

Charter for Member Development Sub-Committee – 26 March 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the **Charter for Member Development Sub-Committee** held on **26 March 2009** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr P A Capon

Cllr C I Black
Cllr T G Cutmore

Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

Mr D J Cottis
Mrs L Walker

VISITING MEMBERS

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn
Mr M G Drage

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Fowler - Head of Information and Customer Services
M Power - Committee Administrator

1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference were noted as follows: 'to oversee and lead on the process of applying for accreditation to the East of England Charter for Elected Member Development'.

2 MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT 2009/10

Members considered the report of the Head of Information and Customer Services on the proposals for the Member Training and Development Programme for 2009/10 prior to its submission to the Standards Committee on 2 April.

It was noted that 85% of the self-assessment questionnaires sent to Members had been returned; Sub-Committee Members were provided with a summary of responses from the completed questionnaires (Appendix 3). In light of comments received from Members, information provided about future training courses would include more specific details of who courses are primarily aimed at and whether the course content is new or a 'refresher' of previous information. The specific aims of the training would also be more detailed. The Sub-Committee was pleased at the response rate to the questionnaire.

Mandatory/competency training would take place in May/July 2009 and suggested course titles were included in the report. It was anticipated that the programme for the October/November and February/March training sessions would be developed in consultation with the Charter Sub-Committee. Further reference could then be made to the responses from Members contained in

the returned questionnaires, specifically in respect of training requests from individual Members.

Following discussion about transportation to training sessions held at St John Ambulance HQ in Rochford, Members were reminded that they were entitled to claim taxi expenses for travel to training sessions. There was also the option of car sharing with other Members who were driving to the course.

It was requested that the Head of Information and Customer Services investigates whether the 'modern councillor' e-learning service, to which each Rochford District Councillor has on-line access, contains a planning module that could count towards the mandatory requirements in respect of planning training.

In respect of the expectation that all Members attend two 2-hour planning related sessions in 2008/09, it was requested that a letter is written to all Members who had not attended the requisite planning training.

It was requested that the heading on Appendix 1 to the Report to Standards Committee be amended to read 'Member Learning & Development Attendances May 2009 – April 2010' for the forthcoming year.

Following discussion, it was agreed to recommend to the Standards Committee that, in addition to mandatory training for Members of the Development Control and Licensing Committees, training for Members of the Appeals Committee should be made compulsory. The training would be designed to keep Members abreast of new legislation and, as such, would not necessarily be held on an annual basis, but it would be necessary for Members to have received some training before sitting on an Appeals hearing.

It was recognised that Overview and Scrutiny training was important for Members of the Review Committee and in particular new Members of that Committee. A paragraph should be included in the Member Learning & Development programme recommending that Review Committee Members attend the training specifically designed for them.

Recommended to the Standards Committee

- (1) That the proposed training programme for 2009/10 as set out in the report be approved.
- (2) That the Head of Information and Customer Services investigates whether the 'modern councillor' e-learning service contained a planning module.
- (3) That a letter be written to all Members, and copied to Group Leaders, who had not attended the requisite planning training during 2008/09.
- (4) That it be mandatory that Members of the Appeals Committee receive appropriate training in order to keep Members abreast of new

legislation, the arrangements for this to be on the same basis as for mandatory planning and licensing training.

- (5) That a paragraph be included in the Member Learning & Development programme recommending that Review Committee Members attend the training specifically designed for them. (HICS)

3 NAME OF SUB-COMMITTEE

Recommended to the Standards Committee

That the Sub-Committee be renamed as the Charter Implementation Group. (HICS)

The meeting closed at 6.27 pm.

Chairman

Date

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