

MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

**Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.**

**Date: Thursday, 18 December
2008**

Time: 2.00 p.m.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 25th September, 2008 (herewith) (Pages 1 - 4)
3. Update on the Modern.Gov and eCasework Improvement Projects (Presentation and Update by Richard Copley)
4. Paul Wheeler Paper (Cath Saltis to report)
5. Update on SYIP (Cath Saltis to report)
6. Member Development Programme 2009 (Cath Saltis to report)
7. Date and Time of Next Meeting - Thursday, 22nd January, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

**MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL
THURSDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2008**

Present:- Councillor Sharman (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Dodson, Gosling, Lakin, Littleboy, McNeely, Pickering, Turner, Whelbourn and Wootton.

Apologies for Absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor G. A. Russell), Councillors Cutts, Hodgkiss, Hughes, Rushforth, Sangster and Smith.

Also in attendance was Councillor Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Innovation for Minute No. 12 below.

10. E-CASEWORK FOR COUNCILLORS

The Members' Training and Development Panel received a product demonstration of the "e-Casework for Councillors".

e-Casework was a case management system developed by and for Elected Members in the London Borough of Lambeth. It allows the submission of cases/complaints for action by officers via web browsers and e-mail. This provided a facility for a better organised way of working, kept an easy track of cases when passed between different officers and had automatic e-mail notification when cases were overdue.

Members agreed that they were unsatisfied with the current system and wished to progress the introduction of a much more easily accessible product which could clearly identify progress of a case/complaint or to see what action had been taken to resolve.

It was, therefore, suggested, that contact be made with officers and Members of the London Borough of Lambeth to receive feedback on the product's functionality and ease of use and comparisons with other products that may be on the market.

Discussion ensued on the best way to progress the introduction of a new case management system for Members' surgery enquiries in Rotherham, including consideration by the E-Government Board and the Corporate Management Team. On this basis it was suggested that a small group of Members meet with relevant officers to discuss how to progress surgery management in Rotherham..

Agreed:- (1) That Rob List be thanked for his very informative demonstration.

(2) That the Scrutiny Adviser contact London Borough of Lambeth to establish feedback on the e-Casework for Councillors case management system.

(3) That this issue be referred to the E-Government Board to assess its

compatibility with ICT in Rotherham and its links with the IT Strategy.

(4) That Councillors Austen, Gosling and Pickering be nominated to meet with relevant officers to consider the possibility of progressing a case management system in Rotherham.

(5) That a report on progress by submitted to the next meeting of this Panel to be held on Thursday, 30th October, 2008, at 3.00 p.m.

11. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 24TH JULY, 2008

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th July, 2008, were agreed as a correct record.

Reference was made to Minute No. 8 (Portable Loop System) and confirmed that it had not been possible to obtain a portable loop system on a trial basis. It was suggested that contact be made with other organisations such as NHS Rotherham, South Yorkshire Police or other neighbouring Local Authorities, to establish if they had such a provision and whether there was any provision to share or loan on an ad hoc basis.

12. UPDATE ON MEMBER ICT

Councillor Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Innovation, introduced a report which had been submitted to the E-Government Board for consideration.

The contents were discussed and covered:-

- Members' Use of ICT Facilities.
- Internet Access.
- E-mail Use.
- Blackberries and Similar Devices.
- Remove Access.
- Memory Sticks.
- Procurement of ICT Kit.
- Members' Training.

It was also suggested that Members receive a copy of the ICT Strategy to view from a Member perspective and to consider how to move issues forward.

Reference was made to the plans being considered for the future of the Town Hall and the Eric Manns Building and it was suggested that as part of the planning stage, consideration be given to the final report of the Scrutiny Review of Community Leadership, This report recommended various aspects to meet Members' needs and should be a starting point in any deliberations, along with discussions with Members.

Discussion also ensued on the future use of redundant ICT equipment

and the protocols associated with disposal.

The Members' Training and Development Panel also heard about difficulties still being experienced by some Members regarding connectivity following the introduction of broadband. It was suggested that Members experiencing difficulties receive support as a matter of urgency.

Agreed:- (1) That the developments to date and the proposed future developments be noted.

(2) That Richard Copley circulate a copy of the ICT Strategy to all Members of this Training and Development Panel.

(3) That consideration be by the group currently developing plans for the future use of the Town Hall be asked to look at the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Community Leadership as part of the planning proposals for the Town Hall and Eric Manns Building.

(4) That Members experiencing connection and functionality problems with broadband receive attention and support as soon as possible.

13. MEMBER OPINION SURVEY

The Chairman introduced Debby Robinson, Senior HR Officer, who was to give a presentation on the Member Opinion Survey.

The presentation drew specific attention to:-

- The Fourth Member Survey.
- Response Rate.
- Areas to Celebrate.
- Improvement Areas.
- Similarity to Employees.
- Other Employee Issues.

A copy of the Members' Opinion Survey was circulated for all those present.

A discussion and a question/answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Promotion, publicity and awareness raising of actions to deal with stress.
- The witnessing of bullying and harassment.
- Actions to be taken forward.

Agreed:- That the contents of the Member Opinion Survey be noted.

14. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Sioned-Mair Richards, Scrutiny Adviser, introduced a report which summarised Member Development activities that had been undertaken in the last months. These included:-

- Post Graduate Course in Local Government Modernisation – Attendees Councillors Austen, Barron, Sangster and Wyatt.
- IDeA Local Leadership Conference – Milton Keynes – 3rd September, 2008.
- Rotherham Show – Role of Councillors Promotion.
- Ward Walkabouts.
- Local Democracy Week.
- Member Development Programme.
- South Yorkshire Improvement Programme.

Councillor Austen circulated a copy of an advertisement that appeared in FIRST Magazine relating to a pack on how Members could be involved in schools as part of the Citizenship Curriculum. The value of this pack was to be sought, with consideration to the circulation to relevant parties.

It was also pointed out that the promotional material and boards used for Rotherham Show on the role of Councillors was available for use elsewhere.

A report was also due to be circulated on the conference held at the South Yorkshire Criminal Justice Unit, which was found to be very interesting and informative by the attendees.

Agreed:- (1) That the Member Development initiatives undertaken be noted.

(2) That work now be extended on promoting the role of Members, including the information pack from FIRST Magazine.

15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That the next meeting of the Panel be amended to now take place on Thursday, 30th October, 2008 at 3.00 p.m. Letters informing Members of this change will be circulated in due course.