MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2023

Present:-

Cllr. Adrian Clifford (Chairman)

Cllr. Matt Tomeo	Cllr. Luke Cousin	Cllr. Jane Wolfe
Cllr. Nick Brown	Cllr. Bob Waterton	

Officers present:-

Sandeep Tiensa	-	Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer
Nicole Cramp	-	Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer
Isaac Thomas	-	Democracy Support Officer

Apologies:-

Cllr. Royston Bayliss, Cllr. Susan Findlay and Cllr. Dillan Shikotra

1.   NOTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2023, as circulated, were approved as a correct record.

2. DRAFT BY-ELECTION MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME

The Senior Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer (SDSSO) briefed Members on the draft By-Election Induction Programme that was designed for the new Glen Parva Ward Member who would be joining the Council following the by-election on 21 December 2023.

The SDSSO suggested that the new Member complete the two mandatory induction sessions in early January before joining other Members in the current Member Development Programme.

The SDSSO explained that Democratic Services would liaise with officers to re-run previous training sessions on a one to one basis with the new Member. The SDSSO invited Members comments on the Draft By-Election Induction Programme.

Members discussed the varying levels of knowledge that the new Member may have (e.g. in terms of their IT literacy or their familiarity with local government roles and processes) and suggested that training be tailored towards the new Member's specific learning and development needs.

Cllr. Luke Cousin suggested that when previous training sessions are re-run for the new Member, they be opened to other Members that were previously unable to attend due to other commitments. Cllr. Cousin provided the example of the Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) training, a Mandatory training session that was missed by several Members.

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3.   FEEDBACK FROM THE NEW MEMBER'S 6 MONTH CATCH-UP

The Chair, Cllr. Adrian Clifford informed Members that the 6 month feedback document had been circulated and asked that Members take a few minutes to read the document. Cllr. Clifford gave a brief overview of the New Members 6 Month Catch-up which took place on 14 November 2023.

The SDSSO updated Members on the key themes arising from the 6 Month Catch-up:

1. Meet the Services

   New Members felt that the Meet the Services event worked well and asked that the event be run again in the future. The SDSSO informed Members that the event would be run again at the end of Year 2/3.

2. Work/life balance

   Members are generally adjusting to the work/life balance of the role. The SDSSO explained that this would be picked up as a question in the New Members 12 month Catch-up to see whether Members feel that their work/balance has improved.

3. Hybrid and recorded training sessions

   Members would like to see more hybrid and pre-recorded sessions to watch in their own time. The SDSSO explained that this would be picked up as a question in the 12 month Catch-up to see whether Members think this has improved.

4. Re-allocation of buddies

   The SDSSO summarised New Members feedback on the Buddy system and explained that the Executive Director and Business, Partnership & Health Improvement Group Manager's buddies would be re-allocated to the Democratic Services team. Members suggested that all Officer Buddy's should be encouraged to meet with their Members.

Members responded to comments made about:

- Planning Committee
- The relationship between Members and Officers
- Members role at Committee meetings

Members discussed the current training needs of Planning Committee Members and agreed that further Planning Training be addressed as a priority. The SDSSO informed Members that Democratic Services had liaised with the Planning team and that the Planning Advisory Service was contacted

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regarding the current training gap. The SDSSO advised Members that the comments from the 6 Month Feedback would be raised with Planning Officers.

Cllr. Bob Waterton, a Member of Planning Committee, added that a glossary of Planning terms and Core Strategies (CS) would aid Members in their ability to make more robust decisions.

Members discussed the value of the 6 Month Feedback document in providing useful comments and pointers, and agreed that this document would set the agenda for the Member Development Steering Group going forward. Members acknowledged the steep learning curve experienced by new Members during the first 6 months and assured new Members that they would come to better understand their role and its limitations over time. The SDSSO highlighted the importance of receiving Member feedback at the 6 month mark and reviewing it after a year to measure what has changed.

Members discussed different methods of presenting the 6 month feedback and proposed that the information be broken down further so that it could be disseminated more easily.

4.   PREPARATION OF COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS (CDR'S)

The SDSSO gave an update on the Councillor Development Reviews (CDR's) and advised Members that notifications would be sent to Group Whips at the beginning of February 2024. The SDSSO reminded Members that the Democratic Services team could offer assistance, should it be required, e.g. making room bookings, sending invitations, printing or sitting in on the meetings.

Members requested that a deadline be provided for the CDR's to be completed. The SDSSO noted this request and advised Members that a deadline would be circulated.

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5. **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME & ILEARN UPDATE**

The Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer (DSSO) provided an update on the current Member Induction Programme and reminded Members of upcoming training dates.

The Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer provided an update on completion rates of online learning and advised that since the last MDSG a further 6 Members have completed the mandatory module of GDPR and Data protection making this a total of 8 members. A total of 2 members have completed the Safeguarding (Bronze Level).

Members requested that their login details for iLearn be sent to Group Whips and re-circulated.

6. **EVALUATION OF RECENT COURSES**

The Democracy Support Officer (DSO) updated Members on the evaluation feedback from recent courses, which was summarised up to the Planning Enforcement Masterclass that took place on Thursday 16 November 2023. An update was provided on the Value for Money (VfM) and Return on Investment for each session. The DSO explained that the Impact factor was now provided up to the New Councillor Workshop on 14 July 2023, however several sessions achieved an Impact rating of 0. The DSO summarised the reasons why Members felt they had not been able to implement the learning from those sessions:

- Members felt that further training was required.
- Members felt that they had not had adequate time/opportunity to put their learning into practice.
- Members had not yet experienced the role specified in the training (e.g. to Chair a meeting).

The DSO asked for Members thoughts on whether a period longer than three months should be given before sending the Implementation Feedback Forms, giving Members more time to implement and apply their learning.

Members discussed the current method of evaluating recent courses and provided suggestions on how the process could be revised and improved. It was agreed that Mentimeter would be piloted as an alternate method of collating feedback at the Code of Conduct training session on Thursday 15 February 2024.

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7.   BUDGET UPDATE

The DSO updated Members on the training budget. The DSO advised Members that £367.50 was left of the training budget but that a further £1,000 would be added to cover the Planning training requirement.

8.   ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- Progress update on the Councillor Development Reviews (CDR's)
- Member Development Programme & iLearn Update
- Evaluation of Recent Courses and Update on Mentimeter
- Update on New Member's Induction

9.   DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Wednesday 13 March 2024.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.57 P.M.

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