

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP
Friday, 7 December 2012

Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development Steering Group held at
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 7 December 2012 at
1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Ken Ayers (Chief Commoner) (Chairman)
Revd Dr Martin Dudley
Marianne Fredericks
Wendy Hyde
Deputy Joyce Nash
Barbara Newman
Deputy Richard Regan

Officers:

Peter Nelson	- Assistant Town Clerk
Lorraine Brook	- Committee and Member Services Manager
Gemma Stokley	- Committee and Member Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from George Gillon (Chief Commoner Elect), Deputy John Bennett, Mark Boleat and Henrika Priest.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 7 September 2012 were approved and agreed as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

Briefings for Potential 2013 candidates (page 1) – A Member commented that it had been very useful to receive the dates for the Briefings for potential candidates in advance.

Plasma Information Screens (page 1) – The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that she had liaised further with the IS Services Team and the Guildhall Premises Manager on this matter following discussions at the last Steering Group meeting.

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that she had been advised that, for various technical reasons, it would not be possible to re-install the screen in its original position, above the bag scanner in the West Wing reception area. Members were, however, informed that it would be possible to move the screen from its current location to the pillar adjacent to the security

desk. The Committee and Member Services Officer tabled photographs of both the current and proposed locations for the screens.

Members were informed that some initial caballing work had been done but that the total cost of relocating the screen would be in the region of £800. It was also reported that the Guildhall Premises Manager was of the view that the screen, in its current location, was useful for the general public to view and not just for those coming into the Guildhall on business.

Whilst some Members were of the view that the screen should be relocated given that it was the security staff who often had to respond to queries on meeting times and locations, others felt that this was an unnecessary use of funds. The Chief Commoner called a vote on the matter and it was decided that the screen in the West Wing reception area should remain in its current location.

Recent Events (page 2) – A Member commented on the recent informal Members' meeting which had taken place last month and expressed concern that this appeared to have been dominated by the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee. The Chief Commoner stated that he emailed all Members of the Court asking for their contributions to the agenda ahead of each informal meeting and that, in the absence of any substantial items, he was content for the Chairman of Policy to highlight certain issues and seek direct feedback.

On the basis of comments made, the Chief Commoner stated that he would be happy to consider the format and purpose of future meetings to ensure that these remain as focused as possible.

Members commented favourably on the set up of the informal meeting. The Assistant Town Clerk reported that Officers were now looking into the possibility of re-arranging the seating for formal Court meetings but would need to consider costs and any new furniture or electronics that might be required. He added that a further matter to consider would be how quickly any new set up could be disassembled in order for staff to prepare for any evening events in the Great Hall.

Members commented that it would be useful for all to have access to a table at Court meetings and also asked that the standing microphones currently used be retained.

Review of Members Briefing (page 3) – The Committee and Member Services Officer tabled a hard copy version of the re-designed Members Briefing and the Group were also shown how the document would look electronically, on the iPad. Members were assured that the comments made at the last meeting of this Group had been taken on board and that the new version of the Briefing would be circulated to all Members next week.

The Chief Commoner reported that the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee had recently been sent a copy of the revised Briefing and was, on the whole, supportive of this.

Members commented that the revised version was now much easier to read and more user friendly. They were also pleased to see the inclusion of colour and photographs to accompany some of the entries.

The Assistant Town Clerk reminded Members that this document had previously been produced by the Committee and Member Services Team but was now the responsibility of the Director of PRO. He stated that this had never been 'under the control' of any given Committee but that all Members had been given the opportunity to feed in to and comment on the new version.

Members were informed that, as this was the first edition of the revised Briefing it was still very much a 'work in progress' and that further feedback from all would be welcomed. The Assistant Town Clerk commented that, whilst hard copies of the document would be made available on request, it was hoped that the new version of the Briefing would be viewed electronically.

Finally, the Committee and Member Services Officer reported that, following comments made at the last meeting of this Steering Group, a new, separate Briefing would now be produced for Livery Company Clerks. Members were informed that this would be a quarterly briefing with the first edition circulated in January 2013. The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that the Chairman of the Livery Committee and all Livery Company Clerks had been informed of this change and that the feedback to date had been positive.

3. RECENT EVENTS

a) **O2 Phone Migration and Unlocking for Members – Wednesday 19 September 2012;**

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that all Members had been invited to attend this event in order to assist them with the 'switch' in service providers. The IS Team had reported that this event had been well attended.

b) **The Equality Act 2012 – Keeping it Legal – What you need to know – Wednesday 31 October 2012;**

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that this session, which had been rearranged following a last minute cancellation earlier in the year, had been very well received. The Group were informed that the session had been attended by 10 Members and that this topic was now to be incorporated within the new Member Briefing programme for early 2013.

Members of the Group who had been present at the session, including the Chief Commoner, commented on the fact that it had been lively, informative and very well organised.

c) IS 'Open Day' – Wednesday 21 November 2012;

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that these drop in sessions which enabled Members to access IS staff on a 1:1 basis with any individual concerns were now a frequent fixture and it was intended that these would continue into 2013.

The Committee and Member Services Officer went on to report that the IS Team were also continuing to contact Members individually regarding 1:1 iPad training sessions. A Member commented that she had recently attended a 1:1 session and had found this extremely useful.

Finally, Members were informed that a short 'crib sheet' on how best to access Committee Papers on the iPad had now been produced by the IS team and had been circulated to all.

d) Standards – information and advice on the new arrangements/Code of Conduct – Monday 26 November 2012 and Thursday 29 November 2012.

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that 28 Members had attended one or other of the initial sessions offered on the new Standards Regime. Members were informed that officers were looking to circulate a 'frequently asked questions' sheet to all in the near future based on some of the issues that had been raised at the sessions.

The Chief Commoner and others who had attended one of the sessions stated that they had found them extremely useful and a vital source of information.

4. MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME / UPDATE

The Committee and Member Services Manager was heard relative to progress on the New Member Induction Programme.

The Committee and Member Services Manager reported that Officers had held regular meetings with the Chief Commoner since the last meeting of this Steering Group in order to consult him on all plans to date.

Members were reminded that feedback had been sought from all on the new Member Handbook which had been tabled at the last meeting and that all sections had now been circulated to relevant Departments to review and update as necessary. The Committee and Member Services Manager reported that the final version of the new Handbook would be produced at the end of January 2013 and asked that any Member who wanted to comment on this did so by this point.

Members were informed that, in addition to the New Member Handbook, officers were also working up a programme of Briefings for those joining the Court. The Committee and Member Services Manager reported that officers had discussed a number of options with the Chief Commoner including holding the briefings over two separate working days (as was the case in 2009) and holding the briefings over a weekend. However, it had been decided that the

best approach, most likely to 'capture all' would be to spread the Briefings over a 3 week period post-elections and to offer two hour sessions at different times each day – morning, lunchtime and early evening. Members were informed that the Briefings would focus on a number of key areas and it was hoped that each would be repeated within the three week period.

The Committee and Member Services Manager reported that all Chief Officers had now been contacted regarding the proposed briefing sessions and had been requested to 'book in' their slots via a calendar that had been set up on the shared drive. The Group were informed that Chief Officers had been encouraged to be as creative as possible with their 'slots' making them interactive and including things such as site visits/tours. Members were informed that feedback from Chief Officers had been extremely positive to date.

Members suggested that all should be made aware of the scheduled briefing sessions in the New Year. The Committee and Member Services Manager stated that it was hoped that some of the returning Members and members of this Steering Group might attend/champion the post-election briefings.

In addition to the three-week briefing period, Members were informed that an initial Welcome Day had been scheduled for Monday 25th March 2013 to 'kick start' the event. It was envisaged that Ward Deputies and the Chief Commoner would also be involved in this.

Finally, Members were informed that, in addition to the post-election briefings in April 'refresher' briefings would be scheduled for both new and returning Members in July 2012.

In response to questions, the Committee and Member Services Manager reported that she was currently liaising with the Electoral Services Team in order to determine deadlines and how best to 'link in' with the information made available to candidates from any early date.

It was suggested that all Ward Deputies should be written to with details of the proposed Briefings so that they could proactively promote attendance at these at the March Wardmotes.

In response to a further question, the Assistant Town Clerk reported that, whilst inductions of this scale were not offered to individual Members who joined the Court at various bi-elections, these Members were encouraged to contact relevant Chief Officers to 'plug any gaps' in their knowledge.

5. NEW MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The Group considered a revised Members' Learning and Development Questionnaire.

The Committee and Member Services Manager reported that, historically, a fairly lengthy Learning and Development Questionnaire had been circulated to all and all new members had been asked to complete this on joining the Court. The Group were informed that it was now proposed that this revised and

simplified version of the questionnaire be circulated to all prior to the 2013 Summer recess. It was hoped that the responses would help inform and shape the Member Learning and Development Programme for the next 6 months from July – December 2013.

A Members suggested that the 'Finance and the City' section would benefit from being more focused with various headings such as 'Banking', 'Insurance' and 'Maritime' for Members to choose from.

6. 2013 COUNCILLOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The Group received information relative to the 2013 Councillor Achievement Awards.

The Group did not feel that these awards were of particular relevance to the work of Common Councilmen and therefore decided against promoting these more widely amongst Members.

7. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

The Steering Group received the minutes of the last London Member Development Meeting on 24 October 2012.

The Committee and Member Services Manager reported that she attended these meetings quarterly and that they were a good way to share best practice in terms of Member Learning and Development. She went on to highlight that the key issue at the most recent meeting had been a proposal from London Southbank University around introducing accreditation for elected members. Members were informed that similar courses had previously been offered by other institutions and that it was anticipated that the costs would be relatively high.

8. PROPOSED 2013 MEETING DATES

The Steering Group considered the proposed 2013 meeting dates. It was suggested that a meeting be scheduled for mid-February as opposed to March in order to update all on the new Member Induction arrangements.

It was suggested that the final 2013 dates be approved by the Chief Commoner and Chief Commoner Elect and then circulated to all in due course.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no additional items of business raised.

The meeting ended at 2.50 pm

Chairman

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