

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

HELD: **AGENDA ITEM: 13**
17 MARCH 2016
Start: 7.00pm
Finish: 7.40pm

PRESENT: Councillor Dereli (Chairman)

Councillors: Davis Kay
Gagen D Westley

Officer: Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

10. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Moran.

11. SUBSTITUTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, the Commission noted the termination of membership of Councillors Mrs Marshall and O'Toole and the appointment of Councillors Kay and D Westley for this meeting only, thereby giving effect to the wishes of the political groups.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

13. MINUTES

AGREED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2015 be noted.

14. MEMBER TRAINING - SUMMARY OF EVENTS HELD SEPTEMBER 2015 TO PRESENT

Members considered the report of the Borough Solicitor as contained on pages 31 to 36 of the Book of Reports, which provided an update on Member training undertaken since September 2015.

The various training sessions, including 'required and essential training' that had been undertaken were noted.

Members commented on the variety of training that had been undertaken and the good selection of briefing topics that had been provided.

In relation to the briefing that had taken place on 'Universal Credit and Welfare Reform' comments were made in respect of the length of the briefing, timing and impact on the session as a result of the scheduled meeting that followed immediately after it.

AGREED: A. That the update be noted.

B. That consideration be given by the Borough Transformation Manager & Deputy Director of Housing and Inclusion for future Member briefings on 'Universal Credit and Welfare Reform' to be arranged on a meeting-free evening.

15. FEEDBACK FROM THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP REPRESENTATIVES FROM THEIR MEMBERS

It was noted that this item is included on the agenda to provide an opportunity for the MDC representatives to give oral feedback from their respective Groups.

16. FUTURE TRAINING EVENTS

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed Members of proposals for future training events that included:

- Dementia Awareness – 30 March 2016. It was reported that 20 Members had indicated that they would attend this training event.
- Member Induction – 12 May 2016 - Primarily for “new” Members, following their election)
- Licensing Training – 24 May 2016 (provisional date) - Primarily for those Members who are appointed to the Licensing & Appeals and Licensing & Gambling Committees.
- Planning Training – 2 June 2016 (provisional date) – Open to all Members but required/essential training for those Members “new” to the Planning Committee.
- Code of Conduct Training – 12 July 2016 (provisional date) – Open to all Members
- Overview & Scrutiny Training – date to be advised – subject to demand an “in-house” training event will be arranged in the new municipal year.

In discussion the format/content of Planning Training, especially for Members new to the Council and newly appointed to the Planning Committee was raised. In feedback Members felt that previous training, facilitated by an external trainer, whilst covering some of the legalities and code of conduct, was too generalised and a “West Lancashire” focus was requested.

Further comments included:

- Briefing / Training on the Local Plan, especially for Members new to the Council and Planning Committee.
- Planning Constraints – Information/training to assist Members understanding and consideration of Planning matters.
- Provision of “bite size” training sessions throughout the year on Planning topics.

AGREED: That the comments relating to Planning Training be passed to the Leader and Director of Development and Regeneration for consideration.

17. ITN PRO-FORMA (PERSONAL ASSESSMENT)

Consideration was given to the re-drafted ITN Proforma – Councillor Training Needs Assessment for circulation to new Councillors as part of the Induction process.

Minor amendments were noted.

AGREED: That the revised ITN Proforma, as amended, be endorsed for circulation to new Councillors as part of the Induction process.

18. IT SUPPORT / TRAINING FOR MEMBERS

Members were advised that 'drop-in' clinics related to PC technical issues are arranged periodically or on request via membersICT@btlancaire.co.uk.

It was further reported that, if other training was required this could be requested, through Members Services, subject to the usual arrangements as set down in the Protocol for Members Attending Conferences/Courses in relation to attending training events.

In discussion comments were made in relation to:

- The progression of the replacement PC/I-pad programme to Members.
- Paperless methods of communication – future provisions/solutions.
- Changes in the Council Information system – future introduction of Mod.Gov.
- IT support for Members – effectiveness of the service.

AGREED: That the update be noted.

19. TIMING OF TRAINING

The time of training events had been included following a request at the last meeting of the Commission.

It was confirmed that training events/briefing events for Members should usually be in the evening, with a 6.00pm at the earliest start time and with a finish time of 9.30pm at the latest. It was further confirmed that such sessions should not traditionally be held on a Monday or Friday evening.

AGREED: That the update be noted.

20. WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17 AND DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members considered the Work Programme for 2016/17 and the dates of future meetings of the Commission (22 September 2016 and 16 March 2017).

AGREED: That the Work Programme and dates of meetings for 2016/17, 22 September 2016 and 16 March 2017, be confirmed.