

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL MINUTES

12 SEPTEMBER 2012

Chairman: * Councillor Mrs Rekha Shah

Councillors: * Ann Gate * Bill Phillips (3)
* Jean Lammiman † Yogesh Teli

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

47. Attendance by Reserve Members

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

Ordinary Member

Councillor Varsha Parmar

Reserve Member

Councillor Bill Phillips

48. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interest.

49. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED: That Councillor Ann Gate be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2012/13.

50. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2012 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

51. Terms of Reference of the Member Development Panel

RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference be noted.

52. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put, or petitions or deputations received at this meeting.

RESOLVED ITEMS

53. Information Report: Charter Mark - Current State, Actions and Future Steps

The Divisional Director introduced the report which detailed the current state of Member Development against the Charter, stated the actions required to meet the requirements of Charter and the highlighted the future steps to attain Charter Plus.

The officers then explained the current situation and made the following comments:

- the evidence had been evaluated against the requirements for Charter and then restructured against the criteria;
- new and old evidence had been evaluated against the criteria for Charter Plus. There were some gaps in the evidence for Charter Plus, such as personal development plans for Members, 360 degree appraisals and shared Member and officer development and training events;
- there were some criteria for the Charter which did not have evidence at present and these were Member feedback from training events, examples of Members sharing knowledge with external partners and feedback from the induction process;
- it was suggested that a survey of Members was carried out to obtain the required feedback and that some development events involving Members and officers would be held;
- the re-assessment of Charter status could take place at present and an assessment for Charter Plus status could be considered after the next election and evidence from the induction programme could be included;
- the Corporate Strategy Board had considered the gap analysis and were supportive of shared development events for Members and officers, especially for key strategic issues.

Members made a number of comments on the current status of the Charter which the officers responded to as follows:

- in the past, there had been action learning teams which involved Members and officers but these had not been built on as successfully as they could have. 360 degree appraisals had been piloted, which some Members had found useful, and personal development plans for Members had been included in the e-learning package but these had not had the desired take up;
- there was a need to offer support for development processes, such as 360 degree appraisals and it was likely that this support would continue to be IT enabled;
- it was accepted that Member development events would be unlikely to achieve attendance by all Members and that there were difficulties engaging some Members in the process. One of the values of the Charter was that it was a tool to assess Member Development against benchmarks and good practice. It provided assurance that the Council was meeting the standard for a good organisation in relation to Member development;
- the cost of the re-assessment was £2,000 for a three year period. The cost of officer time would need to be calculated.

The Members of the Panel made the following comments:

- a wider analysis of the benefits of the Charter was required rather than a simple cost per capita analysis;
- there was need to be aware of the actual costs;
- attendances at development events was cyclical and dependent on various factors, such as the point in the electoral cycle as attendances tended to be lower towards the end of the 4 year Council term;
- the training facilitated by the Office for Public Management (OPM) had been well received and development events were important because they provided a forum for cross party discussions and team building.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

54. Information Report: Member Development Programme Update

The Divisional Director introduced the report which updated the Panel on the Member Development Programme of events which had taken place since April 2012 and the progress of the Member Development Programme in 2012.

During the discussion on the Member Development Programme, Members raised a number of issues which the officers responded to as follows:

- the quarterly briefings were popular and the format worked well. It was anticipated that a similar format would be used for shared Member and

officer events considering more strategic issues, such as welfare reform;

- there was a need to reconsider the remainder of the Member Development Programme for 2012 as a number of the courses were being repeated and were mandatory. Consideration would be given to holding repeated sessions on the same evening as this would create additional capacity in the Programme for development events on other topics;
- OPM would be approached and asked to consider some development events based on real issues with tangible outcomes. It was likely that attendance levels would increase if the development events were outcome related;
- a report considering alternative development event ideas would be submitted to the next meeting.

A Member of the Panel expressed support for shared development events and stated that action learning sets should be considered. In addition, events which involved Members, officers and local residents could usefully be included as part of a revised Development Programme. Another Panel Member stated that Member Development events were promoted at Group meetings and this would continue.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

55. Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED: To note that the next meeting would be held on 7 November 2012.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.33 pm, closed at 8.16 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MRS REKHA SHAH
Chairman