

**COUNCIL BUSINESS
COMMITTEE**

5.00 P.M.

25TH JUNE 2009

PRESENT:- Councillors Rob Smith (Chairman), Susan Bray, Roger Dennison,
Joyce Pritchard, Morgwn Trolinger and Evelyn Archer

Apologies for Absence

Karen Leytham
Geoff Knight

Officers in attendance:-

Debbie Chambers Principal Democratic Support Officer
Jenny Kay Democratic Support Officer

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Nominations for Vice-Chairman of Council Business Committee were requested.

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

“That Councillor Morgwn Trolinger be appointed Vice-Chairman of Council Business Committee.”

There being no further nominations, the Chairman declared Councillor Trolinger Vice-Chairman of Council Business Committee.

Resolved :

That Councillor Morgwn Trolinger be appointed Vice-Chairman of Council Business Committee.

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd April, 2009 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The Principal Democratic Support Officer presented a report which set out the findings and action plan resulting from a recent internal audit of Members Expenses and Civic Functions. This had included a section on Member Development.

The audit highlighted the success of achieving Level 1 of the North West Member Development Charter and the work that would be required in preparation for Level 2.

The action plan agreed three actions regarding Member Development:

- Revision of the Member Development Strategy to set out the roles and responsibilities of key members and how they link to Corporate Plan priorities

Democratic Support to:

- explore opportunities for sharing good practice with other Authorities; to

participate in external training wherever possible and provide Members with access to a wider variety of development and networking opportunities

- develop target areas for training which will demonstrate that Member Development has had a positive impact on the community, in preparation for applying for Charter Level 2.

Resolved :

- (1) That Council Business Committee notes the findings and agreed actions relating to Member Development from the recent internal audit of Member Expenses and Civic Functions.
- (2) That the agreed actions be incorporated into the review of the Member Development Strategy, as appropriate.

4 ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT 2008/09

Members considered a report which detailed the progress that had been made with Member Development over 2008/09.

The report included a comprehensive list of all development opportunities that had been held over the past 12 months. The list highlighted the range of innovative development methods that had been used such as workshops, taster sessions and shadowing. It was reported that each event had been evaluated and almost all feedback was positive with the exception of the Standards Assembly.

Members went on to discuss attendance at events and problems that arose with Councillors booking places on courses and not attending. It was noted that 12 Councillors had not attended any type of development event in the past year.

An update on project areas was given which included details of the roll out of new laptops for Members.

Resolved :

- (1) That the Committee note the report.
- (2) That the Chairman of Standards Committee does not attend this year's Standards Assembly and that attendance in future years be determined year by year, taking into account the relevance of the Assembly programme.
- (3) That the names of those Councillors who had not attended any development sessions in the past 12 months be forwarded to their Group Administrator.
- (4) That Councillors be requested to provide a substitute for any training sessions that they cannot attend once a place is booked.
- (5) That a review of the new laptops is undertaken once the roll out is complete.
- (6) That the names of those Councillors who have not taken a Council laptop be forwarded to their Group Administrator.

5 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REVIEW

The Democratic Support Officer introduced a report which requested the Committee to consider the main issues arising from the 2009/10 Corporate Plan and how this related to the Member Development Strategy.

Members were reminded that the 2009/10 Corporate Plan contained four priorities and within these priorities there were seven key objectives. The Committee considered how each objective related to Member Development.

It was felt that, as some of the objectives were quite extensive and not linked to Member Development, briefings could be provided for Members from Services such as CC(D)S and Economic Development as they related to specific objectives within the Corporate Plan. It was then suggested that Members would benefit from regular briefings from all services highlighting significant issues and concluding with a question and answer session.

With regard to Equality training that had been highlighted as a priority the previous year, it was felt this was still important but it should be incorporated in to Community Cohesion and linked with the Community Engagement priority.

Members discussed the existing priorities contained within the 2008/09 Strategy and it was suggested that Overview and Scrutiny and Communications should be removed and that Economic Development, which featured heavily within the Corporate Plan, should be added.

Resolved :

- (1) That a link to the County Council website page on Climate Change be include on the Council's website.
- (2) That Overview and Scrutiny and Communications be removed as priorities in the Member Development Strategy.
- (3) That Equalities be incorporated into Community Cohesion and linked with the Community Engagement priority.
- (4) That Economic Development be added as a priority in the Strategy.
- (5) That regular information sessions be introduced to address member development needs in relation to Council Service areas, concluding with a question and answer session and that a rolling programme be included as a priority in the Strategy.
- (6) That the revised Member Development Strategy be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

6 INNOVATION AND LEARNING FUND - POST ELECTION MEMBER TRAINING DVD

Members were requested to consider a report detailing a development proposal that had been submitted by Councillor Roger Dennison. It was reported that Councillor Dennison had been successful in a bid to obtain a grant of £5,000 from the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership Innovation Fund to produce a training DVD for Members.

The Committee was requested whether it wished to support the proposal and if so, how this should be taken forward.

Members discussed the proposal at length and agreed that the proposal should be supported.

It was agreed that the Committee should form a Working Group to meet informally to progress the project and that all Members should be invited onto the Group to offer their input into the process.

Resolved :

- (1) That Council Business Committee support Councillor Dennison's proposal for a training DVD for Members.
- (2) That the DVD be given to all Members after the 2011 election.
- (3) That Council Business Committee form an informal Working Group which would be opened up to all Members to progress the project and allow a fair consultation to take place.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.25 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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