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**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL**

**Held on Thursday, 3 March 2011 at 10.00 am in  
St George's Room, Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham**

**PRESENT**

Mr I. Sherwood (Chairman)                      Mrs D.K.R. Irving  
Mr S.G. Bambridge                                      Mr S. J. F. Rogers  
Mr K.S. Gilbert

**Also Present**

Mr S. Askew    Councillor Claire Bowes

**In Attendance**

Stephen McGrath                                      - Member Services Manager  
Leanne Neave    - HR Advisor/Member Development Trainer  
Natalie King    - HR Manager  
Jane Osborne    - Committee Officer

**27/11 MINUTES**

The Chairman advised that with regard to the action under Agenda item 6/11 6.a (first paragraph on page 4) he had written to the Chief Executive on 3 March, and passed on the comments of the Members of the Panel as requested. He would circulate the response in due course.

The Member Services Manager updated the Panel with regard to the action under Agenda Item 6/11 6.a (9<sup>th</sup> paragraph on page 3), in future Minutes of the Member Development Panel would be included on Cabinet Agendas for information.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**28/11 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Robin Goreham.

**29/11 URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

**30/11 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None.

**Action By**

**Julie Britton  
Councillor**

**Ian  
Sherwood**

**Action By**

**31/11 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING**

Mr S Askew, Executive Member for Corporate Resources, and Cllr Bowes, Executive Support Member were in attendance.

**32/11 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

32 .1 Member Induction

The report provided an overview of the suggested Induction Process for the new Elected Members for Breckland following the Election on 5 May 2011.

Mr Bambridge believed that the new IT kit should be available to new Members on their first day as a Councillor (6<sup>th</sup> May) along with the opportunity to talk to IT Officers.

The HR Advisor/Member Development Trainer advised that during the 'Market Place' session scheduled for 12.00 noon – 13.15 p.m there would be a comprehensive IT stand with information available on it to new Councillors. This would cover the IT that would be available to them, IT support, additional software, training, and details on the new ways of working with regard to video conferencing and face to face interviews over the internet.

The Executive Member for Corporate Resources said it would be highly unlikely that the new IT kit would be available before the Induction took place.

Mr Bambridge explained that the Business Improvement Sub Committee on 1 March had recommended a choice of three options with regard to new IT which would now go forward for a decision. Officers from IT had made a commitment that the equipment could be provided if one of the routes recommended went ahead. Mr Bambridge saw no reason why training could not be made available for new Councillors on 6 May or their Induction Day shortly afterwards.

The Panel requested that the HR Advisor/Member Development Trainer liaised with IT to ascertain if the new kit would be ready and if new Councillors were competent in its use, he could see no reason why they could not start with new the kit. She agreed to include IT on the Agenda at 3.30.

It was not known what provision there would be for old kit to be gathered in from non elected Members.

In answer to a question raised by Mr Gilbert with regard to the requirement of the Development Control to have 4 existing Members to make quorate at the first DC meeting on 16 May, the HR Advisor/Member Development Trainer explained to serve on that Committee, Members need to have had training before being allowed to vote. The current Chairman would be happy to move the meeting to another date, but if she was re-elected she would brief new Members prior to their first meeting and conduct a more formal

**Leanne  
Neave**

**Action By**

briefing afterwards. Mr Bambridge said it should be a requirement that training was undertaken before new Members were allowed to vote, and pointed out that there were existing Councillors who could attend if need be.

**RESOLVED** to agree the basis of the new Member Induction Programme, as detailed in the report.

The Chairman thanked the Member Services Manager and HR Advisor/Member Development Trainer for the work they had carried out on the New Member Induction.

**32 .2 Member Training and Development Budget**

The Report attached to the Agenda was the same one as had appeared on the 20 January Agenda, so the HR Advisor/Member Development Trainer tabled an updated report which included information which related to the expenditure made and committed on Member Development Training in 2010/11.

The Chairman was happy with the information provided which consisted of a more detailed breakdown of figures as had been previously requested. It was pointed out that little training had been provided in the past few months given that Members were coming to the end of the current term in office.

The report was noted.

**33/11 IMPROVING ACCESS TO LOCAL DEMOCRACY**

**33 .1 Town & Parish Council Forum**

The Member Services Manager gave a verbal update on the arrangements for the Forum to be held on 14 March 2011.

45 Town and Parish Councillors and 4 or 5 were District Councillors, had advised they would attend.

The three items that had been put forward for the agenda were :-

- Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Environmental Protection Team
- Rev Active - Economic Development

The Chairman asked that reminders be sent out to those concerned. The Member Services Manager confirmed that Teresa Smith, Committee Officer, was already scheduled to do that.

**33 .2 Prospective Councillor Campaign**

A verbal update on the Prospective Councillor Evening held on 2 March 2011 was given by the Member Services Manager. The evening had gone very well, and it had been noted that there had been 51 attendees excluding Officers and speakers (with 48

**Stephen  
McGrath  
Leanne  
Neave**

**Teresa  
Smith**

**Action By**

signatures on Attendance List). 80% of those who had attended had been prospective Town or Parish Councillors with the other 20% prospective District Councillors.

The Chairman said it had been a very valuable and very well attended evening, and felt the success was due to Breckland being a democratic and open Council.

Cllr Irving was encouraged that prospective Councillors had asked about training.

Mr Bambridge felt that it had been held a bit late, and suggested that ready for a future election it could take place before the Christmas, which would leave room in the lead up to the election to have some training in place for those who proposed to stand for election and to further encourage those who thought of standing.

Whilst the Chair agreed in some respects, his experience of the public was that they do not get interested in elections until nearer the time, but it might be worth trying to do something earlier.

Mr Gilbert suggested that public awareness could be raised nearer the time, and that anyone interested should contact Breckland for more information.

The Chairman congratulated the Officer Team on organising an excellent event.

**34/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman thanked the Executive Member and Deputy Executive Support Member for attending.

He stated he had enjoyed being Chairman of the Member Development Panel for the last three years and thanked all the team and the constructiveness of the Panel.

Proposed dates were tabled for future meetings which were :

Thursday 2 June 2011 – 10 a.m Dereham Room  
Thursday 1 September 2011 – 10 a.m Dereham Room  
Thursday 24 November 2011 – 10 a.m Dereham Room

The Chairman was pleased these would be held in the Dereham Room rather than the St. Georges Room.

He hoped that whatever Councillors were on the next Member Development Panel, they invite two newly elected Members, as it had helped having Cllrs Irving and Rogers join, also that additional meetings be arranged apart from the three proposed.

The meeting closed at 10.35 am