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*Member Development Panel - 24/04/14*

## MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Thursday, 24th April, 2014

**Present:-** Councillor David Becket – in the Chair

Councillors Mrs Heames, Kearon, Miss Olszewski and Williams

1. **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillors Eastwood and Mrs Winfield representing the Tablet Trial Members

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest stated.

3. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Turner and White.

4. **MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Resolved:-** That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March, 2014 be agreed as a correct record.

5. **VERBAL UPDATE ON TABLET TRIAL**

Members were given an update on the tablet trial. All ten Members were using them and there has been a positive response and no major issues.

The time out period had been extended from two to five minutes.

The first monitoring period had been favourable and a progress survey would now be conducted.

The Chair Councillors Mrs Winfield and Eastwood gave positive comments about their ipads although a comment was made that they didn't use the keyboard. The Council's ICT Operations and Development Manager advised the Panel that if the trial was successful, there would be a bigger keyboard available that Members could use from home and a less bulky case for when it was taken elsewhere.

**Resolved:-** That the information be received.

6. **UPDATE ON ICT**

There was nothing further to report.

**Resolved:-** That the comment be noted.

7. **UPDATE ON THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND NEW MEMBERS INDUCTION**

Following this meeting, a copy of the amended Member Development Strategy would be sent to Members for their comments.

**Resolved:-** That the comment be noted.

**8. STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL IT USAGE**

Members were advised that the County Council only had one Member who didn't read their emails.

County Members did not have ipads but had an allowance to purchase equipment.

**Resolved:-** That the information be received.

**9. LICENSING ON;LINE**

The Council's Democratic Services Manager, Miss Julia Cleary gave a presentation on the Licensing Online function.

The system was a work-in-progress with some areas still to be populated and this has to be done manually.

It will allow a link to be sent to Members from the Licensing Section with live information and therefore would not delete the previous weeks applications as had happened previously.

Members were advised that a link to the Members home page could be provided.

The Chair and Members congratulated the Licensing Team on their achievements with the online system.

**Resolved:-** That the information be received.

**10. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Council's Head of Planning and Development, Mr Guy Benson had been invited to attend the meeting to discuss a number of issues regarding the Planning Committee:-

**Site visit photographs** were taken by officers and then kept on file or used at Planning Committee. Members had previously asked about the possibility of displaying the photos on line before the meeting.

Mr Benson explained that consent to take photographs was normally sought from the owner and this was less likely to be granted if they were to be displayed on the internet.

In addition, photographs were not neutral and could be manipulated, i.e. showing a busy road or a quiet one, depending on which one would help an application.

Members stated that the quality of some photographs displayed at the Planning Committee in the Chamber were of poor quality. The Members were advised that the

equipment in the Chamber was over 7 years old and quotes were currently being sought to replace them.

A further suggestion was made for a possible link to the Members Web Page which showed the photographs. This would be looked at.

The possible use of ***video equipment*** had also been queried. This had been trialled some years ago but not implemented because it was more resource demanding than taking photographs. Members agreed that the use of videos should not be pursued.

**Resolved:-** That the information be received and the comments noted.

**COUNCILLOR DAVID BECKET**  
**Chair**

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