

## **MINUTES**

### **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP**

**2 OCTOBER 2019**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** Barry  
Bhinder  
Douris (Chairman)  
Griffiths

**Officers:** Katie Mogan Corporate and Democratic Support Lead Officer  
Charlie Webber Corporate and Democratic Support Officer  
(Minutes)

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

#### **1 ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN**

KM stated that Councillor R Sutton had moved to the Development Management Committee and, therefore, a Chairman would need to be elected.

Councillor Griffiths stated that Councillor Williams had suggested that Councillor Douris become Chairman.

The election of Councillor Douris as Chairman was agreed by all.

#### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Silwal and Councillor Freedman.

#### **3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 June were confirmed by the Members present and were then signed by the Chairman.

#### **4 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Councillor Douris queried whether it was necessary for the courses on the mandatory list to be mandatory. He continued that of course the statutory courses should be mandatory but thought that the other courses were worth discussing.

KM stated that when the mandatory courses were proposed by Sally Marshall and Mark Brookes that this was on the basis of a new fresh term for Councillors. She continued that due to poor attendance it was necessary to make sure Councillors had completed the courses, like GDPR.

Councillor Griffiths said that the Council could be legally liable for some things if Councillors had not attended statutory training. She gave the example of GDPR training and that this course completed elsewhere might be different to the Council's session and that it may not be specific to the role of Councillor. Councillor Griffiths said that a certificate for a general course completed elsewhere could be enough to prove that it had been done but that this would not be sufficient for courses specific to Councillors.

Councillor Bhinder said that he had completed two GDPR sessions externally but that both of these had been delivered by the Council's GDPR Officer. He added that it was understandable that legislation will change and that Councillors will need to be up to date but that training needed to be specific to Councillors. Councillor Bhinder said that Licensing and Planning has legislation changes and that they could be constantly changing. He suggested refresher courses for these changes and updates.

KM noted that this year's mandatory training is nearly complete.

Councillor Douris noted that mandatory training should be considered in terms of importance and risk to the Council if not completed. He added that mandatory training should be considered in terms of value as attendance has been poor for a while and that cost needed to be looked at.

Councillor Barry asked what 'mandatory' actually meant and what the consequences were if Councillors did not attend.

Councillor Griffiths responded that this was up to Group Leaders but that this would ultimately go before the Standards Committee.

Councillor Bhinder stated that Councillors were on Committees for these things and therefore had to be confident in what they were doing.

Councillor Griffiths said that all the mandatory courses could have legal ramifications if not attended, apart from Budget Setting.

Councillor Douris suggested reviewing the mandatory training at the end of the year.

Councillor Griffiths suggested reviewing it at the end of the Council term as it has to be approved by Full Council.

Councillor Douris agreed that the mandatory training should be reviewed at the end of the Council term.

Councillor Griffiths said that some Councillors had already completed some of the mandatory courses only last year.

Councillor Bhinder said that due to changes in legislation, it was important for Councillors to remain up to date.

CW asked Councillors about the Safeguarding training after having met with the new Safeguarding Lead Officer – Sue Warren. CW said that Sue wanted to know what

Councillors wanted from a Safeguarding session so that it was less generalised and more specific to Councillors.

Councillor Griffiths said that it would be useful to know what to look out for when visiting someone's home.

Councillor Bhinder gave an example from experience of attending events where photographs were being taken.

Councillor Douris queried whether written approval had to be given for photographs to be taken.

Councillor Barry said that it would be good to have clarification on photo-taking and consent.

Councillor Griffiths said that it would be good if Safeguarding training could cover areas where Councillors can make an impact. She said it would be useful to know what to look out for when speaking to a vulnerable adult or identifying manipulative behaviour when speaking to couples.

Councillor Douris said that it would be useful to cover both ends of the spectrum.

KM updated Councillors on the new training system on DORIS and the wide range of courses that it offers. She said that Councillors could log in to DORIS using their DBC username and password and that they should only have to log in once.

Councillor Douris asked whether this was to book onto face-to-face training.

KM confirmed that it was for face-to-face training but that online training would be added in the future.

Councillor Douris asked whether the new system sent out reminders.

KM said that she would check with Donna Deaton – HR and OD Officer. KM said that Corporate and Democratic Support would continue to send out reminders if the new system didn't.

Councillor Bhinder asked how the system affected resources.

KM said that everything was all in one place now. She clarified that the system was still to book onto group courses and not 1:1s.

Councillor Bhinder said that the system looked brilliant.

Councillor Douris asked whether there would be online training too.

KM said that Corporate and Democratic Support would be looking at developing this. She added that there was also a function whereby officers could upload video updates to the system for Councillors to watch in their own time.

Councillor Douris asked about group sessions.

Councillor Griffiths mentioned a programme called 'Zoom' which is a virtual meeting environment like Skype.

Councillor Douris asked when the new system on DORIS would go live.

KM said that the system had already gone live for officers and that it was now being sorted out for Councillors. She said that Donna Deaton has a meeting with the system providers on 7<sup>th</sup> November. KM said that we will work together to make sure it goes live for councillors asap and will keep MDSG up to date on its progress.

## **5 QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE**

Councillor Douris said that the LGA conference was for the Leaders of the parties.

Councillor Griffiths asked whether Councillors could use the budget to go to conferences and whether they were within their rights to do this.

KM confirmed that this was the case.

## **6 EVALUATION FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS**

KM stated that the new training system on DORIS would have automatic evaluation forms and that reports can be run from this.

Councillor Bhinder said that with the current paper forms, not everyone is aware of them at Member Development sessions. He added that it was important for the objectives to be clear and defined at the start of a session.

Councillor Griffiths agreed and added that objectives should be included in the invite to training and, if mandatory, reasons why the session is mandatory.

Councillor Douris agreed and added that objectives should be referred to at the end of sessions as well to see if they have been fulfilled. He added that trainers should be informed that objectives should be displayed.

KM said that despite reformatting the feedback forms, comments that were not relevant to the training session were still being added. She said that feedback was sent to the trainers. KM said that the new system on DORIS should help with this as she believed the evaluation was 3 simple questions online.

Councillor Griffiths noted that it would still be good to have space for comments on wider issues.

Councillor Barry noted that from the feedback it was clear to see that different Councillors had different opinions on the trainers.

KM added that with the evaluation moving online it would stop Councillors taking their feedback forms away with them and that feedback would be recorded somewhere.

Councillor Douris said that the evaluations had been noted and that they would look forward to the new system.

**Action:** KM said that she would ask Donna Deaton what the evaluation questions were on DORIS. Councillor Douris asked whether the Committee could have sight of the questions. KM said that they could.

## **7**                    **ATTENDANCE TOTALS**

KM noted that it might be worth rebooking a further Budget Setting Process Member Development session as 17 Councillors had not attended either session.

**Action:** Councillor Barry and Councillor Griffiths said that it would be useful to make mandatory sessions clear on the attendance totals spreadsheet.

KM said that a row had been added for Town and Parish Councillors who had attended training sessions.

## **8**                    **WORK PROGRAMME**

Councillor Douris stated that the next meeting would be taking place on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December.

Councillor Bhinder said that he may be late for the next meeting.

The Meeting ended at 8.31 pm