

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Thursday, 2nd October, 2014

Present:- Councillor David Becket – in the Chair

Councillors Mrs Heames, Owen, Proctor, Mrs Simpson, Turner and Mrs Winfield

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Councillor(s) White

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest stated.

2. MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meetings held on 3 July and 28 August, 2014 be agreed as correct records.

3. PRESENTATION ON THE TABLET TRIAL AND ICT

The Councils ICT Operations and Development Manager gave an update on the tablet trial which had recently completed. The results showed that issuing tablets to all Members

4. MEMBERS' USE OF ICT

Consideration was given to a report investigating the methods of delivering information to Members more effectively and efficiently.

Not all Members accessed their emails on a regular basis and therefore need to be encouraged to do so through the use of extensive training in the use of IT equipment. It was suggested that Members who did not access their emails should be made know to their Group Leaders. In addition, greater use by Members could mean the cessation of the Courier service, therefore making a saving to the Council. There would still be paper copies of agendas available but Members would have to come to the Civic Offices to collect them.

It is proposed that after the 2015 elections, the printing of emails etc would begin to be phased out and this would be assisted by advising new candidates that they must be IT literate.

Members were informed about the outcome of the tablet trial and it was agreed that subject to evaluations, the Member Development Panel recommend that tablets be made available to all Members.

Resolved:- That it be recommended to Cabinet and Full Council:

- (i) That the practice of printing off and sending on Members' emails cease.

Member Development Panel - 02/10/14

- (ii) That a similar policy to that outlined about and currently applied to officers be implemented to also cover Member email accounts
- (iii) That the use of Borough Council email by all elected Borough Council Members for council business be made mandatory
- (iv) That the Members' weekly courier service be ceased. Instead, Members will be required to use either electronic means to access committee papers in future, or will be required to visit the Civic Offices to pick up their printed papers. The Council will continue to encourage all Members to use appropriate available technology and will offer the necessary training for Members to use this technology. It is envisaged that the practice of making printed agendas and other papers available to Members in this way will be phased out following the 2015 Borough Council elections.
- (v) That, subject to a sound business case, upon the successful completion of the trial, tablets be offered to all Members.
- (vi) That Group Leaders be advised of Members who are not using the email service.

5. ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

Members considered a report on the Council's current Enforcement Policy 2014-17. At a previous meeting of this Panel, Members had requested training on the nature and extent of enforcement powers that were available to the Council.

Resolved:-

- (i) That the information be received.
- (ii) That specific enforcement training be arranged.

6. MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Consideration was given to a report updating Members on the training programme and events which had taken place.

Members discussed the training programme and were informed that an interest had been expressed regarding the introduction of Health Scrutiny training into it. In addition, as stated in the previous item on the agenda, Enforcement Training would be introduced. In addition, more online training should be sourced and encouraged.

Members also suggested that training should be offered on all committees especially for new Members with little or no knowledge on certain subjects.

Furthermore, mandatory training needed to be enforced by the Group Leaders and training should be made mandatory for all new Members.

- Resolved:-**
- (i) That the information be received.
 - (ii) That Health Scrutiny training and Enforcement training be introduced into the programme.

7. WORK PLAN FOR THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Members considered a report on the Work Plan for the Panel.

The topic regarding the Members Web page was discussed and it was agreed that this should be reviewed as to the requirement for a separate Web page now that modern.gov was in use. It was agreed that a questionnaire be devised and sent to Members asking for their opinion as to whether they have or would use it and what information they would like to see on it.

In addition, Members requested a comprehensive review of the current training programme, looking at the mandatory topics and the desirable ones and prioritising them.

Follow on training for Planning and Licensing should be made available for all Members and there should be training on dealing with queries and complaints from constituents.

- Resolved:-**
- (i) That a questionnaire be devised and sent to Members regarding their use of the Members Web page.
 - (ii) That a comprehensive review of the Members' training programme be carried out and brought back to a future meeting.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

COUNCILLOR DAVID BECKET
Chair