

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL MINUTES

5 OCTOBER 2011

Chairman: * Councillor Phillip O'Dell

Councillors: * Jean Lammiman * Mrs Rekha Shah
* Varsha Parmar * Yogesh Teli

* Denotes Member present

20. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance.

21. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made.

22. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2011 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

23. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations

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

RESOLVED ITEMS

24. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Mrs Rekha Shah as Vice-Chairman of the Member Development Panel for the 2011/2012 Municipal Year.

The Panel also noted the appointment of Councillor Phillip O'Dell as Chairman of the Member Development Panel for the 2011/2012 Municipal Year.

25. Information Report: Member Development Programme Update

The Panel received a report of the Divisional Director of Human Resources, Development and Shared Services, providing an update on the Member Development Programme of events that had taken place since March 2011.

With regard to the resolutions made at the Panel meeting of 30 March, and the follow up actions taken, an officer stated that:

- Members would shortly be sent a user-friendly guide with step-by-step instructions on how to access the Member Development training resources on the Hub and the e-learning resources on the Modern Councillor website;
- a repeat of the Children's Safeguarding training session would be offered in April 2012;
- the Overview and Scrutiny Community Engagement training session had not been repeated yet, because the content of this training might overlap with the content of the Community Involvement training session planned for November 2011. Officers are currently reviewing the approach with Scrutiny and will report back to the next meeting of the Panel;
- officers would shortly be liaising with Facilities Management about providing a Health and Safety training session for Members;
- a running total of all Member Development training sessions, inclusive of attendance figures since May 2010 would be provided at the December 2011 Panel meeting.

Members made the following points with regard to e-learning:

- it was important to recognise that not all Members had the same learning style;
- many Members had not been able to easily locate the learning resources on the Hub or access the Modern Councillor site. The step-by-step guide would encourage Members to engage better with this;
- that the step-by-step guide include the offer of 1-2-1 coaching sessions in the Members' Library for those Members who experienced difficulty in accessing the Modern Councillor website.

With regard to the update on the Member Development Programme of events that had taken place since March 2011, an officer made the following points:

- the training sessions had been relatively well attended when considered against previous Member attendance figures, and when taking into consideration Members' busy schedules. However, attendance levels were generally lower than is desirable;
- Members needed a wide knowledge base to support their roles as Councillors, and the Member Development Programme of events 2010/2011 had reflected that need;
- some of the repeat training sessions requested by Members, such as on Social Media, were now available as e-learning modules on the Modern Councillor website. Officers would regularly update Members about any new e-learning modules available on the Modern Councillor site;
- Scrutiny officers would not be doing a presentation at the Members' Quarterly Briefing on 27 February 2012. Instead, Mind in Harrow would be invited to do a presentation on mental health awareness. Members would be requested in evaluating the information received, to indicate whether they had a requirement for further development on:
 - i) mental health awareness
 - ii) mental health service provision
 - iii) your role as a Member in working with members of the community who may have mental ill-health.

An officer stated that Members had also requested follow-up training sessions in the following areas:

- assertiveness
- data protection
- procurement
- equalities and diversity
- local information system
- social media

and additional training in the following areas:

- the use of new technology (Personal Data Assistants) used by Public Realm officers in order that they can knowledgeably advise residents when dealing with queries on council services
- public speaking
- presentation skills using powerpoint.

It was also noted that there is a further Personnel Appeals Panel mandatory training scheduled for 2 November 2011 for the remaining Panel members not yet trained.

The officer added that Members had been sent an email requesting them to complete an online IT training needs analysis survey, however, only 10 Members had completed it to date. A reminder would be sent to all Members.

Following a request from the Traffic officers, the Transport for London (TfL) presentation entitled 'Travel and Spend at London's Town Centres', would be scheduled shortly. A Member stated that this would be a key briefing as it would inform Members' decision-making and their engagement with residents.

Members requested that the Major Incident training scheduled for 8 December 2012 include the recent Belmont fire in order that the training was current.

Referring to appendices A and B, which related to the implementation of a 'Buddy System' for new Members, an officer stated that this was voluntary and officers would not recommend the monitoring of Buddies. Panel Members agreed that this initiative should be taken forward and requested a training session entitled 'How to be a good Buddy' for those Members interested.

Following questions by Members of the Panel regarding accreditation of Members' learning, an officer stated that:

- certificates of learning had been offered to Members in the past, but the take up had been very low;
- Members would be provided with a Certificate every four years;
- accreditation of Members' learning would be included as an item for discussion at the December 2011 Panel meeting.

The Social Media Protocol for Members, adopted at the Council meeting of 7 July was circulated at the meeting. Following questions from Members of the Panel, an officer undertook to request guidance from the Head of Legal Practice about the level of information that Members' could include in their profiles on social network sites.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the step-by-step guide about how to access the Member Development training resources on the Hub and the e-learning resources on the Modern Councillor website to include the offer of one-to-one coaching in the Members' Library;
- (3) a repeat of the Children's Safeguarding training session be offered in April 2012;

- (4) officers report back at the next meeting of the Panel on the potential integration of Community Engagement and Community Involvement development;
- (5) officers liaise with Facilities Management about providing a Health and Safety training session for Members;
- (6) a running total of all Member Development training sessions, inclusive of attendance figures, since May 2010 be provided at the December 2011 Panel meeting;
- (7) officers to provide regular updates to Members on any new e-learning modules available on the Modern Councillor site;
- (8) Mind in Harrow be invited to make a presentation on Mental Health awareness at a Quarterly briefing in early 2012;
- (9) the major incident training on 8 December 2011 be modified to include the recent Belmont fire incident;
- (10) TfL be invited provide a briefing on 'Travel and Spend at London's Town Centres', as soon as possible;
- (11) a training session entitled 'How to be a good Buddy' to be scheduled;
- (12) accreditation of Members' learning be included as an item for discussion at the December 2011 Panel meeting;
- (13) officers report back on the types of information Members could include in their profiles on social network sites.

26. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 7 December 2011 at 7.30 pm in Committee Room 5.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.26 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR PHILLIP O'DELL
Chairman