

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

10 March 2023

Present:-

Councillors M Asvachin, J Berry, A Connett, L Hellyer, C Leaver, A Saywell (Chair) and C Slade

Apologies:-

Councillors M Hartnell and D Sellis

Members attending in accordance with Standing Orders 8 and 25

2 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 29th September 2022 were agreed to as a correct record of the meeting.

3 **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

4 **Member Development and Training Log**

The Scrutiny Officer and Deputy Head of Democratic Services appraised Members of the training and development opportunities since the last meeting and the future training and development opportunities.

The report highlighted the previous masterclasses and member briefings that had taken place since the last steering group meeting and the upcoming opportunities.

A third date for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion session titled 'Legal and Moral Duties' will be advertised once a date is confirmed.

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services asked Members if there was any feedback from Members on additional sessions or training sessions that they want.

The Chair highlighted an upcoming all Member development day at County Hall where Members are invited to spend the day together conduct office tours and training sessions. The date for this be advertised in due course.

5 Member Wellbeing Survey 2022

Members reviewed the results of the most recent Member Wellbeing Survey. This, the fourth Member Wellbeing Survey ran from 1st December 2022 to 3rd January 2023. Just under half of Members responded to the survey (29 out of 60 or 48.3%). This was decrease compared to the previous survey (65%) but above the first and second surveys, which had response rates of 28.3% and 36.6% respectively.

As detailed in the report, the summary of the results is:

- Overall, the majority of respondents continue to feel positive, choosing between the two 'positive' responses. However, there is a continuing trend in this number falling and a rise in respondents with mixed emotions.
- Respondents are carrying out more activities or ways to support their wellbeing. Keeping in contact with friends and family was the most selected response, and there were declines in the number of respondents using exercise or a good routine to support their wellbeing. There was a concerning small number of respondents who stated they were seeking professional help.
- A large majority of Members (82%) responding to the survey continue to feel "well" supported by the Council.
- The majority of respondents don't feel at risk when carrying out their role as an elected member, and a small number reported some instances as part of the survey.
- 79% of respondents were satisfied with the overall Member Development offer of the Council and made suggestions for future training.
- Most respondents are confident in getting the information they need and using some of the Council's digital platforms. More needs to be done to ensure more Members are confident in using the Member's Area on SharePoint and utilise it's functions.

Members discussed the results with Officers and the overall Member development offer at the Council. In terms of the results of the survey, Members requested an analysis of newly elected Members (elected in 2021) against returning Members and a further deep dive into the results of Question 2 "Which of the following describes how you currently feel?"

Members spoke about the need to have a clearer Member Development Offer for the overall programme, and this is something Officers will be looking at.

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services asked for feedback from Members, recognising that everyone has a different learning style and the need to make training make it accessible for all Members. Members fed back around the positives of online/virtual meetings as an option, ensuring there is flexibility around when meetings happen and ensuring Member's time is well spent.

Finally, Members highlighted the recent Corporate Parenting Forum meeting on Thursday 16th February as an example of an accessible and enjoyable session and fed back their comments on these meetings in the past.

Action: Officers to repeat the feedback document that had been created for the previous surveys to respond to any concerns or comments raised and signpost Members to information.

6 Committee Rooms Feedback

The Deputy Head of Democratic Services asked Members to feedback on the equipment used for meetings in the Council Chamber and Committee Suite rooms. Specifically, this was about the meeting technology used and improving the remote technology in the Daw Room and Chamber.

Whilst it was acknowledged that the technology used to enable virtual meetings and remote attendance was impressive, Members discussed the practicalities and difficulties had when using Committee rooms at County Hall. Members highlighted sound and audio issues with the rooms because of the large rooms used for most meetings, the lack of hearing loops and the microphones.

Members expressed a preference for Committee meetings to be held back in the Daw Room, once the room was equipped with the modern technology needed. The Chair and Members spoke about the importance of having support in place for Committee clerks before and during meetings to ensure the smooth running of meetings, particularly those meetings with virtual/remote attendees.

Officers welcomed the views of Members at the meeting and the Chair (as the relevant Cabinet Member) would look to work with Officers in the relevant directorates to further these conversations.

7 Dates of Future Meetings

Members noted the dates of future meetings. The next meeting will be on Thursday 15th June 2023 at 10.30am.

NOTES:

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

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

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 11.29 am