

MINUTES

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

18 MARCH 2014

Present:

Councillors: Adshead, Douris, Rance,
Taylor (Chairman)

Officers: Michelle Anderson Corporate Support Team Leader
(Democracy)
Trudi Coston Member Support Officer (Minutes)
John Worts Information Security Manager

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Conway, Flint and G Sutton. Councillor Hearn was absent.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2014 were agreed by the members present.

Councillor Douris referred to item 11 and queried if the target for training sessions was per annum. The Chairman confirmed it was.

Councillor Adshead asked if the training sessions were calculated on an average or if all members need to attend three sessions each annually. The Chairman advised it was calculated as an average.

3. PSN UPDATE

J Worts provided a presentation to the group on the PSN.

The Chairman sought clarification on email security restrictions whilst using a DBC laptop/DBC login on a personal laptop. J Worts said it depended on the classification group and explained that forwarding emails from a GCSX account to a private email address was not permitted, and complex passwords must always be used. He drew members attention to the Code of Connection where full detail could be found.

Councillor Douris asked if the DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) applied to all staff. J Worts explained that the Government requires the DBS to be applied to all staff by 2015. There is a cost associated to it for £25 per person.

Councillor Adshead asked if the DBS also applied to Councillors. J Worts said he would seek clarification on the matter.

Councillor Adshead queried if DBC had a disaster recovery plan, and in the event of an emergency how quickly could they be up and running again. J Worts explained they had a three way replication between the Civic Centre, Bucks County and Chiltern District Council and believed they could be up and running after approximately 2.5 hours but ICT had yet to test the invocation. He said with the previous company, invocation took 3 hours for primary servers to be made up and running.

4. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2013/14

M Anderson advised that the training session scheduled for 20 May will be cancelled due to the election.

Councillor Douris suggested that the presentation on Information Security/Data Protection on 23 April should be kept minimal so there will be plenty of time for members to ask questions.

M Anderson advised that she was still waiting for all members to complete and return their self-assessment forms so they can be sifted through to identify popular courses and member's needs.

5. QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE

M Anderson drew attention to the £11k budget and the large underspend. She explained this was due to the change of direction of the Personal Development Plans, and that the annual Standards training didn't take place. Next year a reduction had been approved for 2014/15 to make the new budget £8k.

Councillor Rance noted some incorrect figures within the budget spreadsheet. M Anderson replied she would make corrections.

6. EVALUATION FEEDBACK

The Chairman said the Bribery Act training was very interesting and members had left the session with lots of new knowledge.

Councillor Rance referred to a point in the strengths category noting a £10 gift/hospitality maximum. The Chairman explained that for officers the amount had been reduced from £25 to £10 but believed it didn't apply to members. He advised he was seeking further clarification on the matter.

7. INTIAL THOUGHTS FOR 2015 MEMBER INDUCTION PROCESS

M Anderson said she wanted to gather members' thoughts for the induction process in preparation for next year's election. She explained that during the previous member induction in 2011, members were provided with a tour of the borough, a session with directors to discuss each of their services, and a service stall event to

enable them to circulate and ask questions. She felt that the feedback in previous years had been positive.

Councillor Adshead said he was newly elected in 2011 and felt that there was a lack of I.T support and not enough information on how each council office works and where each team reports to within the management team.

Councillor Douris suggested a dedicated I.T helpline for newly elected members for a couple of months whilst they settle in as it can be a huge culture shock for new members.

Councillor Rance felt that some members may find attending meetings during the day difficult due to their employment status and suggested the induction sessions would be better if held in the evening. Councillor Douris also suggested a weekend.

Councillor Adshead said he found it helpful when he first started that there was a buddy system in place so he was able to shadow an experienced councillor.

Councillor Douris left the meeting at 8.40 pm

Councillor Rance felt that training needed to cover information on an individual's Ward as that is an important part of a member's role. She then explained that when she first started she was introduced to all staff members involved in each committee so she knew their job role and where to go if she had a query.

8. HERTS OFFICER NETWORK MEETING FEEDBACK

DBC hosted a meeting of the Herts network officers on Wednesday 12 March. Eight representatives from other local councils attended along with Keith Crampton from Wiz training. M Anderson advised that Keith had co-ordinated last year's joint training programme and the feedback received was really positive. M Anderson explained that the training programme would begin September 2014, the cost remained the same and you receive two places for free if you host the event. The four courses were suggested by Keith to be the most popular were speed reading, public speaking, dealing with challenging people and chairing meetings, and he will be advising M Anderson of dates of availability in due course. Keith also suggested that two levels of training, an advanced/refresh and beginner, could be beneficial.

Councillor Rance suggested that the council chamber would be the best venue to hold the public speaking training.

M Anderson advised that PDP's appeared to be phasing out with most other authorities and they tend to complete self-assessment forms annually to populate their training programmes. Councillor Rance felt that an evaluation should be carried out for each member to determine their preferences so all members are catered for. The Chairman echoed the view of Councillor Rance.

Councillor Adshead said he struggles to attend some meetings due to his work commitments and often feels he has missed out on something he would have liked to attend because it is held during the day.

9. MDSG WORK PROGRAMME

A revised version of the work programme was circulated.

M Anderson asked the group if they could encourage all members to return their self-assessment forms as there is an item on the agenda for the next meeting to feedback.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 3 June 2014 at 7.30pm.

Councillor Adshead gave his apologies for the next meeting.

The meeting finished at 9.03 pm.