Member Development Steering Group Agenda

Tuesday 3 June 2014 at 7.30 pm
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 Adshead, Conway, Douris, Flint, Hearn, Rance, G Sutton and Taylor (Chairman)

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Minutes**
   Members are asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2014
   (page 2).

3. **Annual Training Report**
   Members are asked to consider the report (page 6).

4. **Member Questionnaire Feedback**
   Members to consider the results of the recent self-assessment questionnaires
   (page 12).

5. **Member Development Programme 2014/15**
   Members to set the training programme for 2014/15 following the results of the
   questionnaires (page 15)

6. **Quarterly Budget Update**
   Members to note and comment on the budget for 2014/15 (page 17)

7. **MDSG Work Programme**
   Members to offer suggestions for items to add to the work programme for 2014/15
   (page 18)

8. **Next Meeting**
   Thursday 9 October 2014

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 member's 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 identity 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.

Report for:	**Member Development Steering Group**
Date of meeting:	**03 June 2014**
PART:	**1**
Title of report:	**Annual Member Training Report 2013-2014**
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 2013/14 (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 the Corporate Support Team Leader - Democracy.

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 Following a successful midpoint assessment in July 2012, the council were due to be reassessed for Charter status in December 2013. However, it was decided, by the MDSG that the council would not sign up for the reassessment. They believed that the council was continuing to achieve the

criteria set out for the Charter. Therefore as a result of this decision, the Council's Member Development Charter accreditation has now expired. 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.

2. Induction

2.1 The Council's Induction programme is put to the test following Borough By-Elections. 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.

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 to maintain the Member Charter level of performance.

3.2 The Council had a local Performance Indicator for 2013/14 *'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 3.8

3.3 The following development opportunities were provided between May 2013 – April 2014:

Course	Date	Attendance
Development Control update	16 May 2013	3
Marlowes Improvement Plan	20 May 2013	6
Chairing Skills	21 May 2013	15
Housing appeal	3 June 2013	1
Standards training	12 June 2013	2
Planning Update	3 July 2013	20
Dacorum Anywhere	10 July 2013	16
Public Speaking	10 October 2013	8
Housing Allocations	31 October 2013	18
Inform 360 (telephone system)	5 November 2013	3
Roles & Responsibilities	6 & 11 November 2013	4
Constitution	14 November 2013	18
Evidence based learning	20 November 2013	11
Marlowes shopping zone	27 November 2013	22
Marlowes bus interchange	10 December 2013	13
Bribery Act 2010	26 February 2014	11
West Coast Mainline - Major Engineering Works	13 March 2014	11
Gypsy & Traveller provision	26 March 2014	12

3.4 You will see from the list above that some courses are arranged for members to have a 1:1 or for small groups to have a briefing with relevant officers, for example Housing appeals and Standards.

3.5 Members are asked each year as to what areas they would like to see included in the annual training programme. 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.

3.6 Originally the Member Development Steering Group agreed that this years Personal Development Plans (PDP's) would be carried out internally using the expertise within the HR department. Unfortunately due to a number of management structure changes, resource issues and priority changes, HR were no longer able to carry out this process.

3.7 Following discussions with relevant officers it was also felt that the Civic Centre move would take a lot of resource and due to the time frame this process would take if it were done internally, it would need to be suspended during the election period. This would result in the completion of this process being later in the year and fast approaching the borough elections in 2015 and understandably members focus would be on the election.

3.8 Not able to do a development plan with councillors, we devised a questionnaire for all councillors to complete, which asked members to score themselves for various tasks/skills/abilities. Included in this, was a section for members to suggest topics they would like to see included in the members training programme for 2014/15. The questionnaires remained confidential and only the Corporate Support Team Leader- Democracy and 1 Member Support Officer had access to them.

Once the questionnaires were received, individual training needs will be identified and relevant courses or 1:1's will being arranged.

3.9 Then as agreed the MDSG will consider the suggestions made for the training programme and prioritise the courses to be arranged for 2014/15.

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.

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 used for joint authority training.

4.3 In 2014/15 the budget has been reduced to £8000, a decision made by the Member Development Steering Group. This decision was based on the option not to carry out Personal Development Plans externally and therefore there is a saving to be made.

5.   Member Development Strategy 2012-2015

5.1   A requirement of the Member Charter accreditation was to have a Member Development Strategy. A Strategy for 2012-2015 had been completed and was revised and amended earlier this year 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 are part of 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. DBC hosted the meeting of this group in March, which was very successful and also had a training facilitator attend to discuss options for further joint learning and developing a structured programme for this.

6.3   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 were the first to host an event run by WIZ. Wiz had 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 arranged and hosted an event on Public Speaking in October 2013, which was very well attended.

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. Its location on the website has also been amended and therefore now appears with links to elections rather than Councillor information.

7.2   The information given on the site includes:

> ➢   Who can become a Councillor?
> ➢   Time commitment
> ➢   Support you will receive
> ➢   Training

> ➢ Next steps to becoming a Councillor
> ➢ Useful contacts

7.3 In addition since December 2013, 2 separate pages were created, linked to the above page which describes the different councillor roles (County, Borough, and Town/Parish) and a further page giving councilor views on the role.
- http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/council-democracy/elections-and-voting/how-to-become-a-councillor
- http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/council-democracy/elections-and-voting/how-to-become-a-councillor/borough-parish-or-county-councillor-
- http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/council-democracy/elections-and-voting/how-to-become-a-councillor/views-from-current-councillors

7.4 Combined, these web pages have received 542 'hits' between May 2013 and April 2014; therefore we are confident that it is acting as a useful source of information.

8. Future Plans and Considerations

8.1 The training programme for 2015-16 has not yet been produced at the time of writing. However, once members' questionnaires are received (as detailed above), then the programme can be populated and facilitators booked in.

8.2 Following the discussions which have taken place around the members Personal Development Plans (PDP), it was agreed by the MDSG that the next PDP process would be included in the induction programme which will follow the borough elections in May 2015.

8.3 The MDSG will be looking very closely at the 2015 induction programme over the coming year and will look at what has previously taken place to see where improvements can be made. The content of the programme will be agreed and the approach which will be taken. Members will be consulted with in order to ensure that all needs and requirements are included.

8.4 The PDP process will be introduced during the induction programme and any initial checklist or questionnaires will be completed. The PDP's will then be carried out over the following few months. The process and facilitator of the PDP's is yet to be agreed.

8.5 Further work is continuing with other authorities to ensure that joint arrangements are in place to ensure a wide range of courses are being provided to our members. This also gives the councillors more opportunities to network with fellow colleagues.

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

'The year under review has, I believe, been very productive. We successfully delivered 18 presentations covering a wide range of topics, all of which were well attended and I hope have been beneficial to all who contributed. It is the group's intention to continue supplying seminars to meet members own specific needs, but

please remember we can all learn by proactive participation in the member development programme.

We set a target of three presentations per member, and I am pleased to say we have exceeded that objective. That is due in no small part to the tremendous efforts from Michelle Anderson and her Member Support team to whom I extend very grateful thanks. We trust you will continue to support this group programme'.

Analysis of Members Self-Assessment Questionnaires 2014

Number of members: 51
Returned Forms: 45
Not returned: 6

Topics required training as '*Need help with*'

- Understand and act on role in building and shaping key local partnerships
- Understand Local Government finances
- Understand the scrutiny process
- Identify areas suitable for scrutiny and ensure that communities are involved in the process
- Inform others of the workings in Local Government
- Identify areas or practices which discriminate against individuals/groups
- Envisage where the council will be in 5 years' time and identify the steps of how to achieve this goal x 2
- Look for ways to promote democracy and increase public engagements
- Prepare budgets and plan for future projects

Topics required training as '*Not at all confident*'

- Understand Local Government finances x 5
- Inform others of the workings in Local Government
- Negotiate with others who have different ways of solving the problem
- Understand the scrutiny process x 2
- Prepare budgets and plan for future projects x 2
- Identify areas or practices which discriminate against individuals/groups
- Write different types of documents x 2
- Identify risks to Health and Safety in working practices x 2
- Use a computer to produce a letter/report
- Send an email, open attachments and access websites on the internet
- Identify areas suitable for scrutiny and ensure that communities are involved in the process x 2
- Remain calm and focused when criticised or under pressure
- Speak confidently in public

Topics required training as '*Not very confident*'

- Identify risks to Health and Safety in working practices
- Understand the scrutiny process
- Mediate fairly and constructively between people and groups with conflicting needs
- Envisage where the council will be in 5 years' time and identify the steps of how to achieve this goal
- Negotiate with others who have different ways of solving the problem
- Speak confidently to the press x 3
- Write a speech for a public event and confidently deliver it
- Remain calm and focused when criticised or under pressure
- Read large documents quickly to gain a general knowledge of its contents x 2
- Speak confidently in public x 5
- Understand Local Government finances

- Help to develop cohesion within the group and good communication between the group and council
- Present concise arguments which are meaningful and easily understood
- Use a computer to produce a letter/report
- Send an email, open attachments and access websites on the internet
- Write a speech for a public event and confidently deliver it
- Understand the cultural diversity of your community
- Identify area suitable for scrutiny and ensure that citizens and communities are involved in the scrutiny process

Topics councillors happy to train others on

- Representing the council at local public events
- Understanding the cultural diversity of your community
- Competently manage a large scale project
- Speak confidently to the press
- Prioritising workloads to make best use of resources
- Confidently chair a meeting and ensure all those present get a chance to have their say
- Work across political boundaries without compromising political values
- Inform others of the workings in Local Government

Preference for evening or daytime meeting:

Evening: 34
Daytime: 28

Topics suggested for training programme:

- Understanding Local Government finances
- Public speaking
- Speed reading
- Team working
- Planning
- Licensing
- Chairing meetings
- Forthcoming legislation affecting local government
- Clean, safe and green
- Waste handling and recycling process
- Benefits and the admin system
- Being an effective back bencher
- Overview of the housing department, and the roles of officers
- Letter writing
- Understand the scrutiny process
- Individual computer training
- Understanding cultural diversity in the community
- Understanding the partnership between local and central Government
- Development options for the town centre and PSQ
- Entertainment needs in the area
- Succession planning
- Managing time and being effective
- Group democracy
- Developing community leader
- DBC's responsibility for street cleaning and pavements.

- Transport issues i.e. car parking, bus and cycle routes
- Writing a speech for a public event and confidently deliver it
- Budget preparation
- CIL and S106
- Accounting for councillors
- Council policy and development
- Understanding the electorate
- Councillor case work
- How to influence decision making
- Legal constraints on policy
- Social media
- Issues with difficult tenants
- EU membership
- Immigration
- Presentation on prospects for tourism in Dacorum
- A cabinet member exposition of a full process of a DBC project
- DBC emergency plan and how it links to other partners
- Presentation of housing policy, their goals for the next 5 years and TLC point of view
- Senior officers explaining their jobs

Additional Comments:

- Development sessions are very helpful and well presented. Councillor has learnt a lot over the past year and is very impressed.
- Develop links with youth forums
- Dislike training before full council
- Member training has improved over the past couple of years. Topics are more realistic and easier to understand
- Would like a speedy response when laptop breaks
- Useful to have some written literature i.e. books, articles or website which provide information on DBC matters
- Would like training for 6pm – 7.30pm
- We provide excellent training opportunities. Councillor wishes more showed interest
- Member development only touches on the subjects

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT DATES 2014/15

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?
* 9 July 2014	Individual Electoral Registration (IER) update	6pm	7pm		*Jim Doyle*	Bulbourne Room	All
23 July 2014							
* 24 September 2014	Information Security / Data protection	6pm	7pm		John Worts	Bulbourne Room	All
1 October 2014							
4 November 2014							
* 19 November 2014		6pm	7pm				
8 January 2015							
* 14 January 2015		6pm	7pm				

17 February 2015							
* 25 February 2015		6pm	7pm				

* indicates a briefing before full Council meeting

To be scheduled:

- *Risk Management (Linda Dargue – reports formats, how collated etc)*
- *Safeguarding (Julie Still)*
- *Social media (Luisa Clark)*

QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE

06/05/2014					
Main Heading	**Budget**	**Sub Heading**	**Spend**	**Remaining**	
Training Course fees	£ 9,000.00			£ 9,000.00	
		LGA conference x1	£ 495.00	£ 8,505.00	
				£ 8,505.00	
				£ 8,505.00	
				£ 8,505.00	
				£ 8,505.00	
				£ 8,505.00	
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				£ 8,505.00	
				£ 8,505.00	
OVERALL TOTALS:	£ 9,000.00		£ 495.00	£ 8,505.00	

Member Development Steering Group Work Programme 2014/15

9 October 2014	1. Outcome of Procurement Review (Ben Hosier) 2. Member Development Programme & E-Learning update 3. Quarterly Budget Update 4. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions 5. MDSG work Programme
3 December 2014	1. DORIS – progress report (usage/future) 2. Member Development Programme & E-Learning update 3. Quarterly Budget Update 4. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions 5. MDSG work Programme
4 March 2015	1. Member Development Programme & E-Learning update 2. Quarterly Budget Update 3. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions 4. MDSG work Programme

To schedule: Evidence based learning (Contact: Shane Flynn)