

MINUTES

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

WEDNESDAY 5 DECEMBER 2018

Present:

Councillors: Taylor (Chairman) and Douris

Officers: Katie Mogan – Corporate &
Democratic Support Lead Officer

The meeting began at 7.30 pm.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2018 were agreed by the members present and then signed by the Chairman with the following changes:

- Change pedal stool to pedestal
- Discusses to discussed
- Cohort to group.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Howard and Hicks.

Councillor Adshead, Banks and Silwal were absent.

Councillor Taylor and Douris expressed their disappointment with the lack of attendance by members and not submitting apologies.

3. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Councillor Taylor highlighted that the rescheduled session for 'Effective Ward Advocacy' for 6 December was not on the list.

Councillor Douris asked if the trainer from Link UK Ltd had already been paid. K Mogan confirmed it had been. The company requires payment prior to these sessions and they have a 100% cancellation fee.

Councillor Douris questioned whether £1300 per training session was good value for money and thought it might be of better use after the elections.

K Mogan said that this course was the most popular when members were asked what they wanted on the programme. Wizz Training that have been used previously are about £400 a session which is a vast difference.

Councillor Douris said it might be worth looking at whether the company is used in the future.

Councillor Taylor said he agreed with the comments made by Councillor Douris. He said he would contact the trainer of the 'Effective Ward Advocacy' session and ask if it is possible to include some tips for councillors in preparing for the election.

Councillor Douris said it was important to get things correct but accepted what K Mogan had said about its popularity. He suggested adding wording to the email adverts telling councillors that these sessions were the most popular.

Councillor Douris mentioned that the last sessions of the year were free so might be an opportunity for officers to provide updates on their service.

4. QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE

Councillor Taylor said the budget update was self-explanatory.

Councillor Douris said he was conscious that there is some money left in the budget and this could potentially be cut if not used. He suggested that noting officer time and cost would show that although the money isn't being spent, training is still ongoing.

Councillor Taylor asked about the pending payment for a course that Councillor Banks was attending.

K Mogan said Councillor Banks had been on this course and would chase to see where it is.

5. EVALUATION FORMS FROM PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

Councillor Taylor said this was the first set out feedback evaluations using the new forms.

Councillor Douris suggested that the names of the trainers are added at the top of the forms.

Councillor Taylor said the idea of these news forms was to avoid subjective comments but can see there are still a few being made.

Councillor Douris said he felt the new format works well.

Councillor Taylor agreed and said it forces them to give a score instead of having to think of a comment to make.

6. ATTENDANCE LIST

The attendance list was noted.

7. INDUCTION 2019: INTAKE AND REFRESHERS

K Mogan introduced the item and said a short report had been put together to try and focus decisions on the induction program for next year. She said she had looked into a coach tour and at the last induction, it cost about £600. It was suggested by councillors at the last meeting that they didn't find the coach tour useful. The alternative suggestion was that a booklet would be produced with every ward in the borough and list the key facts and points of interest in that borough. For example, the electorate, sheltered housing schemes, key

development sites.

Councillor Douris said it would also be a good idea to include key elements of the borough like the leisure centres in Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted. He said there was a website called Herts Insight which gives key information like average housing prices.

Councillor Taylor suggested adding adventure playgrounds and the LA sites.

K Mogan said there was also a proposal to create a FAQ booklet so each service would produce a page of FAQs to give councillors key information in their service.

Councillor Douris said that at Herts County Council, they have a dedicated email address for members enquiries and these are then sent to the relevant officer to respond to. He said this might be something to look in too.

Councillor Taylor said he thought these booklets would be a handy reference guide.

K Mogan asked members to decide on dates for the induction.

Both members suggested a weekday evening session and a weekend session.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was agreed.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm