

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

TUESDAY, 23 JULY 2024

Present:-

Cllr. Adrian Clifford (Chairman)

Cllr. Matt Tomeo (Vice-Chair)

Cllr. Matt Tomeo
Cllr. Luke Cousin
Cllr. Ande Savage

Cllr. Tracey Shepherd
Cllr. Dillan Shikotra
Cllr. Bob Waterton

Cllr. Jane Wolfe

Substitutes:-

Cllr. Tracey Shepherd (in place of Cllr. Nick Brown).

Officers present:-

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

Apologies:-

Cllr. Susan Findlay and Cllr. Roger Stead

1. NOTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023, as circulated, were approved as a correct record.

2. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS OF THE STEERING GROUP

The Chairman, Cllr. Adrian Clifford welcomed new and returning Members and provided an overview of the Steering Group.

3. FEEDBACK FROM THE NEW MEMBERS 12 MONTH CATCH-UP

The Democracy Support Officer (DSO) informed Members that a document providing an update on the actions taken by Democratic Services since the New Members 6 Month Catch-Up was published as a Supplemental Item. A hard copy was circulated for Members' information.

The DSO gave a brief overview of the New Members 12 Month Catch-up which took place on 14 May 2024. This included feedback on key areas such as the Member Induction Programme. The DSO explained that Democratic Services would take Members feedback on-board and work to continually improve Member training.

Members discussed the following:

- Challenges faced with hybrid training, e.g., the Meeting Owl. It was agreed that Member training would continue to be conducted either remotely or in person until a technical solution was found to improve the quality of hybrid training.
- Recording training sessions for members to watch at their leisure. However, Members agreed that this would only be appropriate in certain circumstances.
- Developing a meeting etiquette including expectations and basic ground rules at virtual training sessions, e.g., to ensure that Member's cameras are turned on when using Microsoft Teams.

4. **PROGRESS UPDATE ON COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS (CDR'S)**

The DSO provided a progress update on the Councillor Development Reviews (CDR's). The DSO explained that a total of 24 out of 36 CDR's were completed so far and provided a breakdown of completion rates by Political Group.

The DSO explained that the feedback received in Member's CDR's highlighted several training and development needs. This information was used to develop the Draft 2024-2025 Member Development Programme, enclosed as part of the agenda. An update would also be provided to Members at Full Council on Tuesday 24 September 2024.

The DSO asked for Member's feedback on the draft programme before it was taken to Full Council, including suggestions of topics to be added. Members suggested that more training was needed in the following areas:

1. The role of the opposition and how to be an effective opposition Member:
 - The Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer (SDSSO) highlighted training provided by East Midlands Councils (EMC) for members of the opposition, as well as the importance of leadership modules. The SDSSO also emphasised the significance of effective Scrutiny as a measure of opposition.
2. Local Government Finance:
 - Members discussed the training need prior to the Scrutiny of the Budget process in January 2025.
3. Planning Masterclasses:
 - Members discussed key areas where a Planning Masterclass would be most beneficial.

DECISION

That the 2024-2025 Member Development Programme be approved.

Reason:

It is appropriate that the Steering Group develops an inclusive training programme for all Members of the Council.

5. **AUDIT REPORT - MEMBER DEVELOPMENT**

The Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer presented findings from the recent audit. Members considered the action plan and discussed various methods for encouraging Members to complete the mandatory modules. Members also considered alternative methods of delivering the mandatory modules, it was agreed to continue with the online method which provides flexibility to allow Members to complete them in their own time.

Members agreed that 30 September 2024 was a reasonable deadline to allow all Members to complete the modules. Completion rates would be reported back Group Leaders, Whips, the Monitoring Officer and to the Steering Group at its next meeting in October.

DECISION

That 30 September 2024 be set as a deadline for Members to complete the GDPR & Data Protection and Safeguarding (Bronze) mandatory online modules.

Reason:

Following a recent audit, it has become apparent that Members have yet to complete the mandatory modules set by the Council.

6. **UPDATE ON THE BY-ELECTION MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME**

The Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer (DSSO) provided an update on the By-Election Member Induction Programme.

Cllr. Ande Savage who was elected in December 2023 responded saying that the By-Election Member Induction Programme was useful.

The Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer (DSSO) advised that Cllr. Ande Savage will now be invited to join the main Member Development Programme.

7. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME & ILEARN UPDATE

The Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer (DSSO) provided an update on the current Member Induction Programme.

The Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer provided an update on completion rates of mandatory online learning and advised that a total of 9 Members have now completed the mandatory module of GDPR and Data protection and a total of 3 members have completed the Safeguarding (Bronze Level).

It was agreed that all mandatory online learning modules are to be completed by 30 September 2024. Members requested that their login details for iLearn are re-circulated.

8. BUDGET UPDATE

The Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer updated Members on the training budget.

The Planning Committee training fee had been committed to the current year's budget, therefore the current budget remaining is £922.25. Officers would look to top-up the budget to ensure that training needs are met once the member development programme has been agreed.

9. EVALUATION OF RECENT COURSES

The DSO updated Members on the evaluation feedback from recent courses, which was summarised up to the Annual Planning Committee training that took place on Thursday 23 May 2024. An update was provided on the Value for Money (VfM) and Return on Investment scores for each session. The DSO explained that updated 'impact' scores were provided up to the Planning Enforcement Training on Thursday 16 November 2023.

10. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- Meeting expectations for virtual meetings.
- Update on completion rates for GDPR & Data Protection and Safeguarding online modules.
- Update on Planning Masterclasses.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Thursday 10 October 2024

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 7.00 P.M.