

## MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

30 MAY 2019

Present:-

Councillors M Asvachin, R Hosking, D Sellis and C Slade (Chair)

Apologies:-

Councillors B Parsons, K Ball, A Connett, L Hellyer, M Shaw and P Twiss

Also in Attendance

**18      Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018 be signed as a correct record.

**19      Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

**20      SW Charter for Member Development - Re-accreditation**

The Member Development Officer outlined preparations for the re-accreditation of the South West Charter for Member Development, which included a self-assessment in September. Some Members would also be asked to take part in the onsite visit and assessment.

Members were supportive of the approach and the Member Development Officer undertook to take this forward.

**21      Personal Development Plans**

The Member Development Officer reported that the next round of Personal Development interviews was imminent, and that additional resource would be provided through the HR team to support these.

Members highlighted the value of personal development for Members and discussed the potential to provide mentorship training, both for County Councillors and for district council Members through the shared service, due to changes in political make up and leadership following district council elections.

The Member Development Officer undertook to discuss the potential for mentorship training at the upcoming shared service meeting.

**22      Learning and Development**

a) Scrutiny questioning skills

The Head of Scrutiny reported on the potential to provide training on scrutiny questioning skills to support Members' questioning during scrutiny committee meetings and in task group witness interviews. It was proposed that the Head of Scrutiny, supported by the Scrutiny Team would will deliver this training session through the shared service.

Members supported the approach and discussed the value of utilising experienced scrutiny Members to give examples of successful questioning as part of the training, as well the

potential to call upon the technical expertise of the scrutiny independent advisors. The importance of empowering Scrutiny Chairs to be strong and effective was also discussed.

b) Mental Health First Aid training

The Head of Scrutiny reported on the potential to provide Mental Health First Aid training for Members which would provide support and guidance around identifying those who were in need of help and signposting to the appropriate agencies.

Members welcomed additional training in this area.

c) Office 365

The Head of Scrutiny reported on the range of additional tools available to Members following the upgrade to Office 365. New tools such as 'Teams' which allowed the sharing and editing of documents could be trialled through a scrutiny task group. Members also discussed the availability of training and support for setting up councillor websites.

d) SEND masterclasses

The Head of Scrutiny reported that the Chief Officer for Children's Services had proposed five Masterclass sessions for Members to provide a more in depth understanding of issues surrounding SEND and the Council's response to the recent Ofsted and CQC joint local area SEND inspection, which identified significant areas of weakness in the local area's practice.

Following agreement by the scrutiny committee, the five sessions would take place over the next 12 months; three of which will be held on the morning of the Children's Scrutiny Committee, and one each on the morning of the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee. A schedule of proposed topics would be shared with Members in due course.

## **23 Member Development Schedule**

The Members reviewed the Member Development Schedule which outlined upcoming planned training, as well as training which had taken place over the last 12 months. Members welcomed the broad range of training and development opportunities available and noted the improved Member attendance at Scrutiny Masterclasses.

## **24 Shared Service Update**

The Member Development Officer reported that Teignbridge District Council had recently joined the shared service.

There was a need to revisit data protection training; the GDPR e-learning had been updated and all Members would need to complete this.

The 'Developing your leadership potential' programme which was delivered in partnership with South West Councils was very successful. 16 delegates from 6 different councils took part across five sessions and the programme was delivered for just under £2,000 in total.

Members welcomed the excellent value for money that this approach to leadership development achieved, and the added value of networking and learning from experiences at other local authorities that the joint sessions allowed.

From September the shared service would focus on induction style events for newly elected Members including introduction to scrutiny, communication skills and time management. There was an ambition to continue working with South West Councils to keep training costs down and the shared service viable. Members welcomed this ambition, noting that the shared service was highly valued by the member local authorities.

**25      Dates of Future Meetings**

Members noted future meetings as shown in the calendar of meetings at  
<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 10.30am

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 10.30am

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 10.30am

**\*DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 11.06 am