

Meeting	Member Support Steering Group
Date	30 January 2014
Present	Councillors Douglas (Chair), Boyce, Looker and Runciman (Vice-Chair)
Apologies	Councillor Galvin

15. Declarations of Interest

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

16. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last Steering Group held on 28th November 2013 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

17. Public Participation

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

18. Update on Members Lagan Lite by the ICT Business Engagement and Implementation Manager.

The Council's ICT development team have undertaken to develop a system for Members to record and manage their contacts with members of the public. The software is bespoke and written in-house, based on the Customer Relationship Management system used in the Council's customer contact centre.

Members received a written update on the system, 'Lagan Lite' and made the following comments:

- The name of the system should be changed.
- The Steering Group would like to see a further demonstration of the system before the soft launch to all members. A demonstration using examples of typical

resident problems and how the system works from start to finish would be beneficial.

- Once the system is launched, Members will require drop in sessions for guidance on how to use it.

At Members request, Officers agreed to set up an informal meeting with the Chair and relevant ICT Officers to discuss the system before the soft launch and agreed to request the attendance of ICT officers at the March Steering Group meeting to provide a further demonstration to all members of the Steering Group.

Resolved: That Members noted the update on Lagan Lite.

Reason: To keep members informed on ICT support to Members.

19. MEMBER TRAINING BUDGET UPDATE 2013/14.

Members considered a report which gave details of the current and projected budgetary position in relation to Member training.

Officers outlined the report and advised that it was closely linked with the Core Training Programme report at item 6 of the agenda in that the training offered to Members going forward would be reflective of the reduced budget.

In relation to the allocated 'group pots' being under spent, it was noted that following amendments to the Members' Scheme of Allowances adopted by Full Council, the attendance of Members at conferences, training courses and seminars approved in accordance with the Council's arrangements for member development was now included in the scheme, and that it was likely that members' travel to any training had been paid for from the travel budget. Members commented that the pots had been useful and should be allocated again in 2014/15, then abolished for 2015/16 which will be an induction year.

Members noted that there may be some costs for external training, particularly for Standards and Code of Conduct training.

Resolved: That the Steering Group noted the budgetary position and took it into account when considering the training programme offer for members in 2014/15.

Reason: In order to comply with the role of the Steering

20. DRAFT CORE PROGRAMME OF MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT 2014/5.

Members considered a report which set out the draft proposed core programme of training and development opportunities for the 2014/15 municipal year.

Officers outlined the report and advised that Annex A advised in principle on the suggested programme for 2014/15, taking into account the discussions under the previous agenda item concerning a reduced budget.

Members suggested some possible topics for pre-Council briefings or policy sessions that could be delivered by Council staff and officers agreed to contact the relevant departments to further investigate the viability of the suggestions.

In relation to the Local Government Course, Members agreed that officers should investigate the cost to the Council to run the course in 2014/15.

Following discussions under the previous agenda item regarding the 'group pots' of training money, members agreed this could be allocated again for 2014/15.

Resolved: (i) That Members agreed the outline programme for 2014/15 as set out in Annex A to the report.

(ii) That Members confirmed they were happy to proceed with the allocation of group pots in 2014/15.

Reason: To enable arrangements for the delivery of a core programme for the municipal year 2014/15

21. WORK PLAN

Members considered the Work Plan for the Committee to March 2014 and were asked to suggest items for the forthcoming meeting in July.

Following discussion, it was agreed that agenda items on the following areas would be brought forward for the March meeting:

- Further details on the Core Programme 2014/15
- Update on Councillors Lagan Lite
- Update on Membersphere

In relation to future meetings the following areas were suggested:

- Itrent and Members Claims
- Review of Member support facilities at West offices
- Review of the Members Bulletin

Resolved: That the work plan be noted.

Reason: 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 6.00 pm].