
BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL

**Held on Thursday, 5 December 2013 at 10.00 am in
Room 35, Breckland Council, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr M J Nairn
Mr T R Carter (Chairman)

Mr T. J. Jermy

Also Present

Mrs B Canham

In Attendance

Leanne Neave
Teresa Smith

- Member Trainer
- Committee Officer

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33/13 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2013 were confirmed as a correct record.

34/13 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Bambridge, Gilbert and Robinson.

35/13 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

36/13 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

37/13 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING

Councillor Banham was in attendance.

38/13 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

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39/13 FINANCE REPORT

The Member Trainer presented the report which was tabled at the meeting. It informed Members the total expenditure was £7935 which left £9500 in the budget for the remaining financial year.

The report also provided a breakdown of two training courses provided by an external trainer showing the estimated and actual cost per head.

The Member Trainer mentioned that due to interest by Members for the Speed Reading course, it was decided to ask the trainer to deliver the course in-house. However, due to Members cancelling it then became non-cost effective as first thought so it was offered to Officers to reduce the cost.

It highlighted the need for Members to sign up for training courses, especially if an external provider was being brought in. If Members were unable to attend training sessions they should send their apologies.

Mr Nairn added that the Speed Reading training was really good, worthwhile and would he recommend it to all Members.

The Chairman said that he felt the financial budget was in a healthy position, and he had requested that the budget remain the same in 2014-2015.

40/13 CHARTER PLUS DE-BRIEF

The Member Trainer shared the areas of strength the Assessment team had noted which included the training budget, commitment to leadership development and the level of commitment to development from the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive Officer.

Areas for development would be considered once the full report had been received. An area which was suggested had taken a step back was the work on community development, due to the Member Development Team disbanding. Once the full report had been received discussions would take place to rectify this area.

The Chairman said that the Charter Plus was a valued mark for the Council to have.

41/13 NEW MEMBER INDUCTION

The Member Trainer said she had been asked if new ideas could be generated on the New Member Induction.

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The main question asked of Members was how long they thought the Induction should be.

Mrs Canham suggested that it should be held over two-days as there could be information overload if covered in one day.

A Market place forum was held during the 2011 Induction where departments had exhibitions to demonstrate to Members what they covered. Members said they found this very interesting.

Mr Nairn said he found it useful that he had been given parameters of what he could and could not do and the responsibilities of a councillor. He said that two days would be acceptable, but it was also very important to consider people who may be working and would need to make arrangements for childcare, or time off work.

The Member Trainer suggested that the Member Induction dates should be included in the nomination packs that were sent out.

The Member Trainer asked what training should be covered and it was proposed that the Committee structure, decision making, freedom of information, regulatory committees and risk awareness should be covered.

Mr Nairn asked for an introduction to all committees and also to include what the Officer role was.

The Chairman said that a Mentoring system was in place and should also be used to provide support to new Members.

The Member Trainer said the Personal Development Plans would be mentioned as part of the Induction. It would also include a tour of Elizabeth House, ARP in Thetford and a visit to the contact centre to raise awareness of calls the frontline staff received from residents.

It was hoped that IT equipment would be available for Members on the Induction days, and basic IT Training would also be covered.

Mr Jermy suggested that a briefing session should be given on the Shared Management process and how it worked.

The Member Trainer also proposed basic Media training should be included specifically on how to work with and deal with the Media, as well as using social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

She said she would begin to draw up a programme for Induction

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for New Members for future discussion.

42/13 PLANNING COMMITTEE TRAINING

The Chairman was asked by a Member of the Planning Committee for training to be provided for the Planning Committee members. Councillor Nunn said he would be able to deliver some planning training as he had done it for the Local Government Authority (LGA).

It had been suggested that the Planning Advisory Service could deliver a workshop on specific issues.

Mr Jermy said he had received a few complaints regarding planning and noted that the biggest failure was the presentation of outcomes.

The Chairman said that he was aware that comments had been made during planning meetings. Members needed to be clear on what they were saying and why, and understand the implications of what was being put forward.

The Chairman was awaiting further information from the Leader and would liaise with the Member Trainer.

43/13 TRAINING FEEDBACK

The Member Trainer was awaiting feedback on the Social Media training and would feedback to Members as soon possible.

44/13 NEXT MEETING

The arrangements for the next meeting scheduled for Thursday 13 February 2014 were noted.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am

CHAIRMAN