Member Development Steering Group Agenda

Tuesday 18 June 2013 7.30pm
Gade Room, Hemel Hempstead Civic Centre

The Councillors listed below are requested to attend the above meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Councillors Conway, Flint, Hearn, Rance, Taylor (Chairman) and Wixted

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Minutes**
   Members are asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2013 (page 2).

3. **Overview & Scrutiny Review Feedback**
   See page (page 7)

4. **Member Development Programme 2013/14**
   Members are asked to consider and agree the training programme (page 8)

5. **Evaluation Feedback**
   Members are asked to consider and comment on the feedback from previous development session (page 10).

6. **Quarterly Budget Update**
   Members to note and comment on the budget for 2012/13 and 2013/14 (page 12)

7. **Annual Training Report**
   Members are asked to consider the report (page 14)

8. **Personal Development Plans for 2014**
   Members are asked to consider initial options for carrying out the PDPs in spring 2014.

9. **MDSG Work Programme**
   Members to offer suggestions for items to add to the work programme for 2013/14 (page 19)

10. **Next Meetings**
    Tuesday 1 October 2013
    Tuesday 3 December 2013
    Tuesday 18 March 2014

MINUTES

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

19 MARCH 2013

Present:

Councillors: Conway
                     Hearn
                     Rance
                     Taylor

Officers: Michelle Anderson   Corporate Support Team Leader
                                          (Democracy)

The meeting began at 7.30pm

1.   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Flint and Wixted were absent.

2.   MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 05 September were agreed by the members present.

3.   MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2013/14

M Anderson noted that the programme needed to be populated. The one hour briefings prior to Full Council would be reserved for Officer requests. This would then leave the two hour sessions for Member requests.

M Anderson explained that a joint authority session would be hosted by Dacorum on 10 October 2013 for Public Speaking. The group agreed that this would be a good idea and a way of strengthening the joint authority working.

Councillor Taylor suggested that a session is held on the Constitution, based on comments received by fellow councillors. He felt that a general understanding of certain topics was required. The evening should be an opportunity for members to learn rather than members suggesting amendments.

Councillor Rance agreed that this would be a good idea as a greater understanding of the constitution would benefit many councillors.

Outcome

- M Anderson would meet with Mark Brookes to discuss which key areas could be incorporated into the training session. The MDSG would be informed of the meeting date and attend if available.

- The date for this development session would be confirmed.

4.   EVALUATION FEEDBACK

Members discussed each evaluation feedback summary and noted that David McGrath was an excellent trainer and it was good to note his return in May.

Councillor Taylor felt that the Information Security course was crucial for all members.
M Anderson highlighted that a comment had been received suggesting that the course be an annual event and/or included in Members induction.

The Group agreed that both of these suggestions were good ideas.

Councillor Rance felt that some members may need further IT training in the future.
Councillor Taylor suggested that they contact John Worts.

Councillor Rance noted that a great comment received from the Scrutiny training, was that someone benefited more from the old committee system. She agreed with this comment and felt that members had more say and more involvement when the council had the old committee system.

Councillor Taylor said that Member Development was very important, and agreed that perhaps currently members felt that they had very little influence on decisions.

Councillor Rance suggested that maybe more councillors would have attended the scrutiny course if they could see a point in it. She suggested that maybe a survey be sent to all councillors asking for feedback on Scrutiny.
M Anderson said that this had already been done, just prior to the scrutiny review starting, however only one form was received.
Councillor Rance said that this spoke volumes.

Councillor Hearn said the difference with scrutiny was that people needed to be enthusiastic and know they were making a difference. She gave the example that members on the Housing Appeals committee were hands on and dedicated as it affected people's lives.

Councillor Taylor said that the feedback should be sent to Nigel Smith, but explain that the MDSG felt the scoring system was perhaps a little churlish. Some of the points made in the feedback were true however they felt he had a very well researched knowledge base.

M Anderson asked for the group's thoughts on holding an Overview & Scrutiny feedback workshop for all members. This would give them the opportunity to develop the suggestions/improvements from the review and help take scrutiny forward.
Councillor Taylor supported this idea as it would make councillors feel involved and give them the opportunity to have a say.

Councillor Rance also supported this and said the members could be asked if they felt there was a different way of doing O&S, for example having just one committee or more working groups.

Outcome

- That the Information Security course be included in the annual training programme and included in the Members Induction Programme.
- An Overview & Scrutiny development evening to be organised.

5. ADVERTISING & TELLING US YOU'RE COMING

M Anderson explained that Officers were finding it difficult to obtain replies from members, as to whether or not they were able to attend training sessions. For each session, emails were sent, a note was included in Members News, flyers were put into pigeon holes, it was announced at committee meetings leading up to the event and reply slips were sometimes left on members seats at meetings. However very few councillors' replied and this made it difficult to plan the event. On occasions events had been cancelled, however more members may well have attended than officers were aware of.

Members were asked if they had any preference to advertising training sessions or alternative suggestions.

Councillor Hearn felt this should be taken up within group.

Councillor Rance said that some courses had been done before and therefore members who had been here for a while had already been on them.

Councillor Taylor felt that the brightly coloured flyer in pigeon holes worked well.

Outcome

- Member Development sessions would be advertised in Members News and on brightly coloured A5 flyers in each pigeon hole.

6. QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE

M Anderson explained that the budget shown in the agenda was as at 4 March 2013. The year-end report would be present at the next meeting, along with the current situation at that time.

It was noted that the year-end would potentially see a £1500 underspend. M Anderson said that this was good budget monitoring, considering the budget had been reduced to £11,000 when it was not an election year. Lots had been achieved within this budget.

Councillor Taylor suggested that the spread sheet formulas are checked as they may not be correct.
M Anderson would check this.

Outcome

- The spread sheet formulas would be checked to ensure they were correct.

7. CHARTER RE-ASSESSMENT

M Anderson explained that the Charter re-assessment was due December 2013. It was up to the councillors to give their views as to whether or not the council goes ahead with it.

M Anderson said that if the council went for the charter status again it would cost £2250. The process would be the same as before in that, we would do a self-assessment, an evidence folder would be required and the full assessment day involving interviews with officers and members.

If the council chose not to go for the status, nothing would change. The MDSG would continue, as would all of the processes already in place. The council would however lose the Charter Status, but could choose to sign up at any time. So if they felt things had slipped and Member Development needed a push, this could be a tool to help with that.

M Anderson added that officers found the Hertfordshire Member Development Network group of great benefit and found it was a way of joint working and sharing ideas. The group had been recognised by the Charter group.

The group were asked for their thoughts and M Anderson noted that they could talk to their colleagues and perhaps decide at the next MDSG meeting in June.

Councillor Conway felt that all of the work had been completed already and therefore doing it again would be of no great benefit.

Councillor Rance agreed and suggested that the money would be better spent on something else.

Councillor Taylor felt that Member Development should continue as it was and to try and develop it further. The council could not afford to lose member development.

Outcome

- The MDSG felt that the council should not apply for the re-assessment for Member Charter status. However Member Development should continue in its current form.

8. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY REVIEW FEEDBACK

M Anderson explained that Nigel Smith had carried out the Overview & Scrutiny review. He had looked at key documents, attended OSC meetings, held workshops with Officers and Members and provided training. A draft report had now been received and this would form the council's improvement plan. Any training issues would be discussed at the MDSG meeting in June.

Councillor Taylor suggested that Nigel Smith attends that meeting to feedback on the review.

Outcome

- Nigel Smith would be invited to attend the MDSG meeting in June 2013.

9. MDSG WORK PROGRAMME

- Overview and Scrutiny feedback/improvement plan would be considered at the MDSG meeting in June 2013.

M Anderson asked that members give their suggestions to Officers for the future programme.

M Anderson reported back on the recent Herts Network meeting and highlighted areas which Dacorum may wish to consider:

➢ Visits to areas of interest on the Borough
➢ Peer IT clinic prior to Full Council
➢ E Learning – advertise and guide to topics of interest, to focus the offering

Members were happy to encourage these suggestions.

Possible visits included: Adventure Playgrounds, Cupid Green, Hightown Praetorian, British Film Institute.

Councillor Rance suggested conservation/environmental site visits, with specialist guides. For example showing to members how modern day living affects reality.

Outcome

➢ Officers would look into the suggestions made above.

10.   NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 18 June 2013 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.59pm

Nigel Smith's Review of Scrutiny and Challenge dated 15 March 2013

Nigel Smith will attend the meeting in order for Members to discuss the recommendations relating to training and development arising from the review of Scrutiny and Challenge.

Those recommendations are listed below.

Recommendations:

Training and Development

Enhance the scrutiny training and development programme:

- Develop chairing skills to close down issues and questions, bring in others and ensure focus on key issues.

- Train and develop members in new methodologies, techniques and approaches to scrutiny.

- Ensure effective induction for scrutiny members – for example spread over a number of months including specific modules. Shadowing and mentoring could form part of this.

- Utilise scrutiny as a means of member development and succession planning for Executive positions.

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT DATES 2013/14
Items in italics are provisional – need agreement by MDSG

Date	Development Event	Start time	Finish time	Officer contact and job title:	Run by:	Location	Which Members?
21 May 2013	Chairing Skills	7.30pm	9.30pm	Michelle Anderson Lucy Stone	David McGrath, LinkUK Ltd	Bulbourne Room	Chairs, aspiring chairs, those who chair meetings in the community
12 June 2013	Standards Training	7.30pm	9.30pm	Steve Baker	Paul Hoey Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd	Bulbourne Room	**Restricted to Standards Committee Members**
3 July 2013	Planning Update	7.30pm	9.30pm	Alex Chrusciak	Alex Chrusciak	Bulbourne Room	
10 July 2013 *	*Dacorum Anywhere*	*6.00pm*	*7.00pm*	*Heather Price, Team Leader, Performance, Improvement & Transformation*	*Heather Price*	*Bulbourne Room*	*All*
25 Sept 2013 *		6.00pm	7.00pm				
10 Oct 2013	Public Speaking **	7.30pm	9.30pm	Lucy Stone	Keith Crampton Wiz 07770 593 425	Bulbourne Room	All Joint Authority
14 Nov 2013	*Constitution training*	*7.30pm*	*9.30pm*	*Mark Brookes, Group Manager*	*Mark Brookes and Jim Doyle*	*Bulbourne Room*	*All Just DBC*

Date	Topic	Start	End	Lead	Provider	Location	Audience
20 Nov 2013 *	Evidence Based Decision Making	6.00pm	7.00pm	Elissa Rospigliosi	Elissa Rospigliosi	*Bulbourne Room*	*All*
15 Jan 2014 *	*Check if a Budget briefing*	6.00pm	7.00pm				
22 Jan 2014	*Standards Training*	*7.30pm*	*9.30pm*	*Steve Baker*	*Likely an external provider*	*Bulbourne Room*	*All*
26 Feb 2014 *		6.00pm	7.00pm				
13 Mar 2014		7.30pm	9.30pm				
23 Apr 2014 *	Information Security / Data protection	6.00pm	7.00pm		John Worts	Bulbourne Room	All
20 May 2014		7.30pm	9.30pm				

* indicates a briefing before full Council meeting

** This is a joint authority event with Wiz training. Keith Crampton will send through some details in late August or early September. We will get one free place at the event and Wiz training will invoice any authorities directly. They will make a joint programme and we will get details of events at other authorities.

FEEDBACK ON TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT
Attended: 15   Returned Feedback forms: 12

> **Objectives**: This session demonstrates how to be an efficient and effective Chair in a variety of scenarios - ranging from Committee meetings, community events and in the Scrutiny role (including Task and Finish Groups). Includes strategies to deal with challenging contributors ('Dr Heckle and Mr Jibe') and how to start meetings with the 'Magic Minute'. Uses templates and delegates produce personal action plan.

STRENGTHS

- Good Presentation
- Gets on well with audience
- Enthusiasm
- Drive expertise
- Passion
- The illustrations are excellent and true to form
- Highlighted different ways of dealing with problems in a balanced way
- Very good when table was on chair skills, but this was only about 45 minutes.
- Excellent delivery
- Entertaining x2
- Held your attention/interest
- Enjoyed session
- Really loved David's presentation & David's performance
- Great presenter
- Very engaging & interactive x2
- Practical skills
- Preparation planning for scrutiny meetings – want to try ideas
- Delivered with humour
- Good fun
- Confirmed my chairing skills must be good as they matched all we learned on the course

WEAKNESSES

- Not very relevant to DBC
- Some of the individual presentations were unsuitable for DBC
- Shortage of time x2
- The training should have been 3-4 hours
- A lot of the talk was common sense
- Found a lot of time was spent talking about databases etc., a waste of the time we had
- Not enough time on Chair skills
- Too much content on 'public meetings', not enough on council based OSC's or Regulatory committees where different skills are required
- Too much interaction from Members (too many shouts and rubbish from them)
- Really could have benefited from more time

OPPORTUNITIES
- We need more examples of 'case specific' chairman management
- Should return to cover other 'committee types'
- Follow up courses x2
- Clear plan of course content rather than let participant choose options because there wasn't enough time for them all. 2 separate courses would have enabled all options to be covered.
- Session on scrutiny/committee meetings and public meetings

TRAINING SCORE

Poor	
Adequate	
Good	3
Very good	5
Excellent	4

2012/13 Year End

Main Heading	Budget	Sub Heading	Spend	Remaining
Training Course fees	£ 11,000.00			£ 11,000.00
		LGA conference - 3 Councillors	£ 1,485.00	£ 9,515.00
		RTPI East of England Branch (Localism & Planning Conference -1 Councillor)	£ 100.00	£ 9,515.00
		Derek Lamb - Exeter House	£ 804.48	£ 9,415.00
		GovNet Communications 'The Future of Local Government' Course (1 Councillor)	£ 99.00	£ 8,610.52
		James Button & Co (Licensing training)	£ 500.00	£ 8,610.52
		Link Support Services (UK) Ltd (Localism training)	£ 1,427.40	£ 8,511.52
		Refreshments (Licensing training)	£ 62.50	£ 8,011.52
		Hertsmere (Income for Localism training)	-50	£ 6,584.12
		East Herts (Income for Localism training)	-100	£ 6,521.62
		Hertfordshire Housing Conference (1 Councillor)	£ 120.00	£ 6,401.62
		Hire of room at Maylands Business Centre (Localism training)	£ 45.00	£ 6,356.62
		Link Support Services (UK) Ltd (Chairing Skills, Difficult people) -committment	£ 2,104.80	£ 4,251.82
OVERALL TOTALS:	£ 11,000.00		£ 6,598.18	£ 4,401.82

Member
Development Budget
2013/14

As at 23/05/2013

Main Heading	Budget	Sub Heading	Spend	Remaining
Training Course fees	£ 11,000.00			£ 11,000.00
		Nigel Smith - Scrutiny Review/Development	£ 2,700.00	£ 8,300.00
		IDEA Course - Leadership Academy - 1 Councillor	£ 150.00	£ 8,300.00
OVERALL TOTALS:	*£ 11,000.00*		*£ 2,850.00*	*£ 8,150.00*

Report for:	MDSG
Date of meeting:	18 June 2013
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Annual Member Training Report
Contact:	M Anderson, Corporate Support Team Leader (Democracy) Councillor Taylor Chairman of the Member Development Steering Group
Purpose of report:	(1) To provide an update on Member Training for 2012/13 (2) To illustrate the ongoing commitment to delivering Member Development
Recommendations	(1) To comment on and note the report.

Background

1.1 Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) has always strived to provide training for its elected members. An annual development programme has been produced and delivered.

The cross party Member Development Steering Group (MDSG), continues to meet quarterly and leads Member Development at the Council. It is supported by Michelle Anderson and Lucy Stone.

1.2 As part of the Chief Executive's priorities identified back in 2009/10, it was decided that DBC would aim to achieve Elected Member Charter Status. The Council achieved this status in December 2010 and has continued to show commitment to this.   The Member Charter is a statement of commitment to develop and support elected members. The processes put in place to achieve the Charter have helped the Council adopt a structured approach to Councillor development and to build elected member capacity. This is particularly important given the ever changing skills and competencies essential to fulfil the requirements of office.

1.3 The council are due to be reassessed for Charter status in December 2013. However, it has been decided, by the MDSG that the council will not sign up for the reassessment. They believe that the council is continuing to achieve the criteria set out for the Charter. Members are still keen to take part in the Member Development programme and therefore the money would be better suited to spend on courses requested by Councillors.

1.4 The Council was, however, revisited by the Charter assessors on 9th July 2012 to evaluate the programme of continuous improvement, since the Charter award was given in December 2010. The council passed this evaluation and the assessors were happy that Dacorum were continuing to achieve the charter criteria.

2. Induction

2.1 Following two Borough By-Elections during the past year, the Induction programme has been put into practice. Once elected the new Councillor is contacted by Member Support, setting out initially what they need to do, forms they need to complete and where to obtain help if required. Following this they are offered the chance to meet staff in the areas which they have a particular interest. They are also offered the opportunity to go on site visits. Member Support acts as their initial contact and helps signpost them until they are settled.
The two occasions this has been carried out recently have been very successful and the Councillors have been very grateful.

3. Member Development Training Programme

3.1 Attendance at Member Development sessions has continued to remain at a steady level over the past 12 months and the evaluations received are proving very helpful for the facilitators and helps towards organising future training events. This level of involvement by Councillors demonstrates their continuous commitment to their personal development and the criteria needed for Member Charter.

3.2 The Council had a local Performance Indicator for 2012/13 *'Average number of training opportunities taken up per member is 3'.* This indicator was achieved; and the average number of training opportunities taken up per member was 4.3.

3.3 The following development opportunities were provided between May 2012 – April 2013:

Course	Date	Attendance
Emergency Planning	18 April 2012	16
Community Infrastructure Levy	31 May 2012	21
Water Gardens briefing	27 June 2012	17
Law Commission Tax Reform	30 August 2012	4 – External run course
Licensing Act 2003 & Taxi Licensing	13 September 2012	14
Environmental Management	4 October 2012	13
Localism	10 October 2012	18
Standards	20 November 2012	34
Marlowes Improvements	28 November 2012	11
Budgets	13 December 2012	23
Managing Challenging Situations & Difficult People	10 January 2013	14
Information Security	27 February 2013	18
Scrutiny	6 March 2013	16

3.4 Members will soon be asked as to what areas they would like to see included in the training programme for 2013/14. This will ensure a Member focused training programme and one which responds to their needs. Once drafted, the programme will be agreed by the Steering Group. All officer requests are discussed by the group and then a way forward for each is agreed.

3.5 Throughout the past year, we have trialled one hour briefings prior to Full Council for any requests received from Officers. These have been successful, some more than others; and has proved to be a valuable extra means of making training available.

3.6 Courses already being considered for the next year include: the Constitution, Chairing Skills, Dacorum Anywhere and Public Speaking. It has been decided that the Information Security and Data Protection course will be run annually.

4.   Member Development Budget

4.1 During the years which do not have local elections, the Member Development budget is streamlined to £11,000. This year we have successfully kept within this budget and ended with a £2,000 underspend.

4.2 The budget covered areas such as the LGA conference, Courses held at Dacorum, Courses individual Members requested to attend, hire of venues and specialist facilitators.

4.3 In 2013/14 the budget has remained the same, this will allow costs to be covered, in addition to courses and events, such as the Scrutiny review and Personal Development Plans.

5.   Member Development Strategy 2012-2015

5.1 A requirement of the Member Charter accreditation is to have a Member Development Strategy. A revised Strategy for 2012-2015 has been completed and has been agreed by the Member Development Steering Group.

5.2 The Strategy aims to set out why Councillors require training, how this will be delivered, the resources and support available to Member Training and details on the Steering Group which coordinates the training programme.

6.   Hertfordshire Member Development Network

6.1 Member Development Officers at DBC have joined the Hertfordshire Member Development Network Group, which meets quarterly.

6.2 This is a very successful group, which has been recognised by South East Employers as the leaders in networking and referred to as the Hertfordshire model. The group exchange examples of good training providers, give feedback on recent training events, seek advice and guidance on forthcoming projects and discuss future training topics. This is a great way for officers to increase their knowledge and expertise in Member Development.

6.3 Further joint training has been held with local authorities and the Hertfordshire Member Development Network group have agreed to advertise all relevant training sessions to each other when spaces are still available. There is a standard charge for attending the course if they are being run by an external provider. This process is working well. DBC are heavily involved in coordinating joint training events and as such will be the first to host an event run by WIZ. Wiz has agreed to give some training sessions to local authorites at a standard charge. The hosting authority then gets a number of free

places. Dacorum were keen to start this and so will be arranging and hosting an event on Public Speaking in October 2013.

7. **Updated 'How to Become a Councillor' Webpage**

7.1 The 'How to become a Councillor' webpage is a crucial tool leading up to an election. Therefore this page has been updated this year to ensure that it is relevant and accurate. The MDSG were given a demonstration of the webpage with amendments highlighted. This was a very useful meeting as it also involved the Leader of the Council. Suggestions and minor amendments were taken on board and the page then went 'live'.

7.2 The information given on the site includes:

> - Who can become a Councillor?
> - About Dacorum Borough Council
> - Views from current Councillors
> - The role of a Councillor
> - Standards
> - Time commitment
> - Support you will receive
> - Training
> - Equality and diversity
> - Next steps to becoming a Councillor
> - Useful contacts

436 'hits' have been received on this webpage; therefore we are confident that it is acting as a useful source of information.

8. **Future Plans and Considerations**

8.1 The next decision for the MDSG to make is how the next set of Personal Development Plans are carried out. There are several options to carry these out, for example, doing them internally by officers, asking Senior Councillors to carry them out, sending questionnaires to be completed or asking an external provider to complete them. The latter has been the favored approach for the past few years; however a range of providers will be researched to allow the process to be varied from previous years.

8.2 There are many exciting plans for the year ahead. The MDSG are keen to re-launch Member Development, arrange for different types of training to be offered, allow training to be more interactive and to involve as many councilors as possible.

8.3 Sites visits are a new way of showing Councillors what council services do, for example, touring Cupid Green. It is also a way of building Officer/Councillor relationships. Councillors will be asked if there are any locations they wish to visit, and Officers have been asked if there are areas/services they wish to show. Member Support will be encouraging this and then arranging group visits accordingly.

8.4   An alternative way of learning for Officers to explore is peer learning. This will first be trialed with an IT clinic prior to a Council meeting. Members will be asked if they would like to receive some training/coaching, whilst others will be asked if they wish to share their knowledge. It is envisaged that Councillors will be put into pairs and given the opportunity to learn from each other. Depending on the success of this will depend on further topic areas being provided.

8.5   Following a recent Hertfordshire Network meeting, many different ideas are being explored across the county, for example, workbooks to be completed over the summer, focused e-learning, training through the means of theatre and a leadership academy to help with succession planning. All options can be explored at Dacorum.

9.   Quote from the Chairman of the Member Development Steering Group

'The group has seen a very successful and profitable year. Many member development sessions have been held, and attended by the majority of councillors. Their continued support has enabled the council to exceed its target of 3 sessions per member, by achieving an average of 4.2 per member.

This level of support will encourage the continuance of the Member Development Steering Group in providing training in the areas seen as needed by and requested of members.

I would like to express my thanks to all members from all parties for supporting this on-going project which is designed to heighten the knowledge and hone the skills of every member.

All of this could not have been achieved without the expert guidance and enthusiasm of our colleagues in Member Support, overseen by Michelle Anderson and Lucy Stone. My thanks to you all'.

Member Development Steering Group Work Programme 2013/14

Meeting Date	Item
1 October 2013	1. Member Development Programme 2. Quarterly Budget Update 3. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions 4. PDP chosen option
3 December 2013	1. Member Development Programme 2. Quarterly Budget Update 3. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions 4. Member Development Strategy – mid point review
18 March 2014	1. Member Development Programme 2. Quarterly Budget Update 3. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions