

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL**15 APRIL 2008**

Chairman: * Councillor Jean Lammiman

Councillors: * B E Gate * Paul Osborn
Phillip O'Dell

* Denotes Member present

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**55. **Attendance by Reserve Members:****RESOLVED:** To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.56. **Declarations of Interest:****RESOLVED:** To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.57. **Arrangement of Agenda:****RESOLVED:** That all items be considered with the press and public present.58. **Minutes:****RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2008 be deferred until printed in the next Council Bound Minute Volume.59. **Public Questions:****RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 19.60. **Petitions:****RESOLVED:** To note that no petitions were received at the meeting under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 16.61. **Deputations:****RESOLVED:** To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 17.62. **Member Development Programme:**

The Panel received the report of the Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development, which reviewed the progress of the 2007-2008 Programme and set out the proposals for the Member Development Programme for the remainder of 2008:

Finance and Disability Training

The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development reported that Finance training held during March 2008 was well attended and that the Members had given a positive evaluation of the session. It was noted that when Finance training was initially run, attendance was low but since training had become mandatory the session had seen a greater turnout. The Chairman added that mandatory Disability training had also seen a good turnout and queried the possibility of the session being run again. It was noted that with the possibility of new Cabinet members being appointed in May 2008 it would be prudent to run the finance training again in early May, whilst also extending the opportunity to Members of Scrutiny and Call-in Committees, and any other Members who wished to attend. The Chairman suggested that such training be worded as a 'request that is a statutory requirement to fulfill statutory duties'.

Quarterly Briefings

The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development reported that the most recent briefing was well attended and had led to a good debate. He further stated that the presentations on Arts Culture, Culture and Media, Sports, and an update on Law, had been well received, with some topics provoking engaging discussions.

Project Management Training

A Member queried the possibility of Project Management Training being arranged for Cabinet Members, and complimented the quality of the training he had received from the Roffey Park Institute. He added that such training would be useful to Members and would enable them to ask suitable questions relating to major projects. The Chairman suggested that such training should be offered to all Councillors and requested that an evaluation of the data from the Roffey Park Institute be investigated. He stated that this training be provided 'in-house' should it prove to be more cost effective.

Media Training Workshops

The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development reported that the response to the workshops from Members was very positive, with some having improved their skills. A Member suggested that such training might be provided under the contract with Westminster and it was requested that the Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development investigate the possibility. The Chairman suggested that more training might be needed for Members on how best to represent the administration as a whole rather than just their political parties. He added that, in addition to the workshops, new methods of training should be evaluated.

Action Learning Events

The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development reported on a shortlist of speakers under consideration for the next event taking place in September 2008. He suggested that a representative of the Ombudsman and a speaker on Scrutiny and Councillor Call for Action be considered with a view to discussing complaint management and performance indicators. The Chairman agreed that although such speakers would be valuable, she would favour a speaker who would provoke discussion more than just provide an 'inside track' to knowledge.

Member Coaching Programme

The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development reported that he was still in the process of receiving feedback from the Roffey Park Institute and would therefore report back to the next Member Development meeting. He added that the Panel must now set the framework on how to go forward, and that a strategy that fitted with the Improvement and Development Agency Skills Framework (IDeA) should also be considered. The Chairman added that she would like to see the framework as soon as possible. She reported that some Members had expressed difficulty in dealing with elements of the coaching and that a 'helpline' would be valuable. The Chairman expressed disappointment that Symmetry's 'front-end' was not very customer focused.

E-Learning

The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development reported that, although all Members had access to E-Learning sessions very few had made use of the facility. A Member suggested that separate training sessions were needed for London Councillors and that sections not relevant to Members would have discouraged them from participating in E-Learning. The Chairman commented that E-Learning was yet to 'stand out' as a project and that it might benefit from an official launch. The Chairman further added that E-Learning on subjects could be used to bring Members up to the required level before traditional training sessions took place. It was suggested that the feasibility of E-Learning taking place in the Members' Library be investigated.

Scrutiny Member Development

The Chairman reported that the programme looked promising and appeared to be running smoothly.

LGiU Manifesto Supporting Councillors

The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development reported on the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) Manifesto and the option for Members of the Council to sign up and implement their twelve action points. Although Members of the Panel expressed their concerns that certain points could be open to misinterpretation, the Chairman explained that signing up to such a manifesto would not commit the Council to anything problematic.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

63. **Protocol for Councillors' Website:**

The Chairman suggested that if people had concerns with blogs set up by Councillors, then the protocol would have to be supported. She added that Members needed to be aware of the impact of blogs. A Member replied that there did not appear to be a substantial demand for blogs amongst Councillors. The Chairman added that the Panel should recognise that the Standards Committee had requested a protocol, but that, as blogs were low on the list of priorities, the protocol would be more relevant for consideration in a year's time.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

64. **Any Other Business of Importance to be referred to the Chairman:**

New Members' Induction

The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development reported that training for Councillor Husain Akhtar had taken place and that Councillor Krishna James was starting the programme. The Chairman requested that feedback and evaluation be given to the Panel at the next Member Development Meeting.

Member Development Charter

The Chairman requested that the framework for the updated Member Development Charter be developed with a view to renewing and signing it in six months' time. The Chairman added that this was particularly important so that statutory issues could be covered.

Member Request for Training

The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development reported that a Member had made a request for an individual training session with the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) for Case Management Training. He enquired if this could be extended to all Members and run 'in-house'. A Member added that the tracking of casework could be difficult and that there might be benefit in requesting training. The Chairman responded that whilst there could be no provision for individual needs, Member Development would take on board the individual's needs. The Chairman added that training for Members as a collective could be paid for by common resources if it was displayed there was a common need. The Interim Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development confirmed that he would canvas the views and interest of Members, so that such future training needs could be built-in to the Member Development Programme, and that he would research the potential costs for running such a course for the consideration by the Panel in May 2008.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.34 pm, closed at 9.10 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR JEAN LAMMIMAN
Chairman