy for the practice to continue. However, the pots would not be available after this municipal year due to the budget for Member training being significantly less after this year. Members agreed that the groups should receive the pots of money for the 2013/14 municipal year but be advised that it would be for the last time.
- Personal Development Reviews (PDR's) – Members agreed that it would be cost effective to bring the PDR's in-house and within group, and that a resource for the political groups to use such as a standard form, would be helpful. The Chair agreed to circulate a version she had used previously.
- E-Learning Provision – Members advised that it was useful to have access to some provision and that free e-learning resources could be incorporated into the new Membersphere.
- Charter Status for Member Development – Members agreed that there was no budget or staff resources to pursue charter status and no merit in renewing it at this time.
- Member Training and Development Policy – Members agreed that it is useful to have a formal policy and asked that the current policy be brought to a future meeting for review. They did however agree that as the Core Training and Member Development Programme for the new municipal year would be less comprehensive than in the past that the targets of attending 8 sessions for non-Cabinet Members and 12 for Cabinet Members should be removed.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That Members endorsed the proposed approach for the 2013/14 Core Programme and accredited programme.
 - (ii) That the Group Pot allocation should continue for the municipal year 2013/14.

- (iii) That PDR provision should be brought in-house and in-group.
- (iv) That any free e-learning provision that could be sourced should continue to be offered in 2013/14.
- (v) That the Council should not pursue the renewal of Charter Status for Member Development once the current award expires in September 2013.
- (vi) That a formal Member Training and Development Policy should be retained (but not include the targets for attending training and development sessions) and the current policy brought to a future meeting for review.

REASON: To enable the delivery of future support to Members.

Action Required

3. Put together and circulate Core Member Training and Development Programme for the 2013/14 municipal year. TW

36. SECOND MONITOR OF TAKE UP AND EVALUATION.

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

Members queried some of the figures detailed at Annex A in relation to individual Member targets. Officers advised that some Members are still not reporting attendance at events outside of the Council that can count towards their annual target and that some of the figures may not be a true reflection of what some Members have undertaken.

Members agreed to chase up 'no shows' within their groups in relation to events to find out why they were unable to attend the sessions they had registered for.

In relation to the feedback forms at Annex B, officers advised that a pared down programme in forthcoming municipal years will give Officers more time to work on training sessions to ensure they are satisfactory.

RESOLVED: That the Steering Group noted the report.

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

37. WORK PLAN.

Members considered the Work Plan for the Committee to March 2013 and were asked to suggest items for the forthcoming meeting in July.

Following discussion, it was agreed that reports on the following areas would be brought forward:

Update on the Membersphere
A review of the Training and Development Policy
Personal Development Plans

In addition, Members asked that the Head of Communities and Equalities (Neighbourhood Management Unit, Equalities and Play) attend a future meeting to discuss Members requirements relating to casework in their Wards.

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

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

Councillor Douglas, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.45 pm].