

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP
Friday, 15 February 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development Steering Group held at
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 15 February 2013 at
1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy John Bennett
Revd Dr Martin Dudley
Marianne Fredericks
Wendy Hyde
Barbara Newman
Henrika Priest
Deputy Richard Regan (in the Chair)

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 Deputy Ken Ayers (Chief Commoner) (Chairman), Mark Boleat, George Gillon (Chief Commoner Elect) and Deputy Joyce Nash.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

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

MATTERS ARISING

Plasma Information Screens (page 1) – A Member stated that he was surprised to hear that staff had not been consulted on this matter particularly as some of the West Wing Security Staff had expressed a preference for relocating the screens so that they were more visible for them.

A Member stated that this matter had been discussed in full at the last meeting of this Group and a vote had been taken. She reminded the Group that the screens, in their current position, were intended to display general information for members of the public and not just for those actually attending meetings at the Guildhall.

The Group acknowledged that this was not a matter directly within its remit and it was suggested that the Chief Commoner could take this up with the Director of PRO.

Recent Events (page 2) – A Member commented on yesterday's scheduled Informal Members' meeting which had been cancelled without consulting all Members on any issues they might want to raise.

Deputy Regan stated that Members had been encouraged to contact the Chief Commoner with any issues they might want to see on the agenda in advance of the meetings although he accepted that it would have been useful if a reminder of this had been sent to all.

A Member commented that, in the past, these meetings had gone ahead regardless of any agenda being prepared in advance and Members had been given the opportunity to raise or discuss issues amongst themselves.

Members were of the view that informal meetings should not be cancelled in the future as they were an opportunity to air common issues / concerns and that this should be conveyed to the Chief Commoner and the Chairman of Policy and Resources.

3. **RECENT EVENTS**

a) IS 'Open Day' – Wednesday 16 January 2013;

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that there were plans to repeat the 'Open Day' next month as feedback from Members had been extremely positive to date.

b) Three City Schools Joint Training Session – Access and SEN's – Monday 21 January 2013;

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that this had been a very successful event facilitated by the City of London Freeman's School. Members were informed that this was an annual event focusing on a different topic of common interest each year. It was reported that this year's sessions was opened up to a wider audience to include not only Governors of the three City Schools but also Governors of King Edwards School, Witley.

A Member, who was also Chairman of the Board of Governors of the City of London Freeman's School added that the event had been extremely useful and of interest to all who had attended.

A Member suggested that sessions such as these may also be of interest/use to Members of the Community and Children's Services Committee.

Members were of the view that much of the 'Committee specific' training could usefully be offered to all Members and made more general. The Assistant Town Clerk stated that he would be happy to raise this with various Chief Officers. A Member stated that it was her recollection that it had originally been proposed that the Informal Members' meetings would have an element of this attached to them.

c) Member Finance Seminar – Friday 1 February 2013;

The Committee and Member Services Manager reported that this was now an annual briefing delivered by the Chamberlain's Department.

Members of the Group who had attended one of the two briefings held on 1 February commented that these had been very useful, well delivered events. They were pleased to see that the Chamberlain's Department had taken on board and addressed previous criticisms with regards to the presentation of their financial information.

A Member commented that it might be useful to have two sessions held on different days in future years so as to try and ensure that as many Members as possible were able to attend.

4. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

a) IS 'Open Day' – Tuesday 19 February 2013;

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that these events were normally scheduled to coincide with meetings of some of the Corporation's larger Committees in order to make them as convenient as possible to as many Members as possible. This month's event was therefore to be held on the same day as the Finance Committee.

In response to questions, the Committee and Member Services Manager reported that these events would continue to be scheduled throughout the year if they continued to be relatively well attended and if feedback continued to suggest that they were useful.

A Member suggested that a sheet of various 'IS Frequently Asked Questions' would be useful and would also save time in terms of Members having to telephone the IS Service desk each time they had a problem.

b) Initial 'Welcome Day' for newly elected Members and their Deputies – Monday 25 March 2013

c) New Member Induction Briefings – Tuesday 2 April 2013 – Friday 19 April 2013

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that further information on these two events were available at Item 5 and within the circulated papers.

5. NEW MEMBER INDUCTION - FINAL UPDATE

The Committee and Member Services Manager updated the Group on Plans for the Induction of any new Members the City might gain following the March 2013 elections.

It was reported that all new Members would be encouraged to attend an Initial 'Welcome Day' on Monday 25 March which would cover all of the basics/practicalities and would allow new Members to 'meet and greet' some 'key' Officers and Senior Members/Ward Deputies.

The Committee and Member Services Officer then went on to highlight that this initial Welcome Day would be followed by a series of briefings scheduled over a three week period in early April. She reported that a lot of work had been done in terms of engaging Chief Officers and encouraging them to be creative with their slots in terms of both content and venue. She went on to highlight that there were plans to hold some of the sessions at the Old Bailey, Mansion House and the City Marketing Suite.

In response to questions regarding the briefing subjects, the Committee and Member Services Manager reported that there were still a few Chief Officers who were yet to respond to the request to host a briefing but added that all would be finalised by early March. A Member underlined the need to include 'education' as a briefing subject by the City Schools and the GSMD. It was also suggested that Community and Children's Services should contribute.

Members were informed that the Programme of Briefings was to be presented in a booklet form with pictures of each of the Chief Officers delivering the sessions as well as an outline of the key objectives of each briefing.

Members were informed that, in addition to the briefings, new Members would also be issued with an 'Induction Pack' full of useful information to help 'get them started'. The Committee and Member Services Manager reported that this had been widely consulted on across the organisation and that final checks on the Pack were now being undertaken.

Final proofs of the Pack were made available at the meeting and the Committee and Member Services Officer invited any Member who might be interested to review the contents in more detail over the coming weeks.

In response to a question regarding the Member Photobook, the Assistant Town Clerk reported that this would be re-produced as soon as possible after the March elections once the membership of the Court had been confirmed.

In response to further questions, the Committee and Member Services Manager reported that it was envisaged that the Induction Pack would eventually be available as an electronic document with the different sections 'bookmarked' for ease of use on both PCs and iPads. She stated that this would make it easier to circulate more widely and, particularly, to any returning Members who might find this of use/interest.

A Member suggested that it might be useful to inform new Members of the new GSM map and online telephone book which would help them in terms of who best to contact with various issues as they got started.

It was also suggested that Officers could consider putting any forms for completion within the pack on different coloured paper.

Finally, the Committee and Member Services Manager reported that the Team were also keen to evaluate the sessions and drew Members' attention to the draft evaluation form circulated.

A Member suggested that introducing 'self-tests' might be an effective way of ensuring that certain information was being absorbed and re-enforced.

In response to questions, the Assistant Town Clerk stated that he would be dealing with the Court of Common Council, Standing Orders and the Livery amongst other areas within his briefings. A Member suggested that it would also be helpful for him to provide new Members with a plan of the top table for Court of Common Council and to explain the set-up of the Great Hall on Court days in general.

Members congratulated Officers on putting together what was now a robust and extremely useful Induction programme.

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that whilst the Induction of any new Members was a priority at present a similar programme of briefings would be offered to the full Court in early July, ahead of the Summer recess.

6. CONFIRMATION OF 2013 MEETING DATES

Members noted the remaining 2013 meeting dates for the Member Development Steering Group which are as follows:

- Friday 17 May 2013 – 1 for 1.45pm
- Friday 13 September 2013 – 1 for 1.45pm
- Friday 6 December 2013 – 1 for 1.45pm

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Membership of the Member Development Working Group

Revd. Dr. Dudley reported that he had taken the decision to stand down from the Group and that this would, therefore be his last meeting.

Deputy Richard Regan (in the Chair) thanked Revd. Dudley for being such an active member of the Group and helping to shape how things now move forward.

It was suggested that the Group review its membership following the March 2013 elections and continue to maintain a 'balance' of both senior and newer Members.

The meeting ended at 2.55 pm

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