

**COUNCIL BUSINESS
COMMITTEE**

4.30 P.M.

26TH JUNE 2008

PRESENT:- Councillors Rob Smith (Chairman), Evelyn Archer, June Ashworth (substitute for Geoff Knight), Susan Bray, Karen Leytham, Joyce Pritchard and Morgwn Trolinger (part)

Apologies for Absence

Geoff Knight

Officers in attendance:-

Richard Tulej	Head of Corporate Strategy
Sarah Taylor	Head of Legal and Human Resources and Monitoring Officer
Debbie Chambers	Principal Democratic Support Officer
Jenny Kay	Democratic Support Officer

1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2008 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Nominations for Vice-Chairman were requested.

It was proposed by Councillor Evelyn Archer and seconded by Councillor Joyce Pritchard:

“That Councillor Susan Bray be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council Business Committee.”

There being no further nominations, the Chairman declared Councillor Bray elected as Vice-Chairman.

Resolved :

That Councillor Susan Bray be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council Business Committee.

3 POLICY FRAMEWORK - ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

The Head of Corporate Strategy presented a report which requested Members to approve the Council’s Annual Report 2007/08 for publication on 30th June 2008.

It was noted that the Audit Committee had approved the Statement of Accounts for inclusion in the report at its meeting on the previous evening. Concern was expressed over the Audit Committee’s comments not being provided at the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Susan Bray and seconded by Councillor Joyce Pritchard :

“That approval of the Annual Report 2007/08 be delegated to the Head of Corporate Strategy in consultation with the Chairman.”

Members voted unanimously in favour of the proposition.

Resolved :

That approval of the Council’s Annual Report 2007/08 be delegated to the Head of Corporate Strategy in consultation with the Chairman.

4 PROTOCOL ON PUBLICITY FOR COMPLAINTS OF BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT MADE TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Head of Legal and Human Resources presented a report on the Protocol on Publicity for complaints of breach of the code of conduct made to the Standards Committee. It was reported that the Standards Committee had considered the draft protocol at its meeting on the 19th June 2008 and recommended it to Council Business Committee for approval.

The recommendation as set out in the report was unanimously agreed.

Resolved :

That the Protocol be approved for inclusion in the Council’s Constitution.

5 CONSULTATION ON MOVING THE DATE OF ENGLISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS TO THE DATE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS IN 2009

Members considered a report detailing a Department for Communities and Local Government consultation on moving the date of English Local Government elections to the date of the European Parliamentary elections in 2009. A response had been drafted by Officers for approval by the Committee.

Members unanimously approved the draft response.

Resolved :

That the draft response be approved for submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government on the consultation on the date of elections in 2009.

6 ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING COURSES AND DEVELOPMENTAL CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

The Principal Democratic Support Officer advised Members that since the publication of the Agenda, an Individual Cabinet Member Decision had been taken on the transfer of the Members Conference budget to the Member training budget. Members considered the supplementary report on this issue alongside the original report.

Members discussed the mechanism for reporting back from conferences and courses that cost more than £100 and agreed that a standard evaluation report template be

produced to allow Members to report back on the benefit of attending the event.

Members unanimously agreed the recommendations as set out in the reports.

Resolved :

- (1) That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to approve:
 - training to be offered in house and therefore at minimal cost and attendance at external training or developmental events costing less than £100 per Member, subject to the event meeting priorities identified in the Member Development Strategy; and
 - training to be purchased externally or attendance at developmental events costing more than £100 per Member in consultation with the Chairman of Council Business Committee, subject to any such events meeting training or developmental needs identified in the Personal Development Plan of the individual concerned.
- (2) That where any Member attends a training or development event costing more than £100 per member, they be asked to provide a report on their return to be available to other interested members and to be used in evaluating the event for the future.
- (3) That a standard evaluation report template be produced to allow Members to report back on the benefit of attending the event.
- (4) That the transfer of £3,700 from the budget for Members' Conferences to the Member Training Budget together with requests for attendance at Conferences or Seminars where attendance is for the developmental benefit of an individual Councillor be noted.
- (5) That the annual attendance at the following conferences be approved from the Member Training Budget subject to the application of criteria agreed by this Committee, future evaluation and continued relevance of the conference content:

N W E O Scrutiny Conference (or similar)	Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny
Standards Board	Chairman of Standards
Planning Summer School	Chairman of Planning
Regeneration & Renewal National Conference	Relevant Cabinet Member (s)
Northern Regeneration & Renewal Conference	Relevant Cabinet Member (s)
- (6) That Members attending conferences provide a report on their return to be available to other interested Members and to be used in reviewing the value of that conference for future years in line with resolution (2) above.

7 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REVIEW

Members were requested to review the Member Development Strategy in light of the new Corporate Priorities that had been agreed by the Council and the issues that had emerged from the recent CPA report.

The review had highlighted four main areas that required inclusion within the Strategy – Political Leadership, Equality and Diversity/Accessible Services, Community Engagement and Action on Climate Change.

With regard to Political Leadership, Members agreed that this should be a project area for Officers to investigate how the induction and support for Cabinet Members could be improved upon. It was suggested the two Cabinet Members who had recently stepped down should be offered exit interviews and that Cabinet should be asked what support was needed and how this could be achieved.

It was further suggested that Democratic Services should provide a list of what was expected of Group Administrators as it was felt by some that the role was vague.

The Committee went on to discuss Equality training and the CPA report which highlighted this as a weakness for the Council.

It was agreed that the Committee submit a report to full Council to consider making Equality training mandatory for all Members.

Members went on to consider the issues of Community Engagement and local communities having more influence and involvement in service delivery and the decision making process. It was felt that this was an important area of work especially with the white paper on Community Engagement expected in the coming month. It was agreed that it should be included in the Strategy as a priority and a further project area.

With regard to Action on Climate Change, it was agreed that the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate Change should be requested to circulate a briefing note on the Council's position on the issue which could be followed by a briefing session if there was demand.

It was further agreed that a link should be included on the Council's internet giving details on the measures the Council has in place regarding climate change locally.

Members agreed that the Strategy required updating to include reference to the review that was taking place and that it should also include a section on one to one interviews and statutory training for regulatory committees. It was also agreed that reference to the Member training budget and conferences as agreed in the previous Minute should be included.

In a discussion on one to one interviews, it was agreed that Group Administrators should be copied into correspondence on training courses identified for Members of their political party. It was further agreed that a list of Members by political party who had not undertaken a one to one interview should be sent to Group Administrators.

Resolved :

- (1) That the Strategy be updated and include a reference to the review.
- (2) That Political Leadership be included as a priority in the Strategy as a project area and that Officers investigate how the induction and support for Cabinet Members could be improved upon.

- (3) That the Strategy include :
 - (a) A section on one to one interviews.
 - (b) Statutory training for Regulatory Committees that arises throughout the year.
 - (c) Information about the Member training budget and conferences.
- (4) That Community Engagement be included in the Strategy as a priority and a further project area.
- (5) That Cabinet be consulted on improving support for Cabinet Members and how this could be achieved.
- (6) That the two Cabinet Members who had recently stepped down be offered exit interviews.
- (7) That the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate Change be requested to circulate a briefing note on the Council's position on the issue, followed by a briefing session if there was demand.
- (8) That a link be included on the Council's internet giving details on the measures the Council has in place regarding climate change locally.
- (9) That the Head of Democratic Services provide details of what is expected of Group Administrators.
- (10) That Group Administrators be copied into correspondence on training courses identified for Members of their political party.
- (11) That a list of Members by political party who have not undertaken a one to one interview be sent to Group Administrators.
- (12) That the Committee submit a report to full Council asking Council to consider making Equality training mandatory for all Members.
- (13) That a draft revised Member Development Strategy be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

8 SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING 2008

The Democratic Support Officer presented a report which detailed proposals for the Special Council meeting in October 2008. It was reported that the Head of Democratic Services had requested themes for the meeting from Directors, Service Heads and Members and the theme that had emerged was the development of a Children and Young People Engagement Strategy.

Members considered the outline of the meeting and it was suggested that the participants should be given a tour of the Town Hall on the day.

Resolved :

- (1) That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make appropriate arrangements for the 2008 Special Council meeting on the lines set out in section 2 of the report, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and

other Group Administrators as necessary.

- (2) That a progress report be submitted to Council Business Committee in September setting out further details of the proposed event and any financial implications.
- (3) That the participants be given a tour of the Town Hall on the day.

9 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

Group Administrators were invited to put forward nominations for any changes to membership of Committees. The changes submitted by the Conservative group were accepted.

Resolved :

Audit Committee

Delete Tony Johnson (and add as substitute)
Add Sarah Fishwick (and delete as substitute)

Licensing Act Committee

Delete Peter Williamson
Add Helen Helme

Licensing Regulatory Committee

Delete Susie Charles
Add Ken Brown

Planning Regulatory Committee

Add Val Histed (to fill vacancy)

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Delete Ken Brown
Add Val Histed
Add Sarah Fishwick as substitute
Delete Sylvia Rogerson as substitute

Lancashire Locals Joint Committee

Delete Roger Mace as substitute

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.07 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Jenny Kay, Democratic Support Officer – telephone: 01524 582065 or email
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