

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP
Friday, 17 May 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development Steering Group held at
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 17 May 2013 at 1.45
pm

Present

Members:

George Gillon (Chief Commoner) (Chairman)
Deputy Ken Ayers
Marianne Fredericks
Wendy Hyde
Deputy Joyce Nash
Henrika Priest
Alastair Moss

Officers:

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| Peter Nelson | - Assistant Town Clerk |
| Lorraine Brook | - Committee and Member Services Manager |
| Gemma Stokley | - Committee and Member Services Officer |
| Ellen Murphy | - IS Division |

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy John Bennett, Mark Boleat and Deputy Richard Regan.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 15 February 2013 were considered and approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

Plasma Information Screens (page 1) – The Chief Commoner commented that he did not feel that this was a matter for the Steering Group to deal with.

A Member reported that the plasma screens in the Members' Room were not currently working. Ellen Murphy undertook to look into this matter as soon as possible.

Informal Members' Meetings (page 2) – The Chief Commoner reminded Members that two Informal Members' Meetings were scheduled in place of full Court meetings each year if there was any business to discuss. He recognised that more could possibly be done to encourage Members to put forward any items for discussion to him and the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee in future.

Three City Schools Joint Training Session (page 2) – A Member reported that this had been a very well-run and informative session. She suggested that City Academy Governors be invited to attend these sessions in future years.

2013 Meeting Dates (page 5) – The Chairman asked the Group to note the remaining 2013 meeting dates but suggested that the Group might want to review the frequency of their meetings for 2014. It was suggested that 3 meetings should be scheduled for 2014 with any additional, ad-hoc meetings, called if necessary.

3. **MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

The Town Clerk reminded Members that Revd. Dr. Dudley had resigned from the Group at their last meeting and it had been agreed, at this point, that they would go on to review their Membership in its entirety whilst still attempting to maintain a 'balance' of newer and longer serving Members of the Court.

Deputy Nash highlighted that she had been one of the founding members of the Group and had enjoyed her time serving on this body but was now happy to stand down and make way for others.

The Chief Commoner reported that he had received expressions of interest from two new Members of the Court wishing to serve on the Group – Alastair Moss and Ann Holmes. The Group were happy to welcome both of these new Members to the Group.

The Chief Commoner went on to state that he would like the Group to give consideration to its numbers and would suggest that a Group of 10 would be desirable.

It was suggested that the Chief Commoner should 'sound out' any other expressions of interest from Members of the Court in serving on this Steering Group and any longer serving members of the Group who might also like to now stand down.

RESOLVED – That, Ann Holmes and Alastair Moss both be appointed to serve on the Member Development Steering Group.

4. **REVIEW OF NEW MEMBER INDUCTION**

The Group received a report of the Town Clerk reviewing the delivery and effectiveness of the recent new Member Induction arrangements delivered in late March/early April 2013.

The Chief Commoner began by congratulating Officers on all of their efforts to deliver what he felt had been a very impressive and successful programme.

The Committee and Member Services Manager reported that the feedback received from new Members to date had generally been very positive with regards to being able to meet 'key' people and to understand their role. She added that many returning Members had also appreciated meeting their new colleagues quickly too. The Group were informed that the Chief Officers who

had delivered the various sessions had also indicated that they had benefited hugely from their exposure to the new Members of the Court.

In response to questions, the Committee and Member Services Officer highlighted that attendance at each of the sessions was detailed on page 13 of the papers. She added that new Members had not been required to RSVP for all of the sessions as Officers wanted to be as flexible as possible and to encourage as many new Members as possible to attend on each occasion.

The Group were keen to hear the views of a Member who had recently been through the Induction. Mr Moss commented that some of the daytime sessions had been difficult for him to attend but added that, where this had been the case, 1:1 sessions with relevant Chief Officers had been facilitated. He went on to suggest that feedback might be more forthcoming if individual evaluation sheets were handed out at the end of each session. Finally, he suggested that more advanced notice of the proposed Induction Programme dates would have been beneficial. He concluded by saying that, on the whole, the Induction Programme had been a very welcome process and that all had been very helpful and approachable.

The Chief Commoner went on to discuss the role of Deputies with regard to new Members. He highlighted that some Deputies were, of course, new Members themselves and suggested that he would personally meet with any new Deputies to discuss their role and responsibilities in greater depth.

In response to questions, the Assistant Town Clerk reported that there were no formal briefings for Ward Deputies regarding their 'expected' duties and that it was more a question of good practice with practices tending to differ between Wards. Having said this, it was suggested that the Privileges Sub Committee might want to consider the issuing of guidance to Deputies and whether or not existing information needed updating.

A Member reported that the 'lady Members' had also arranged their own 'get together' which had been very well attended.

In response to a question, the Chief Commoner stated that the new Member Induction Pack, which had been very well received and was a helpful and comprehensive guide on a range of issues, could be circulated electronically to all Members for information in due course.

RECEIVED.

5. RECENT/FORTHCOMING EVENTS

a) Members' IS 'drop in' Session – Thursday 16th May 2013

Ellen Murphy reported that the most recent IS 'drop in' Session had been very well attended. Members were informed that a member of the Contact Centre staff had also been present on the day providing Members with information on Social Media.

She commented that it had been useful to hold this on a Court day and also to be positioned in the Members' Room as this seemed to 'prompt' people to come along with any questions and issues.

It was agreed that future sessions should continue to be held on Court days in this same location.

The Chief Commoner went on to refer to the April 2012 Court of Common Council meeting, parts of which had been filmed and placed on YouTube by the City Corporation's PRO Office. He noted that he and other Members had not been informed of this in advance. A Member reported that the Corporation had recently made a number of short YouTube videos detailing different areas of its work and that this was a pilot being run by the PRO Office. The Assistant Town Clerk suggested that links to the YouTube films could feature in the Members' Briefing. Members suggested that, if any future meetings were to be filmed, Officers would need to ensure that non-public/confidential papers were not visible and Members should be advised in advance.

Members suggested that the Corporation's Policy on Social Media should be clearly highlighted to Members, many of whom now held Twitter accounts. The Committee and Member Services Manager suggested that PRO could be encouraged to cover this topic at their July all Member Briefing sessions.

b) Licensing Hearing Training

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that an external trainer had also delivered a session to new Members of the Licensing Committee regarding Licensing Hearings earlier this week.

It was reported that similar training would soon be offered to new members of the City's Planning and Transportation Committee.

6. 'ALL MEMBER' 'FOLLOW UP' BRIEFING SESSIONS

The Group considered the timetable for the delivery of the July 2013 'all Member' briefing sessions.

The Committee and Member Services Officer highlighted that these sessions would be promoted in the May and June editions of the Members Briefings and that all Members would be emailed the final schedule of sessions directly in due course. Members were encouraged to suggest any additional means of promoting these sessions so that as many Members as possible could be encouraged to participate.

A Member suggested that a finalised schedule of events should be posted on the Members' Room Board in due course and that consideration could be given to sending Members meeting requests for each session so that they could accept or decline these as necessary. It was noted, however, that some Members had previously opposed the circulation of meeting invites and this may not therefore be well-received. It was further suggested that Members could be encouraged to 'sign up' for these sessions before or after future Court meetings with Officers further promoting what would be on offer.

In response to a question, the Committee and Member Services Officer reported that the fact that only some of the sessions were to be repeated but not others was due to individual Chief Officer's availability.

RECEIVED.

7. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE AND LONGER TERM PLANS

The Group discussed the circulation of a comprehensive Learning and Development questionnaire to the full Court in September 2013 and considered plans for reviewing the responses received and how these might then inform longer-term training and development plans.

The Committee and Member Services Officer reported that, if Members were not keen to complete a questionnaire, they would be offered the opportunity to meet with a member of the Committee and Member Services Team and discuss their individual requirements.

The Group were informed that Officers would report back to them in late 2013/ early 2014 on the top priorities arising from the responses received and formulate a longer-term training and development programme for all Members around these.

Members suggested that the offer of 'evening' sessions within the questionnaire should be made more time specific i.e. after 5/6pm.

In response to questions regarding the reference to Code of Conduct and Equalities training, the Committee and Member Services Manager reported that these references had previously been added at the request of Corporate HR. She added that this matter could now be followed up with them to determine what constituted 'adequate training' in these areas.

In response to further questions, the Committee and Member Services Manager stated that the Committee and Member Services Team would be responsible for delivering the longer-term development programme. She reminded the Group that there was no dedicated Member Development Officer within the team and so the proposed programme would need to be realistic whilst also taking into account budget/resource availability.

Members agreed that any forthcoming programme would need to be realistic and more focused. It was recognised that the previous plan overseen by the Group had been too 'overwhelming' with many conflicting needs. It was suggested that just 4-5 issues should be focused on and delivered over an agreed period of time i.e. 6-12 months, with additional, ad hoc, learning and development sessions scheduled where possible on a 1-2-1 basis or as specific Member needs arose.

The Group requested that the final version of the questionnaire be sent to them for final approval before being distributed to all.

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Aldermen

In response to questions regarding the training, development and induction of Aldermen, the Assistant Town Clerk reported that new Aldermen were given an induction in the same way as any new Member would be and that these were normally conducted individually or in pairs.

He added that, as Aldermen progressed to the Mayoralty, a more focused programme of learning and development, focusing on things such as media exposure was available to individuals. He added that, to an extent, it was also the responsibility of the Aldermen to 'flag up' any areas in which they might need assistance or additional support.

The Committee and Member Services Manager added that the recent new Alderman had been invited to participate in the new Member Induction Programme and had also received the new Member Induction Packs.

Members' Photobook

In response to questions regarding the Members' photobook, the Committee and Member Services Officer reported that a new Photobook was currently in production but that Officers had been awaiting the appointment of three new Aldermen so as to ensure that this information was as up to date as possible.

It was explained that the document would be circulated in the near future and updated electronically going forward so that it could be circulated in PDF format in the future with greater ease.

The Chief Commoner highlighted that all up-to-date Member photographs were available on the public website and could be arranged either alphabetically or in Ward order.

Date of next meeting

The Group noted that the next meeting would take place on Friday, 13 September 2013 at 1 for 1.45pm.

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm

Chairman

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