



MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP AGENDA

**7.30pm Thursday 1 March 2012
Dacorum Room, Civic Centre, Hemel Hempstead**

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

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes**
Members are asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2011 (page 2).
- 3. Evaluation Feedback**
Members are asked to consider and comment on the feedback from previous development sessions (page 6).
- 4. Member Development Programme**
Members are asked to note the current programme. (page 8)
- 5. Quarterly Budget Update**
Members to note and comment on the current budget for 2011/12 (page 9)
- 6. Volume of Emails Survey Results**
Members are asked to comment on the results (page 11)
- 7. PDP/360 degree feedback update**
Officers will provide an oral update at the meeting
- 8. Draft Member Development Strategy**
Members are asked to comment on the draft revised strategy. (Attached separately)
- 9. Charter Plus Action Plan**
Members are asked to comment on the proposed action plan (Attached separately)
- 10. MDSG Work Programme**
Members to discuss and agree a work programme (page 12)
- 11. Next Meetings**
The meetings for the 2012/13 municipal year are:
Wednesday 13 June 2012
Wednesday 5 September 2012
Tuesday 4 December 2012
Tuesday 19 March 2013

MINUTES

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

13 DECEMBER 2011

Present:

Councillors: Conway
Hearn
Rance
Taylor

Officers: Michelle Anderson Corporate Support Team Leader
(Democracy)
Lucy Stone Member Support Officer

The meeting began at 7.30pm

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2011 were agreed by the members present.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor Guest.

3. EVALUATION FEEDBACK

M Anderson highlighted the Final Accounts training session on 5th September which 17 Members from other Herts Authorities attended. Councillor Rance asked which Authorities had attended. M Anderson said Councillors had come from Stevenage, Watford, Welwyn Hatfield and Three Rivers. She added that this had been good recognition for DBC within the Herts Member Development Network.

The first briefing before Full Council had been held on Safeguarding. M Anderson said this had been a success and well attended. There would be another briefing before the next Full Council meeting on Environmental Management at the Council.

M Anderson reminded the MDSG that it was important Members let officers know if they were attending a session as refreshments, evaluation forms and course handouts were based on this information.

Councillor Taylor said the media training had been very useful and that the trainer had been excellent. He said that everyone was involved and had interacted.

M Anderson said the target for every Councillor attending five development sessions or conferences was on schedule.

Councillor Taylor suggested sending flyers as well as emails advertising the sessions. M Anderson said that officers would put a flyer inside the Council agenda for the briefings prior to Full Council meetings. She added that an advert for all the remaining sessions in the 2011/12 programme would be put in the pigeon holes before Christmas.

Councillor Rance said that the Members' News email which was sent weekly to all Councillors was too long and that she only read it for the timetable at the bottom. Councillor Hearn added that she received around 20 emails a day and it was impossible to find the time to deal with them all. Members discussed this and agreed that officers should ask Councillors to complete short survey (1 side of A4) on whether they like to receive regular emails such as Members' News and Press Releases. This would be given to Councillors at the next Full Council meeting.

Councillor Rance suggested starting it with the phrase "Some Councillors expressed concern over the number of emails you receive, what do you think?"

Outcome/Actions

A short survey on the volume of emails sent to Members to be circulated at Full Council to all Councillors.

4. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

L Stone outlined the future scheduled events. She highlighted the Standards training scheduled for the beginning of February and said that S Baker may ask to delay this session until the Standards Committee had met to agree on future procedures. L Stone would liaise with S Baker as to whether it went ahead then or not and whether Parish and Town Councillors would be invited to that or a separate session. Councillor Rance suggested that Councillor Williams be invited to the session and introduce it. Councillor Taylor suggested that there should be a session in February even if S Baker could only speak about the new legislation and not what DBC had decided to adopt.

L Stone said that the 2012/13 programme would be devised from the results of the PDPs in the New Year. Some form of Scrutiny training would also be considered. There was a possibility that this could be jointly procured with neighbouring authorities.

5. QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE

M Anderson presented the budget including items spent and committed items. Councillor Rance asked why there were two separate payments for the LGA conference. M Anderson explained that a few years ago, payment had been delayed. The second payment in this year's budget was the correct time for payment and there would be just one payment in subsequent years.

Members said the joint training had been very worthwhile and the income generated was excellent.

6. E-LEARNING & ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF DEVELOPMENT

L Stone outlined the research carried out through South East Employers on e-learning. Out of the 19 authorities who responded, 17 did not have an e-learning facility. Some of those had run such a facility in the past, but the take up had generally been poor and the cost high, so it had been abandoned. She said that Watford BC had acquired a library of training CDs from Calderdale Council. L Stone said she was still waiting for a response from Calderdale, but if the CDs were not too expensive, this would be an option.

Councillor Rance said she disliked looking at a screen and responded much better to face to face learning. She added that CDs could be a useful additional tool especially to listen to in the car. She asked if the Member Development sessions could be recorded for Councillors who could not make the session. L Stone said she would look into this and the possibility of DBC making its own CDs to sell to other Councils and the cost of purchasing CDs.

Outcome/Actions

Officers to look at making CDs, recording Member Development sessions and to buying CDs
An e-learning system would not be taken forward at this stage.

7. PDP/360 DEGREE FEEDBACK UPDATE

M Anderson said that following the MDSG's decision at the previous meeting, Derek Lamb, would be carrying out the PDPs in January/February 2012. She said that he had been asked to tie in the PDPs with the Council's priorities and that she and L Stone would be meeting with Derek the following week to finalise plans.

With regard to the 360 degree feedback trial, of the ten Councillors officers had asked, nine had confirmed that they were happy to take part. M Anderson explained that Derek Lamb knew which Councillors they were and that he would leave those Councillors until later in the process to give them chance to complete the process.

Councillor Rance asked if the results from the 360 degree feedback exercise would go to Derek Lamb. M Anderson explained that it would not automatically be sent to Derek, but would be up to the Councillor to print it out and take it to the PDP session. It was recommended that Councillors did take their report with them as it would be a useful tool in the PDP.

Councillor Taylor highlighted the benefits of a 360 degree feedback and said that Councillors could ask other Councillors, officers, members of the community or others to complete it.

M Anderson said that 44 Councillors had a PDP with Derek in 2010, and it was important that we achieved at least the same number again. She asked the MDSG to encourage their colleagues to take part.

8. FEEDBACK FROM EXIT INTERVIEWS

M Anderson said there had been a good return rate on exit interviews as 5 out of 10 had been returned. She highlighted a few comments on holding an event before elections for potential candidates. This would be to promote becoming a Councillor and to let them know what it would involve.

Councillor Taylor commented that it was very difficult for an ex Councillor to wind down from casework.

9. MDSG WORK PROGRAMME

M Anderson explained that the next meeting would include an action plan for achieving Charter Plus status. This would determine the work programme for the following year.

Councillor Taylor asked if all Members should be invited to the next meeting. It was agreed that officers would look into holding a separate briefing session on Charter Plus for all Councillors, which the South East Employers would also be invited too.

Outcome/Actions

Officers to look into holding a separate briefing session on Charter Plus for all Councillors.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 1 March 2012 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

FEEDBACK ON TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Attended: 6

Returned Feedback forms: 6

Objectives:

- To gain an understanding of how the media works
- To be introduced to tools and techniques that will help you engage with the media and get your messages across

STRENGTHS

- A full plenary session with everybody taking part & contributing to a very informative meeting
- Very two-way
- Knowledgeable and experienced presenter
- Presence of Comms Team
- Good to have a wide discussion
- Better understanding of Communications process between press and council
- Friendly atmosphere
- Honest discussion
- No set agenda
- Finished at 9pm!
- Training was clear and understandable
- The general group discussion
- Quite a lot

WEAKNESSES

- Maybe a current reporter from the Gazette
- Perhaps more structure on handouts
- Lack of member attendance meant it wasn't as structured as otherwise it would have been
- None
- Could have been more structured

OPPORTUNITIES

- A Member Development evening with a Gazette reporter (half – an hour)
- Possibly more reference to actual press stories and analysis of them
- More junior councillors should attend this sort of training programme
- Find a new way to get more members attending

TRAINING SCORE

Poor	
Adequate	
Good	1
Very good	5
Excellent	

Other Comments:

Thank you to Richard Evans the guest speaker & Sara Hamilton from Communications for facilitating the evening. Well done.

FEEDBACK ON TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT
Attended: 20 Returned Feedback forms: 10

Objectives: to inform Councillors on the Council’s approach to environmental management to assist in demonstrating leadership to our residents and staff on environmental issues. Also, a background on relevant environmental issues and policy, an explanation of the approach the Council is taking to improve its environmental performance and an introduction to some of the initiatives underway or planned.

STRENGTHS

- Detailed knowledge of subject matter supported by good quality data
- More about the environmental impacts of our operations
- Well presented facts
- Interesting facts about the council’s energy uses. Recognising that we don’t think enough about our impact on the environment
- Information about the borough was most useful
- Full of facts which were helped by the quizzes in understanding
- Useful seeing council’s performance & improvement
- Well planned and well kept in time
- Good interaction with games
- Well paced delivery
- Interesting to include personal background. Over reliant on discredited IPCC. Generally useful coverage of many relevant issues. Good enumeration of all the things going on in DBC. Food for thought & encouraging us to look around
- The quiz time added more value
- The detail provided

WEAKNESSES

- Presentation should have included handouts
- A little more focus on how we impact locally
- Although the content was excellent – the delivery could be a bit more ‘punchy’
- Whilst we have to get our own house in order, the greater loss comes from the whole community. It isn’t just educating, it’s also facilitating
- Not enough about DBC, therefore not enough time to query/challenge/discuss what we can/should/are doing
- 1st half an hour on history was boring and I did not feel was directly relevant
- More on ideas about what we can do in the community would be useful

OPPORTUNITIES

- Extra time to cover topics in depth
- It would have been helpful to have had more detail on council initiatives on how to assist residents and workers within the borough to improve their methods of fuel/water/land use etc.
- More on what we as DBC are doing
- Could consider more about impact of possible legislation on council decisions e.g. financial effects & car tax if council increases home workers
- Change to think further about opportunities to reduce costs & carbon footprint
- To inform residents & others of the good work DBC is carrying out

TRAINING SCORE

Poor	
Adequate	
Good	5
Very good	4
Excellent	1

Member Development Programme

Date	Development Event	Start time	Finish time	Officer contact:	Location	Which Members?
22/02/12	Managing Debt Under Self Financing	7.30pm	9.30pm	CIPFA (Shane Flynn)	Bulbourne	All Members
18/04/12	Emergency Planning (pre Council briefing)	6.00pm	7.00pm	Jenny Young	Bulbourne	All Members

Dates for 2012/13:

Evening sessions:

- 31 May 2012
- 4 July 2012
- 4 October 2012
- 7 November 2012
- 10 January 2013
- 6 March 2013
- 21 May 2013

Pre-Council Briefings:

- 11 July 2012
- 26 September 2012
- 16 January 2013
- 17 April 2013

To be scheduled:

- Standards
- Scrutiny (potentially more than one session)
- Localism
- Matters arising from PDPs

Quarterly Budget Report

20/02/2012				
Main Heading	Budget	Sub Heading	Spend	Remaining
<i>Training Course fees</i>	16600			16600
		Local Government Information Association - Chairing Skills course at DBC	723.7	15876.3
		East of England Local Government Training - Community Engagement Cllr W Wyatt-Lowe	250	15626.3
		Tour - Refreshments Little Hay	37.50	15588.8
		LGA Conference (x3 delegate booking)	1558.75	14030.05
		Lunch - Induction day 24 May 2011	120	13910.05
		Lunch - Chairing Skills course - 13 June.	45	13865.05
		Licensing - Three Rivers	333	13532.05
		Derek Lamb - Effective Scrutiny	367	13165.05
		Cllr G Chapman Mayor training	125	13040.05
		Cllr Lloyd Course (Rural Conference)	229	12811.05
		Cllr W Wyatt Lowe Conference (Lean Government)	295	12516.05
		CIPFA - Accounts training Sept 2011	1722.11	10793.94
		Self Financing training July 2011 ('Sector')	1500	9293.94
		Self Financing training July 2011 ('Consult CIH')	1000	8293.94
		Self Financing training July 2011 ('Consult CIH')	124.7	8169.24
		South East Employers - Members Skills Portal	995	7174.24
		Derek Lamb - PDP Preparation	744.9	4584.34
		<i>Cllr White - Local Government Conference - commitment only</i>	345	6829.24
		<i>LGA conference 2012 - commitment only</i>	1500	5329.24
OVERALL TOTALS:	16600		12015.7	4584.34

Notes: Charing Skills Income breakdown (RECEIVED): North Herts £50 Three Rivers £150	200
Notes: Final Accounts Training Income breakdown (RECEIVED):	850
£500 from Stevenage	
£50 from Watford	
£150 from Welwyn Hatfield	
£100 from Three Rivers (Cllrs)	
£50 from Three Rivers (officer)	
<i>Income from Self Financing Course - (RECEIVED)</i>	100
TOTAL INCOME RECEIVED	2050

RESULTS - Survey for Councillors – Volume of Emails

Concern has been raised by some Councillors as to the volume of emails you receive. Therefore we would like to ask your opinions, and for you to rate the following types of email, in order to help us to try to minimise the volume in the future:

Email Type	Rating 1 – 5					Do you want to continue receiving this email?		Would you prefer to receive this information as a hard copy instead?		Any further comments?
	1	2	3	4	5	Y	N	Y	N	
Members News	0	1	1	4	26	31	0	0	31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get rid of the A, B, C bit at the top • Useful for meetings etc but I don't have time to read the added bits and would prefer they be sent to those interested only. • Better now that alerts are before meetings, still a bit 'cluttered' though
Press Releases	4	4	7	5	12	26	5	0	31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I read the newspapers • I am not aware of ever getting theses but would be pleased to see them
Adverts for Member Development sessions	0	3	3	8	18	31	0	2	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard copy would be better
Invitations to external conferences/events	5	7	7	7	6	22	8	0	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the title of the email states the course it is more useful • If filtered to specific needs
General information emails from Officers about Civic Centre business e.g. New recycling procedures in offices	2	5	6	8	11	28	3	1	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be relevant to councillors • More interested in what we are doing in the community

Member Development Steering Group Work Programme 2012/13

Meeting Date	Item
13 June 2012	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member Development Programme 2. Quarterly Budget Update 3. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions 4. Annual Training report (<i>Draft</i>) 5. PDP process outcome/review 6. Results of member questionnaire (members who have attended 1 or 0 MD sessions to find out why)
5 September 2012	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member Development Programme 2. Quarterly Budget Update 3. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions 4. Alternative learning- Options (CD's, glossaries) 5. Becoming a Councillor webpage
4 December 2012	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member Development Programme 2. Quarterly Budget Update 3. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions 4. Charter Plus Action Plan - review
19 March 2013	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member Development Programme 2. Quarterly Budget Update 3. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions