MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL   **4 SEPTEMBER 2008**

Chairman: * Councillor Jean Lammiman

Councillors: * Phillip O'Dell   * David Perry (2)
                   * Paul Osborn

* Denotes Member present
(2) Denotes category of Reserve Member

[Note: Councillor Eileen Kinnear attended this meeting to speak on minute item 84].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

79.   **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

       RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

       Ordinary Member   Reserve Member

       Councillor Brian Gate   Councillor David Perry

80.   **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.

81.   **Arrangement of Agenda:**

       RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

82.   **Minutes:**

       RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2008 be deferred until printed in the next Council Bound Minute Volume.

83.   **Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations:**

       RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put, or petitions or deputations received at this meeting under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rules 19, 16 and 17 respectively.

84.   **Member Development Programme Update:**
       The Panel received a report of the Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development, which reviewed the progress of the 2008 Member Development Programme and set out plans for the implementation of a full programme for 2008/2009, in line with the Council's Improvement Programme.

       Forthcoming Training
       The Learning and Development Service Manager reported that, due to the holiday period, only one training session had been run for Members. The training session had provided Members with a refresher on the main principles of the Licensing Act 2005, relevant legislation and practice. The officer reported that the training had been well received.

       A Member commented that another councillor had been given specialist training on chairing scrutiny committees. The Chairman informed the Panel that this training was available to all members of Scrutiny, although it was not necessarily offered automatically. The Learning and Development Service Manager commented that, due to the positive feedback received in regards to the Chairing Scrutiny course, a further one day course organised by INLOGOV had been arranged and would take place on 23 July 2009.

The Learning and Development Service Manager detailed the mandatory training available for Members. In particular, he reported that:

• the external session 'Dealing with Casework Effectively' had been made available at a reduced cost to the Council and would provide training for up to 12 Members;

• the 'Time Management' session had been made available following the Roffey Park Coaching Feedback and aimed to help Members identify ways of balancing conflicting priorities;

• the quarterly briefing scheduled for 24 September 2008 would give further consideration to Local Area Agreements (LAA). This would not be a repeat of previous training, but would provide new updates and information.

The Learning and Development Service Manager reported that the content of the quarterly briefing scheduled for 10 December 2008 had not yet been finalised but that a session led by the Harrow Association of Voluntary Service (HAVS) was being considered. The Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development commented that they were keen to involve HAVS when there was space available. The Chairman noted that HAVS were to be represented at an earlier quarterly briefing and stated that the Council should try and reduce repetition by focusing on different key areas. A Member suggested that Local Government Finance Training might be more beneficial. He noted that, though a session was scheduled for 23 February 2009, it would be useful to have it earlier as the process of deciding the annual budget for the municipal year 2009/2010 was commencing in January. The Chairman and other Members agreed that this training should be brought forward.

Modern Councillors e-Learning Programme
The Learning and Development Service Manager explained that the Modern Councillor e-Learning Programme was being introduced to allow Members to study at their own convenience, dip in and out of courses as required and revisit courses to refresh themselves, as necessary. He reported that a taster session on the Modern Councillor e-Learning package had been scheduled for 3 November 2008 to showcase the available material.

The Chairman suggested that the Members' Library be adapted so that it could become a "learning centre". She and other Members noted that the library was not used efficiently and that, by utilising the new e-learning technology, it could be transformed into a valuable central learning resource. Following a discussion, Members recommended that, as a method of re-launching the library, some aspect of the e-learning taster be held there. To facilitate this, Councillor Osborne stated that he would check to see whether the computers in the Members' Library had internet connectivity.

Action Learning Events
The Learning and Development Service Manager reported that the provision of Action Learning Events for Members would continue. These events utilised high profile speakers to promote discussion and debate concerning key development needs related to performance, service planning and service delivery. The Chairman stated that the events were very useful but, due to the reliance on external speakers, prone to cancellation. She requested that every effort be made to ensure that future Acton Learning Events went ahead as planned and suggested that reserve speakers be made available to ensure that these opportunities were not wasted. Other members agreed that these events were highly beneficial and that the Council should strive to secure high quality speakers to discuss important and challenging issues.

Member Development Brochure
The Learning and Development Service Manager reported that plans were being implemented to launch the 2008/2009 Professional Development Brochure for Members. He explained that the purpose of the brochure was to formalise existing development initiatives and provide Members with a comprehensive overview of available training.   The brochure was to be made available both in print and electronically on the Council's intranet.   To compliment the document, updates regarding training would be provided via e-mail and mail shots.

Following a discussion and questions from Members, the Learning and Development Service Manager stated that:

• courses detailed in the brochure would be colour-coded to provide further information regarding the session, including whether the course was fee-based;

- all courses in the brochure were detailed on the corporate calendar. The Divisional Director Human Resources and Development would speak to Democratic Services to see whether these dates could also be included on the committee calendar;

- a course registration form would be included within the brochure so that Members could apply for both internally and externally run courses.

The Chairman suggested that, as some courses carried cost implications, Members should be encouraged to provide feedback and share information with other councillors. Another Member of the Panel felt that the brochure should make it clear that external courses could be funded, provided that they were relevant.

The Learning and Development Service Manager reported that, in addition to providing details of available training, the brochure would also include a learning log that Members could use to record their professional development. The log was intended to be anonymous and could be submitted to the Member Development Team to help identify training needs.

Council Values
The Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development informed the Panel that a report was being submitted to Cabinet on 18 September 2008 recommending the adoption of a set of council values designed to establish the foundation for cultural change. The officer explained that the values had been developed, in part, based upon the work of the Roffey Park Institute and that, if Cabinet agreed to the report's recommendations, the values would be used to develop a behavioural framework for the Council. The values, collectively known as CREATE, were as follows:

- **C**ustomer First
- **R**espect
- **E**ngaged Communication
- **A**ctively 'One Council'
- **T**aking responsibility
- **E**nergise and Improve

The Chairman requested that information regarding the new value system be included in the brochure, provided that it did not delay its publication. The Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development stated that he would aim to include a summary on the overview page.

Coaching
The Learning and Development Service Manager informed the Panel that, following the review meeting held with Roffey Park on 9 July 2008, coaching was going to be made available to all Members. The programme would be phased in for all elected Members commencing in late October or early November 2008. Initially there would be availability for 15 councillors, with two further opportunities for 15 Members being made available in January and March of 2009. The Learning and Development Service Manager stated that he was confident that there was enough capacity to cope with demand and that no Members would be prevented from taking part. The Chairman added that it was important that interested Members did not miss out on coaching and that the opportunity be promoted as much as possible.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

85. **Membership Development Charter Action Plan:**
The Panel received a report of the Divisional Director of Human Resources and Development detailing the principles of the Member Development Charter, a framework designed to help councils develop and support their elected Members. The Learning and Development Service Manager explained that the attached self-assessment template was designed to help the Council meet the charter's principles and that its compliance would eventually be assessed externally by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). The officer commented that, due to their unique role, Councillors were not covered by the Investors in People framework and, as such, the Member Development Charter was an important addition.

The Learning and Development Service Manager explained that the self-assessment template acted as a checklist and was concerned with the following five key areas:

- commitment to member development
- strategic approach to member development
- Member learning and development plan in place

- learning and development that is effective in building capacity
- elected Member Development promotes work life balance and citizenship

The officer stated that the Council was currently complying with most aspects of the charter, but that it needed to focus on formalising and documenting certain processes to ensure that they could provide the IDeA with evidence.

Speaking in relation to section 4.3 of the template that stated that the Council should evaluate the benefits and impacts of training, the Chairman suggested that the learning log included in the Member Development Brochure be used to monitor this. A Member commented that Members should also use the learning log to identify areas where they felt they were not progressing. The Chairman and other Members agreed that this would help identify gaps in training.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.32 pm, closed at 9.23 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR JEAN LAMMIMAN
Chairman