

MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4 APRIL 2008

Present: Councillors K Hitchen (Chairman); P Watson ; S Meteer and N Williams.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B A Dixon; Mrs E Eastwood and Mrs Y Clarkson.

Officers: T Capper, Democratic Services Manager; C Willoughby, Technical Support Officer.

MTP 33 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2008 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MTP 34 Updated Member Training Programme

The Panel were provided with an updated Member Training Programme and advised that the current programme is due to end at the end of the municipal year.

Parts A (Induction Training) and B (Essential Training) have been completed.

Within Part C (Training to meet Identified Needs) it was noted that:

- IT General Awareness was ongoing. The new IT trainer was in place and it was requested that a progress report be provided to the next meeting.
- Finance and Budget Training remained outstanding due to a lack of resource. In the next municipal year, the possibility of outsourcing or joint training with Allerdale would be explored.
- Appeals Training had not been completed, but would be looked at in the 2008/09 programme, in particular Disciplinary and Grievance training for members of the Personnel Panel.
- Media Relations Training had not been completed but would be looked at in the next training programme, possibly being conducted jointly with Allerdale.
- Chairing, Organising Surgeries and Study Skills have also not been completed. It was suggested that a recommendation be put to the Leader of the Council and the Opposition Leader, that any new Committee Chairs be offered Chairing training.
- Community Leadership training had not been completed and would be offered to all Councillors in the next programme.

RESOLVED - that

- a) an update on IT Training be bought to the next meeting of this panel;
and
- b) it be recommended to the Leader of the Council and Opposition Leader that new Committee Chairs be offered Chairing training.

MTP 35 Modern Councillor Update

Members of the Panel were updated on the usage of the Modern Councillor website, which remained very low.

The Chairman advised that he had e-mailed all Councillors to encourage usage.

It was suggested that certain Modern Councilor modules, suitable for Induction, be made mandatory for any future new Councillors.

It was also suggested that a PC be set up on the next Full Council day to demonstrate access to and the layout of the Modern Councillor website.

RESOLVED - that

- a) Modern Councillor be made mandatory for any future new Councillors; and
- b) a PC be set up to demonstrate the Modern Councillor website on the next Full Council day.

MTP 36 Joint Training

The Panel were advised that the recent Section 17 training held jointly with Allerdale BC had been well attended and received.

The next Joint Member Training and Development meeting is due and it was suggested this be arranged for the end of April/beginning of May, and to include a discussion on possible joint training opportunities for the next year.

RESOLVED - that a Joint Member Training and Development meeting be arranged for the end of April/beginning of May and to include a discussion on possible joint training opportunities for the next year.

MTP 37 Personal Development Plans 2008/09

The Panel were advised the PDPs need to be commenced shortly to enable a Training Programme to be developed for the next municipal year. It was suggested that North West Employers Organisation (NWEO) be asked for costs, if they could facilitate.

(Note: Councillor N Williams declared a Personal Interest at the point due to being an Executive Member of North West Employers Organisation)

It was also suggested that Mrs S Mounsey, Personnel, be asked if she could facilitate PDPs.

RESOLVED - that North West Employers Organisation and Mrs S Mounsey be contacted with a view to PDP facilitation.

MTP 38 Member Training Requests

Members of the Panel were refreshed on the agreed procedure for assessing requests for training and development courses and events for Councillors, where these are to be funded from the Member Training and Development budget.

The Panel then considered three applications.

1. IDeA Leadership Academy

An application had been received from a Member whose attendance at the IDeA Leadership Academy had already been approved. This application was for funding for attendance at the additional voluntary Module 4 and the Graduation Ceremony.

It was noted that similar requests had been approved in the past.

It was suggested that attendance at Module 4 and the Graduation Ceremony be included as an integral part of the IDeA Leadership Academy funding applications in the future.

2. Standards Committee

An application had been received for an Independent Member, as Chair of the Council's Standard's Committee, to attend the Annual Conference of the Standards Board for England.

3. Executive Training

(Note: Councillor N Williams declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item due to being a member of the Council's Executive and left the room during discussion of this item)

An application had been received for members of the Executive to attend a two day meeting with G3 and other officers at Blackbeck Hotel on 20/21 April 2008 to review/consider Performance, Finance and Leadership.

During the debate of this item, Councillor Meteer strongly opposed the Executive holding away days at hotels involving overnight accommodation and suggested that if meetings of this type needed to be held, the use of a village hall should be considered.

Concern was expressed by the panel that following previous awaydays, the press would put a meeting of this nature in a negative light.

It was suggested that it be recommended to Executive that they consider future meetings in other venues, without overnight accommodation and to also consider the press/public perception of awaydays.

A recorded vote was requested and agreed on this application.

RESOLVED - that

a) Application 1 (IDeA Leadership Academy) be approved and Module 4 and the Graduation Ceremony be included as an integral part of the IDeA Leadership Academy funding application in the future;

b) Application 2 (Standards Committee) be approved; and

c) Application 3 (Executive Training) be approved and it be recommended to Executive that they consider future meetings in other venues, without overnight accommodation and to also consider the press/public perception of awaydays.

For Approval of this application (2) Councillors K Hitchen and P Watson. Against Approval of this application (1) Councillor S Meteer.

The meeting closed at 11:10 am.

Chairman