

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**HELD:****26 OCTOBER 2006**

Start:: 6.30pm

Finish: 8.30pm

Councillors: O'Toole (Chairman)
Bailey (Vice Chairman/Member Development Group Representative)

Hanlon
W G Roberts
Swiffen

In attendance:

Councillor Mrs Edwards

Officers: Human Resources Manager
ICT and e Government Manager
Health and Safety Manager
Training and Human Resources Officer
Senior Member Services Officer (CAJ)

15. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Collinson and Dereli.

16. SUBSTITUTIONS (IF ANY)

There were no substitutions.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

18. NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

Members considered the notes of the meetings of the Member Development Commission held on 7 June 2006 and 13 September 2006.

It was reported that at its meeting on 26 September 2006 the Internal Review Committee had referred the appointment of Councillor Hanlon back to the Member Development Commission to confirm that the Leader of the Labour Group was aware of the appointment.

- AGREED:**
- (A) That the notes of the meeting held on 7 June 2006 be agreed.
 - (B) That it be confirmed that Councillor T Rice, Leader of the Labour Group, was aware of Councillor Hanlon's appointment to the Member Development Commission.

- (C) That the notes of the meeting held on 13 September 2006 be agreed subject to amendment to Minute 13, (A), to read:

“That Councillor Hanlon be appointed to serve as an Additional Member of the Commission.”

19. PROJECT PLAN

Members considered the Project Plan as circulated and contained on pages 67 to 69 of the Book of Reports.

This led to a general discussion session during which comments/observations were made in respect of the following:

- The approach and perception by Members to training and development
- North West Charter in Member Development
- Competency models and appraisals
- ITN Exercise
- Comprehensive Action Plans
- Specific service area training
- Member induction

AGREED: (A) That the revised Project Plan be confirmed subject to:

- (i) Amendment of the Terms of Reference as follows:

“9... To ensure that the Council takes ownership of its training and development and it appears as a regular item at Group meetings.

10. To monitor training through feedback from the Commission’s Group representatives and Officer reports.

Renumbering of the remaining terms of reference.”

- (ii) Amendment of the Objectives as follows:

“The present

- To receive regular feedback from the Groups’ on the “way forward” for Member Development in the Council.

The future

- To ensure Councillors have a knowledge and understanding of service delivery within the Council.”

- (iii) Amendment of **Establish Ways of Working** as follows:

“Use of service areas in training, as deemed appropriate”

- (B) That a report on Competencies be considered at the next meeting of the Commission.

ACTION:

- (A) *Human Resource Manager/Senior Member Services Officer*
- (B) *Human Resource Manager/Training and Human Resources Manager*

20. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT - FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUPS

Members considered feedback from the Groups in respect of Member Development following agreement at the Commission's meeting held on 7 June 2006 that training should now be raised regularly at Group meetings.

Comments/observations in discussion included reference to:

- Members' perception of training and development
- The availability of specific service area training
- Competencies
- Training Needs Analysis
- Recognition of training
- Assessment of individual training needs

It was agreed that in order to promote member development that the re-establishment of an ITN exercise would be worthwhile pursuing with each Member of the Council.

It was further agreed that the Member Development Commission should receive, on a regular basis, details of training undertaken by Members, in order to fulfil its monitoring of training role as identified in the Project Plan.

AGREED:

- (A) That the ITN exercise with Members be re-established.
- (B) That details of in-house training undertaken by Members be reported on a regular basis to the Commission.

ACTION:

Human Resources Manager/Training and Human Resources Officer

21. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION - PROGRESS REPORT

The Commission considered the joint report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor and the Human Resources Manager presented to the Internal Review Committee on 6 July 2006 which had advised that Committee of the developments and progress made by the Member Development Commission.

AGREED: That the report be noted.

22. DEMONSTRATION OF MEMBER INDUCTION

The Commission received a presentation from the Health and Safety Manager in respect of the contents of the Induction diskette which had been circulated to newly elected Members of the Council following the elections in May.

The diskette contained an array of information including details of Members, Management and services of the Council.

Members of the Commission acknowledged its usefulness to newly elected Members. However, it was noted that the information, particularly in respect of Members, was only current at the time it was produced and that Members would need to use the intranet and internet once their PCs were up and running as those systems contained the most up-to-date and current information.

It was suggested that a url link within the diskette could be provide a direct link to the information contained on the web pages, particularly the details provided by the CoiNs management information system.

It was further suggested that the diskette could also be beneficial to those Members who had only been on the Council a few years.

The Chairman thanked the Health and Safety Manager for the presentation.

AGREED: That the presentation be noted.

23. ICT TRAINING FOR MEMBERS

The ICT and e-Government Manager updated the Commission on the ICT training for Members of the Council and made reference to the following:

- The completion of roll-out of laptops/initial training to newly elected Members.
- The additional ICT training offered to Members and take-up of that training.

Comments/observations noted in discussion included reference to the following:

- Opportunities to undertake specific training, for example Publisher and ECDL.
- Replacement of dated laptops.
- Cancellation of training.

AGREED: (A) That Members be reminded to contact the ICT Helpdesk if experiencing difficulties with equipment or for additional assistance with the generic systems.

(B) That Member Development Group Representatives be kept informed of the take-up of ICT training.

- ACTION:**
- (A) *Member Development Group Representatives*
 - (B) *ICT and e-Government Manager*

24. PLANNING TRAINING

The Human Resource Manager updated the Commission on the request to the Executive Manager Planning and Development Services to provide training for Members involved with the Planning process. In his update he made reference to the following:

- The type/availability of externally facilitated planning training, including modular training.

Comments/observations noted in discussion included reference to:

- Provision of general planning knowledge training to assist Members, possibly facilitated in-house.
- The need for more specific planning training, for example, on the new Local Development Framework.

It was agreed that the possibility of the provision of a basic planning knowledge course for Members should be explored further and that facilitating more specific training in respect of the Local Development Framework should also be considered.

- AGREED:**
- (A) That the views of the Executive Manager Planning and Development Services be sought to assess the possibility of providing in-house general planning knowledge training for Members.
 - (B) That the views of the Commission in regard to more specific training on the new Local Development Framework be passed to the Executive Manager Planning and Development Services.

- ACTION:**
- (A) *Human Resources Manager*
 - (B) *Human Resources Manager*

25. IVY ON-LINE LEARNING COURSES

The Human Resource and Training Officer updated the Commission on the opportunity to undertake on-line training courses through Ivy Learning On-Line. It was explained that various applications were covered through this learning package including computer and soft skills courses.

The Commission were of the opinion that this form of on-line training could be beneficial to Members of the Council and it was agreed that a "flyer" should be distributed via Members' mail, and electronically, to raise awareness the learning opportunity.

It was suggested that presentations from Ivy On-Line Learning would be useful.

- AGREED:**
- (A) That a "flyer" be distributed to all Members' giving further details on the Ivy On-Line Learning Courses.
 - (B) That the processes for access/use of the Ivy On-Line Learning Courses be instigated.
 - (C) That presentations, by Ivy On-Line Learning, be organised.

- ACTION:**
- (A) *Human Resources and Training Officer.*
 - (B) *Human Resources and Training Officer/ICT and e-Government Manager.*
 - (C) *Human Resources and Training Officer/Member Development Representatives.*

26. LGA'S COUNCILLOR INFORMATION STUDENT PROJECT

The Human Resource Manager updated the Commission on the national LGA's Councillor Information Student Project initiative. He explained that the project's intention was to raise young people's awareness of the Councillor's role by encouraging students to become more directly involved with the work of Members.

It was stated that with the improvement of technology there was now a wealth of information on the West Lancashire District Council web-site on the Council, its Members and its services and that individual Members of the Council could be contacted via the email system. It was also stated that to improve communication further one initiative for future consideration was the development of individual Member web-pages.

- AGREED:** That the LGA' Councillor Information Student Project initiative be noted.

27. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting be held, subject to availability, in January 2007.