

Public Document Pack

Date of meeting Thursday, 7th November, 2013
Time 7.00 pm
Venue Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, Merrial Street,
Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 2AG
Contact Geoff Durham ext 2222

Member Development Panel

AGENDA

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest from Members on items included in this agenda

2 MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 1 - 6)

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting of this Working Group held on 11 July and 15 August 2013.

3 UPDATE ON ICT

To receive a verbal update from the Council's ICT Operations and Development Manager in respect of ICT and mobile devices.

4 MEMBERS MAIL

To receive a verbal update from the Chair regarding the current position with respect to Members' mail

5 PEER ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK (Pages 7 - 10)

To consider a report on the Peer Assessment feedback and discuss possible actions

6 Update on Member Development (Pages 11 - 14)

7 UPDATE ON REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

To receive a verbal update from the Council's Member Training and Development Officer on the Outside Body Representations.

8 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

Members: Councillors D Becket (Chair), Mrs Heames, Kearon, Miss Olszewski, Mrs Peers, Snell, Turner, White and Williams

Members of the Council: If you identify any personal training/development requirements from any of the items included in this agenda or through issues raised during the meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Democratic Services Officer at the close of the meeting.

Meeting Quorums :- 16+= 5 Members; 10-15=4 Members; 5-9=3 Members; 5 or less = 2 Members.

Officers will be in attendance prior to the meeting for informal discussions on agenda items.

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Thursday, 11th July, 2013

Present:- Councillor David Becket – in the Chair
Councillors Kearon, Mrs Peers, Turner and Williams

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest stated.

8. MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 April, 2013 be agreed as a correct record

9. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Consideration was given to a report on the progress made to date with regard to Members' development.

All Members had been contacted regarding their willingness to collect their mail rather than have it delivered by courier. Only twelve responses had been received to date and half of these respondents had said they were in favour. The Chair advised Members that relocating the mail to the Members' Room was not a preferred option but leaving it in the Post Room for collection was a possibility. There may be issues, however, with Councillors who lived some distance away.

An update was given in respect of training sessions which had been arranged in the near future.

Twenty nine Personal Development Plans had been returned and reminders sent out in order to set up the training programme.

The Chair stated that two Group Leaders had agreed that the ceasing of the courier service would be a huge saving

Resolved:- That the information be received.

10. UPDATE ON MEMBERS' ICT

Members received a presentation from the Council's ICT Operations and Development Manager.

Twenty four Members had not responded to the Data Protection form request and it was indicated that Members would now be given the opportunity to opt out rather than sign up to the scheme.

Members had experienced problems with passwords when trying to gain access externally. Later this month, a system would be introduced which would give extra

security with three random questions being asked when a password required changing.

Resolved:- That the information be received.

11. **DIGITAL MEMBER SERVICES**

Members were advised that the 3G tablet, complete with a keyboard was the preferred option to be issued to all Members. A demonstration was given on the device.

Concerns were raised regarding the use of multiple calendars on the device. Another calendar could be placed onto it with other appointments. Another person could be given permission to access and update it.

A modern.gov app would be available for the device.

Members referred to the, sometimes, larger agendas and the difficulty there would be in reading such documents on the smaller screen. It was suggested that the current format be looked at and alternative layouts considered.

A trial of the device would be carried out over a period to see if it was a viable option.

The older Members of the Council may not wish to move to digital agendas. It was therefore suggested that all Members be asked if they would use one before going ahead.

The trial could not commence until April 2014 as there was due to be a software update later this year and it would be more logical to train Members on the new Modern.gov application. Several names had been put forward of who would undertake the trial. It was also suggested that the Members present at this evenings meeting do the trial.

It was felt that a more detailed breakdown of the costs and savings etc would be required in order to justify the project.

Resolved :-

- (i) That the information be received
- (ii) That the format of documents be investigated for a better layout.
- (iii) That the trialing of the mobile devices go ahead.

12. **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

It had been requested at a previous meeting to submit a list of the Council's representatives on outside bodies. The list was out of date and therefore required amending. It was agreed that the organisations be contacted via a questionnaire and asked if they felt that they benefited from Councillors' presence. In addition, Members should be asked if they attended the meetings and whether they felt that it was worthwhile.

Resolved:-

- (i) That the information be received
- (ii) That the Group leaders be asked to raise the issue

of whether individual Members felt it worthwhile to attend outside meetings at their next group meeting

- (iii) That a questionnaire be prepared and sent to outside organisations for their views.

COUNCILLOR DAVID BECKET
Chair

This page is intentionally left blank

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Thursday, 15th August, 2013

Present:- Councillor David Becket – in the Chair

Councillors Miss Olszewski, Mrs Peers, Turner, White and Williams

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest stated

14. MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July, 2013 be agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- Item 10 – Update on Members' ICT. Second paragraph should read "Twenty four Members had responded to the Data Protection form..."
- Item 11 – Digital Member Services. Replace seventh paragraph, first sentence with "*The trial could commence in October as the new IOS would be out by then, therefore Members could be trained on the updated Modern.Gov operating system.*"

15. MOBILE DEVICES

Members received a presentation on the current position regarding Members' ICT.

Members agreed that it was a good idea for all Councillors at Newcastle to be automatically registered with the ICO unless they wished to opt out.

A comparison was shown of what was offered via mobile devices at the County Council as opposed to Newcastle and Newcastle did provide more services.

Members viewed reports which came through on the Modern.Gov application on the mobile device and were very impressed, agreeing that it was the way forward. It was suggested that the issue of formatting the documents be kept on the agenda for discussion at all meetings.

Concerns were raised as to not create the wrong impression. Therefore a full financial and business case needed to be prepared before going ahead. A Members' printing costs' exercise was already underway. In addition, a survey of Members should be done as to who would not use a mobile device.

Member Development Panel - 15/08/13

Ten Members would trial the devices before full implementation. Names of Members who were to undertake the trial would be confirmed at a later date.

- Resolved:-**
- (i) That the information be received.
 - (ii) That all Members be automatically registered with the ICO unless they opted out.
 - (iii) That a full financial and business case be prepared for the use of mobile devices.

COUNCILLOR DAVID BECKET
Chair

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO THE
MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL**

07 November, 2013

MEMBER TRAINING PROGRAMME

Submitted by: Member Training and Development Officer

Portfolio: Communications, Transformation and Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: Non-specific

Purpose of the Report

To update Members on the findings of the Peer Assessment Team and to consider the Action Plan

Recommendations

- (a) That the report be received.
- (b) That the Action Plan be updated with Members' comments and further actions.

Reasons

To ensure that the Council's meeting procedures are an effective process.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 In August 2013, a Peer Assessment Team addressed this Committee with its findings from the Peer Review held between May and July. An Action Plan is attached at Appendix 1.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 A number of recommendations were suggested along with a number of areas where the Authority did well.

3. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

Effective meetings of the council will contribute directly to the 'Transforming our Council to Achieve Excellence' priority within the Corporate Plan. Consequently, Members who have the knowledge and skills appropriate to the discharge of their responsibilities will also assist the Council in meeting the other corporate priorities and outcomes associated with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications directly associated with this report.

5. **Equality Impact Assessment**

5.1 There are no equalities implications directly associated with this report.

6. **Financial and Resource Implications**

6.1 There are no budget implications associated with this report.

6.2 The main resource implication associated with the proposals listed in this report is use of Members' and officers' time. The process will require a minimal commitment of time from Members if it is to be effective and meaningful.

7. **Major Risks**

7.1 There are no major risks associated with this report.

8. **Key Decision Information**

8.1 The proposals within this report are not regarded as Key Decisions in the sense that it should be included within the Forward Plan. However, as this is not regarded as a non-Executive function, a Cabinet (executive) decision is required to give effect to the proposals.

9. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

15 August 2013.

10. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Peer Assessment Review Action Plan

APPENDIX 1

PEER ASSESSMENT REVIEW ACTION PLAN			
Comments	Actions	Do by	Done
Adequate Signage to Meeting Room and Building Entrance	New up to date signage within the building Externally	Oct	
Name Cards should be put in front of Members and Officers	Now being done at public meetings. New, more practical signs are being prepared	Oct	
Committee Members should sit together	Now put into practice at public meetings Unavoidable at Full Council	Sept	YES
Rooms should be accessible and not overcrowded	Where possible, this is being taken into account. It is rare for a room to be overcrowded	Sept	YES
Microphones or loop system	Only the chamber has micropohones. A portable loop system is available and should be taken to all required meetings		
Ambient Room Temperature	Only remedied if the rooms had air conditioning fitted and working thermostats on radiators		
Can the Chamber discussion be heard from the Gallery	Test carried out and yes it can if the microphones are used by all	Oct	
List of Alternative venues for meetings	Alternative venues have been used in the past Unaware of a formal list		
Wall clocks should be visible	This was an issue in Committee Room 1 behind the Projector screen. Now moved	Sept	YES
The Committee should be visible to the Chair and Public Rooms should of sufficient size for public attendance.	This is only unachievable at Full Council If a meeting is expected to draw large public attention it is held in the Chamber	Sept	YES
Member Access to technology	Mobile phones, blackberry and laptops are provides Mobile devices are being considered at present		
Members voted to accept reports withy little or no discussion questions.	Unfair to reach this conclusion after assessing one meeting. I assume this related to Planning Committee		
Very few links between questions asked and the officer recommendations	Comment was raised after a Scrutiny Committee. Recommendations not discussed and questions were not relevant		
Evident lack of preparation by Members	This contradicted a positive comment made that		

	said "Members demonstrated good preparation and thoughtful contribution"		
Overly long officer presentations. They should be succinct	Training could be given or a time limit imposed		
Needs to be sufficient structure to reports i.e numbered paragraphs and legible appendices	This seems to have fallen by the wayside but can easily be reintroduced		
Officers expect and respect challenge/contributions from Members. Can be constructive on both sides	From experience. This happens at most meetings		
Officers failed to fully answer members questions. They should anticipate questions and have back up data	Not every question can be anticipated therefore on the information may not be readily available		
Report taken with no officer available to present or answer questions	This is very rare. However, there should be an officer available to stand in		
Members should express a view even if they agree with the recommendations so that observers understand why	Members could be encouraged to do this		
Officers should outline plans, pictures, rationale for recommendations prior to Members, supporters or objectors speaking	Look at the present format of the Planning Committee		
Manage the loud voices and encourage all to contribute	Group leaders could be asked to identify quieter members and public speaking training offered		
All contributors should be clear on what is being scrutinised	Scrutiny Chairs Training		
The order of the agenda should be considered not necessarily having the work programme at the end	Chairs /Officers		
Build on good work programme discussions for strategy and policy development - Maximise links with the cabinet panels	Scrutiny training		
Members don't appear to value full Council.	Look at the process and procedure		
Ensure that clear recommendations are given at the end especially what is being taken to Cabinet	Chairs Training		
Be more specific about nailing outcomes, timelines	Chairs Training		

Agenda Item 6

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL

07 November, 2013

MEMBER TRAINING PROGRAMME

Submitted by: Member Training and Development Officer

Portfolio: Communications, Transformation and Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: Non-specific

Purpose of the Report

To update Members on the work carried out by Central Services in relation to Member Development and Training.

Recommendations

(a) That the report be received.

Reasons

To ensure that Members are given adequate training opportunities to enable them to carry out their duties as a Councillor effectively.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 Some training has taken place this year including the quasi-judicial committees and Scrutiny Chairs training.
- 1.2 Members were sent out a Personal Development Plan for completion. Not all of these have been returned and therefore reminder letters have been sent to the Group Leaders. Attached at Appendix 1 is the current position.
- 1.3 Members may wish to action some of the requested training courses although the budget for the remainder of the financial year is now limited and therefore in-house training courses should be considered.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 Completion of the Personal Development Plans is essential in order to identify the training requirements of our Members

3. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

Effective training of our Members will contribute directly to the 'Transforming our Council to Achieve Excellence' priority within the Corporate Plan. Consequently, Members who have

the knowledge and skills appropriate to the discharge of their responsibilities will also assist the Council in meeting the other corporate priorities and outcomes associated with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

4.1 There are no legal implications directly associated with this report.

5. **Equality Impact Assessment**

5.1 There are no equalities implications directly associated with this report.

6. **Financial and Resource Implications**

6.1 There is now a limited budget for the remainder of the current financial year.

6.2 The main resource implication associated with the proposals listed in this report is use of Members' time. The process will require a minimal commitment of time from Members if it is to be effective and meaningful. There is little resource implication concerning officers as this process will be Member led and owned by Members.

7. **Major Risks**

7.1 There are no major risks associated with this report.

8. **Key Decision Information**

8.1 The proposals within this report are not regarded as Key Decisions in the sense that it should be included within the Forward Plan. However, as this is not regarded as a non-Executive function, a Cabinet (executive) decision is required to give effect to the proposals.

9. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

11 July, 2013

10. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Personal Development Plan results

1 TRAINING

EVENT	TOTAL
ICT - INTRODUCTION TO MODERN.GOV	14
ICT - EMAILS	6
ICT - FILING AND BASICS	8
CHAIRING/MEETING SKILLS	12
COMMUNITY/LAPS ETC	13
FINANCE/BUDGETS	11
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	9
NEW LEGISLATION UPDATES	24
DEALING WITH THE MEDIA	13
OTHER AREAS	
PLANNING LEGISLATION	4
HIGHWAYS TRAINING	2
PUBLIC SPEAKING	2
LICESING LEGISLATION	1
COMMUNITY ADVOCACY	1
SOCIAL MEDIA	1
YOUNG COUNCILLOR CONFERENCE	1
STRESS MANAGEMENT	1
PORTFOLIO HOLDER TRAINING	1
STAFFING COMMITTEE	1
SPEED READING	1

PREFERRED TRAINING TIME		
AM	PM	EVE
12	13	28

REFLECTOR	PRAGMATIST	THEORIST	ACTIVIST
4	1	3	1

COUNCILLORS RESPONDED	35	58.33%
------------------------------	-----------	---------------

This page is intentionally left blank