



Member Development Steering Group Agenda

Wednesday 3 December 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 9 October 2014 (page 2).
- 3. Outcome of the Procurement Review**
Ben Hosier will attend the meeting to provide members with an update on the Procurement Review (page 6)
- 4. 2015 Induction and PDP process**
Members will be updated on any progress with the Induction and PDP's (page 6)
- 5. Member Development Programme**
Members are asked to note and comment on the training programme (page 7)
- 6. Quarterly Budget Update**
Members to note and comment on the quarterly budget update (page 8)
- 7. Evaluation Feedback**
Members are asked to note the feedback from previous development sessions (page 9)
- 8. MDSG Work Programme**
Members to offer suggestions for items to add to the work programme for the next meeting (page 12)
- 9. Next Meeting**
Wednesday 4 March 2015

MINUTES

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

09 OCTOBER 2014

Present:

Councillors: Conway, Douris, and Taylor
(Chairman)

Officers: Trina Lawson Corporate Support Team Leader –
Democracy (Minutes)
Trudi Coston Member Support Officer

The meeting began at 7.32 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Adshead, Hearn, Rance and G. Sutton.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2014 were agreed by the members present and then signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Taylor asked if the Outcomes / Actions had all been completed. T Coston advised that they were all on-going and that she just needed to chase Officers regarding the fact sheets that were to be produced.

Councillor Douris suggested adding the words “for members”, in after the noting of that same paragraph to make it clearer who they were aimed at. T Coston confirmed this would be actioned.

3. 2015 MEMBERS INDUCTION – INITIAL PLANS

T Coston asked members to disregard the draft plan in the agenda and refer to the one that she was presenting this evening. She advised that the previous plan had been the induction plan 4 years ago, and that following meetings with Jim Doyle, the Chief Executive, T Coston and T Lawson the previous day, some amendments had been made. She advised that the main changes were that previously there had been 2 separate events; an Induction event during the day, followed by a Service Market a couple of weeks later in the evening. The Chief Executive had suggested changing this slightly to include the service market in the daytime and that instead of an evening event, a duplicate Induction day would be held on a Saturday. She went on

to explain that the plan would be to have the Induction in the Council Chamber and then lunch and the service market in the Bulbourne Room.

Councillor Douris asked if this would mean that we would be doing down the service market as a 45 minute lunch break may not be long enough to eat and to get round all the stands.

T Lawson advised the group that the plan was to condense the service market this time to 6 stalls to be facilitated by each Assistant Director and their Group Managers. The hope being that this would allow new members to begin associating names and faces to the correct services.

Councillor Taylor thought that this made more sense and advised that organograms should also be given out as they are incredibly useful.

Councillor Conway confirmed that she also felt that the lunch break should be an hour.

T Coston asked if members were happy with the Presentation topics proposed in the Induction Plan.

Councillor Taylor confirmed he was, depending on what was included in the coach tour as Cupid Green depot is a big department on its own.

Councillor Douris felt that 2 hours was probably enough time for the tour and suggested that if there are a large number of new Councillors, that there would be sufficient time between the 7th May and the 6th June to arrange something else.

T Coston confirmed that we could speak to Cupid Green nearer the time should the need arise.

Outcome/Action

That the current proposed Induction Plan is acceptable at present but may be subject to change nearer the time.

4. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

T Coston advised that a few extra dates had been added at request, so we are now completely booked up although extra dates can be added if required. She advised that we had some training coming up with James Deane regarding finances and that she was really hoping for a good attendance at this training as finance regularly crops up in self-assessment forms and asked members for their support in promoting it to colleagues.

Councillor Taylor echoed the importance of members gaining an understanding of how the budget process is done and the Council's financial figures.

T Coston advised that flyers for this training had already gone out, that it would feature in Members News and that member support would continue to remind members of this training.

Councillor Taylor suggested he may ask for an e-mail to be sent out on his behalf to further press the importance of this training. He then asked for any further comments.

Councillor Douris suggested that to help further concentrate the mind, it would be useful if the days were added onto the sheet along with the dates.

Outcome/Action

- T Coston / T Lawson to amend the Member Development Programme to include days as well as dates.
- Member Support will continue to regularly remind Members of James Deane's finance training on the 23rd October.

5. QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE

T Coston advised that there was not too much to say regarding the budget. She advised that M Anderson had added the individual courses to the spreadsheet so that you can clearly see exactly what we have spent on so far. She also advised the committee that if they heard any members talking about any external courses that they would like to attend to contact Member Support as there is money there to support this.

Councillor Douris commented that there were a couple of pre-booked courses on the spreadsheet that were yet to happen, and that were quite expensive. He suggested it may be prudent to add the other expendable courses to the spreadsheet so as to avoid the possibility of an over spend.

T Coston advised that she was happy to do this but that it was not always possible as some providers charge per head and we are not always advised by members of their intention to attend.

Councillor Taylor advised the group that following discussions with the Chief Executive, it had been agreed that if we do have an underspend on our training budget this year, that that money will be ring-fenced for the purchase of tablets devices for members.

Councillor Douris suggested that given the amount that we are spending on some external training providers that maybe it would be a good idea for Councillor Taylor to do a three line whip to encourage as high attendance as possible.

Outcome/Action

- T Coston / T Lawson to amend the spreadsheet where possible to account for pre-booked training expenditure.
- Councillor Taylor to encourage members to attend all training

6. EVALUATION FEEDBACK

T Coston highlighted that there were not many 'Excellents' fed back from the training but some 'Goods' and 'Very Goods'. She also advised that there had also been some IT training in this period but that no feedback was obtained as only 2 members attended and the company carried out its own feedback.

Councillor Taylor advised the group that he tried to attend as many training sessions as possible and spends a few minutes at the start of each one requesting completion of the feedback forms and that this appears to get a better take up response than when requested by the trainer.

Councillor Douris noted that the 'Electoral registration' training had been prior to Full Council but the 'Public Speaking with Impact' hadn't been. He felt that whilst he was aware that the purpose of training prior to Full Council had been in the hope that this would encourage a higher attendance rate, he felt that it hadn't worked as well as we had hoped as people were coming in throughout the training and there was no time for questions at the end.

T Coston confirmed that she had also received similar feedback.

Councillor Conway suggested that as some members work full time, they may not be able to get to the training in time.

Councillor Taylor advised that the feedback he has received is that members would appreciate reminder e-mails prior to any training.

Councillor Douris asked if there would be any benefit from sending reminders via text, the day before and not only to those that have booked but also to all members.

T Coston advised that she was unsure but that it is something that we could look into.

Councillor Douris also asked if sign in sheets were fed round at training as it would be helpful to have the number of attendees at the top of each evaluation feedback sheet in future.

T Coston advised that this was normally present and that she would make sure it was in future.

Outcome/Action

- T Coston/T Lawson to explore the possibility of text alerts as reminders for members of training sessions

7. MDSG WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Taylor mentioned that at the meeting on 3 December, Bill Haylock is due to attend to give a progress report on DORIS. However he has been speaking with the Chief Executive who has suggested speaking with Matt Rawdon. Councillor Taylor advised that he would do this before the next meeting.

T Coston confirmed that this had been discussed in yesterday's meeting with the Chief Executive and that Member Support would also be approaching Matt Rawdon and that we were all on the same page.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 3 December 2014 at 7.30 pm.

The meeting finished at 20.25 pm.

3. Outcome of the Procurement Review

Ben Hosier will be providing a presentation to members with an update on the Procurement Review.

4. 2015 Induction and PDP Process

Member Support to provide an update on the Induction and PDP process.

5. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

| Date | Development Event | Start time | Finish time | Run by: | Location | Which Members? |
|-----------------------------|--|------------|-------------|----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Wednesday 26 November 2014 | Learn more about your ward | 7.30 pm | 9pm | Isobel Benton-Slim | Bulbourne Room | All |
| Wednesday 17 December 2014 | Audit Training and how to scrutinise effectively | 6.30pm | 7.30pm | James Deane/Mazars | Bulbourne Room | Audit Committee members |
| Thursday 8 January 2015 | Social Media / Media training | 7.30pm | 9.30pm | Sara Hamilton | Bulbourne Room | All |
| *Wednesday 14 January 2015 | Safeguarding | 6pm | 7pm | Julie Still / Dharini Chandarana | Bulbourne Room | All |
| Thursday 29 January 2015 | Charitable trusts; roles and responsibilities | 7.30 pm | 9.00 pm | Denis Cooper (Eversheds) | Bulbourne Room | All |
| Tuesday 17 February 2015 | Managing difficult people and situations | 7.30 pm | 9.30 pm | Keith Crampton (WIZ training) | Bulbourne Room | All |
| *Wednesday 25 February 2015 | Information Security / Data Protection | 6pm | 7pm | John Worts | Bulbourne Room | All |

* indicates a briefing before full Council meeting

To be scheduled for training programme 2015/16:

- Mental Health First Aid Training (Matt Rawdon, HR)
- Highways Training (Paul Newton)

6. QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE

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|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| 25/11/2014 | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Main Heading | Budget | Sub Heading | Spend | Remaining | |
| <i>Training Course fees</i> | £ 9,000.00 | | | £ 9,000.00 | |
| | | LGA conference x1 | £ 495.00 | £ 8,505.00 | |
| | | The Baikie Wood Consultancy Ltd | £ 100.00 | £ 8,405.00 | |
| | | Training U IT Limited | £ 545.00 | £ 7,860.00 | |
| | | Improvement & Development Agency Local | £ 250.00 | £ 7,610.00 | |
| | | Link Support Services | £ 1,119.18 | £ 6,490.82 | |
| | | KBTraining | £ 445.00 | £ 6,045.82 | |
| | | | | £ 6,045.82 | |
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| | | | | £ 6,045.82 | |
| OVERALL TOTALS: | £ 9,000.00 | | £ 2,954.18 | £ 6,045.82 | |
| | | Upcoming courses/expenses | | | |
| | | 29/01/2015 - £600 + vat + expenses | | | |
| | | 17/02/2015 - Cost TBC | | | |
| | | | | | |

7.

FEEDBACK ON TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

SOLVING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE JIGSAW – 23/10/14

Attended: 12

Returned Feedback forms: 12

Objectives:

- The Council's end-to-end financial management process;
- What is expected of a Budget Holder within the Council;
- How Members can add value to the budget-setting process;
- How Members can add value through effective scrutiny;
- What it really means for the Council to be over/under spent

STRENGTHS

- James is very good at presenting considering the subject is Finance
- Very good what I saw but had to leave early (as arranged)
- Clear presentation as I was already aware of much of the content it was good to fill some gaps
- Not drowned in charts and facts/figures, this would be a turnoff.
- Explained what a 'virement' is
- Explained how depreciation works
- Knowledge no subject identifying key issues
- Very clear presentation – valuable to have some stats from principles rather than number sheets
- Excellent use of language
- Message on being more commercial minded is very sound and important
- Clarity of presentation
- The high level overview of the annual cycle was useful and for me achieved this objective. The role of Members and Scrutiny was particularly helpful.
- Dry subject well presented
- Simple definition of key financial terms was of much benefit
- The presentation impressed with his knowledge of his subject
- I have a better understanding of the budget cycle. Scrutiny is still a difficult subject to understand and the role of the councillors.

WEAKNESSES

- The really get to grips with Finance we need to go into a little more detail
- To many acronyms not explained
- Could have been more examples
- More specific slides for 'cut aways' to accounts

OPPORTUNITIES

- All Cllrs should be made to attend sessions like this one
- More sessions to assist in learning my in-depth
- Really this is core so it would be good to see more members present.
- Cool the room down
- Add to induction to new councillors programme
- Participation rate weekness?
- Sub-presentation of similar nature for each of the 'scrutiny committees' to explain 'budget' aspects per training to that committee

TRAINING SCORE

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Poor | 0 |
| Adequate | 0 |
| Good | 0 |
| Very good | 7 |

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|-----------|
| Excellent |
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|---|
| 5 |
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FEEDBACK ON TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

UNDERSTANDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCES – 04/11/2014

Attended: 10

Returned Feedback forms: 10

Objectives:

- Understand the overall legal and best practice framework of local government finances
- Understand the various sources of funding available to the council, and constraints, pitfalls and controls on each
- Understand how the council plans and manages its spending plans
- Confront and overcome the barriers of jargon that make finance difficult

STRENGTHS

- Learnt a lot about the law on local government finance. Implications of Council Tax freeze explained clearly.
- Very informative presentation highly knowledgeable good speed of delivery.
- Presenter knew his onions and did homework on local area, was not dull or boring peppered presentation with examples.
- Clearly expressed.
- Obviously researched DBC Finances and made examples relevant.
- Made best use of the time
- Clear examples made it relevant to DBC
- Very clear, new ideas very descriptive
- Answered questions well flowed well.
- The objectives were met at the level of information was excellent
- Good overall view of Finance learned more detail on most areas. E.g. Capital and Revenue CIL & S106
- A person who knew his subject and from whom I learnt an incredible amount, all objectives achieved

WEAKNESSES

- Time it started 7pm was too early.
- A tad early at 7pm as some of us work in London, Coffee break
- Some of the audience participation was allowed to go on beyond the point of wider usefulness.
- Didn't have long enough to go through anything
- The presentation was initially steered towards Dacorum, love my council was kept in the loop by this speaker/trainer, well done.
- Easy to hear and read slides etc
- Yet again, time.
- Restraints – even though we started at 7 and finished at 9.30.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Presented and developed a greater and clear understanding in local authority finances.
- Need more good worked examples i.e. War stones
- Cant think of any, very informative Most important it was worth coming.
- This should be a must for all elected members it weaves into every section to out borough economy.

TRAINING SCORE

| | |
|----------|---|
| Poor | 0 |
| Adequate | 0 |
| Good | 1 |

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Very good | 5 |
| Excellent | 4 |

FEEDBACK ON TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

EMERGENCY PLANNING AWARENESS – 19/11/14

Attended: 7

Returned Feedback forms: 7

OBJECTIVES:

- Have a basic understanding of what emergency planning is;
- Be able to give examples of events that might occur;
- Be able to briefly outline arrangements within Hertfordshire including other agencies;
- Have an awareness of Dacorum BC's involvement;
- Have an understanding of member roles in an emergency.

STRENGTHS

- Good slides and presentation. Reassuring.
- Knowledge of subject. Understandable explanations.
- Useful and informative briefing. Clearly stated which met the aims.
- Very clear, full and precise. I learnt a lot.
- A well designed and easy to understand presentation. Well presented, good delivery. Good update of past knowledge.
- The objectives were covered in great detail. A complex subject and having hard copies of the slides are useful for future reference.
- Very strong and effective presentation.

WEAKNESSES

- We did already have training on this subject.
- Shortage of time.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Copies to go to all members

TRAINING SCORE

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Poor | 0 |
| Adequate | 0 |
| Good | 0 |
| Very good | 5 |
| Excellent | 2 |

8. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

| Meeting Date | Item |
|---------------------|---|
| 4 March 2015 | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. MDSG work Programme2. 2015 Induction/PDP process3. Exit interviews – confirm form/questions4. Member Development Programme & E-Learning update5. Quarterly Budget Update6. Evaluation feedback from previous development sessions |

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4 March 2015 at 7.30 pm.