



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on Tuesday, 26 March 2024 at Remote Meeting via Teams at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillors Karen Mundry and independent (non-elected) member Derek Barnett

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Laura Smith, Kath Buckley, Peter Coan and Rob Moreton.

2 NOTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That

[1] the notes from the previous meeting on Tuesday 12th December 2023 be approved as a correct record.

3 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022-24 - IMPLEMENTATION - QUARTERLY MONITORING

The Governance Officer presented the report on the Member Development Strategy 2022-24 Quarterly Monitoring, updating Members on progress made against the Implementation Plan for the quarter. She provided an update in each of the objectives that were included in the Strategy.

Objective 3 – Provision of an Annual Member Development Programme

Further discussion was held during Item 4 – Member Development Programme 2023-24 – Quarterly Monitoring.

Objective 4 – Delivery of a comprehensive and effective Induction process for new Members

Further discussion was held during Item 8 – Discussion Item - Proposals for 2024-25 Member Development and Induction Programme.

Objective 5 – Member Champions

Further discussion was held during Item 7 – Discussion Item – Review of the Member Champion Arrangements.

Objective 6 – Continuous Development

Further discussion was held during Item 6 – Discussion Paper: Member Satisfaction Survey 2023-24.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Member Development Strategy 2022-24 Implementation – Quarterly Monitoring be noted.

4 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2023-24 - QUARTERLY MONITORING

The Governance Officer presented a quarterly update on the Member Development Programme for 2023-24. She advised that Members were invited to attend two Member Planning Day sessions and had the opportunity to virtually attend a webinar on fire risks associated with lithium batteries.

It was also reported that all Members also had the opportunity to visit their local fire station but there had been no uptake to-date. A Member queried why the invite had received no responses. The Governance Officer stated that there were no responses to the initial email however, it was not to say that Members had not arranged their own visits to local stations through UPG meetings or their officer buddy. A Member advised that she had a tour of fire stations on the rise of UPG meetings.

It was suggested that the Leadership Development Advisor could ask Members during their Personal Development interviews whether they had visited their local fire station, and if not could one be arranged.

A Member also queried whether there was an official opening of the newly constructed Crewe Fire Station. It was noted that a group visit would benefit Members.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the progress on the delivery of the Member Development Programme 2023-24 be noted; and

[2] the Governance Officer arrange a member visit to the new Crewe Fire Station.

5 DRAFT MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP REVIEW 2023-24

The Governance Officer presented the draft review which considered Member training and development activities undertaken throughout the municipal year. The report contained an overview of the progress against the objectives of the Member Development Strategy 2022-24 and feedback from training and development sessions.

The final report was due to be considered by the Fire Authority on Wednesday 24th April 2024. Members were satisfied with the content of the report.

RECOMMENDED: That

[1] subject to minor amendments, the Draft Review of Member Training and Development 2023-24 be approved by the Fire Authority at its meeting on 24th April 2024.

6 DISCUSSION ITEM - MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY 2023-24

The Governance Officer introduced the discussion item on the Member Satisfaction Survey for 2023-24. She advised that unlike the survey from previous years, a new section on the performance of the Governance department had been included as part of consultation feedback for the Governance departmental review. Feedback was requested from the Group on the proposed questions and delivery of the survey.

Members were satisfied with the proposed questions. The Leadership Development Advisor suggested that the survey could be produced via Slido. Members were receptive to use Slido and officers agreed to explore the survey and review its effectiveness for the collation of data.

It was also agreed that the survey would be ready for Cheshire Fire Authority meeting on Wednesday 24th April 2024 to encourage a high completion rate. Any Members that had not returned their completed survey at the meeting would be asked to complete the survey virtually.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the proposed questions for the Member Satisfaction Survey 2023-24 be approved; and

[2] the Member Satisfaction Survey 2023-24 be produced for the Cheshire Fire Authority meeting on Wednesday 24th April 2024.

7 DISCUSSION ITEM - REVIEW OF THE MEMBER CHAMPION ARRANGEMENTS

The Governance Officer introduced the discussion item which enabled Members to provide feedback on the existing arrangements for the Member Champions. She advised the feedback from the group would be included within the formal review completed by the Governance and Constitution Committee.

Members provided their feedback following the item on Member Champion activity that was presented at the Member Planning Day held on Friday 22nd March 2024. It was noted that the presentation was well received. However, there was a variance in the length and detail of some of the activity summaries. It was suggested that officers could produce a template to assist Members when completing their activity

summaries.

A Member queried whether the Authority had a champion for contingency and emergency. He noted the importance of business continuity following the recent events of the pandemic and Manchester Arena bombing. The Governance Officer advised that the Chair; Deputy Chair; Group Spokespersons; and Lead Members formed the Business Continuity Committee. It was part of the Business Continuity Committee's responsibilities to introduce, monitor and review contingency planning arrangements in the event of disruptions to the delivery of the service.

RECOMMENDED: That

[1] the feedback provided by the Group be considered by the Governance and Constitution Committee during their review of the Member Champions Arrangements.

8 DISCUSSION ITEM - PROPOSALS FOR 2024-25 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND INDUCTION PROGRAMME

The Governance Officer introduced the discussion item which provided a summary of the proposals for the new Member induction. The Group discussed the three aspects of the new Member induction: the welcome pack, including the Member Induction Handbook; induction activities; and meetings with officer buddies.

Officers advised that all-out local elections in Warrington Borough Council were taking place this year, and there was at least one Member officially retiring from being a councillor this year. Therefore, it was expected that there would be some new Members joining the Fire Authority for 2024-25. Members commented that although there were benefits to an induction session held in person, it needed to be practical and would not be suitable for only one new Member. It was proposed an induction session would be provisionally organised and only confirmed once the Service received confirmation of seat allocations from the unitary authorities.

The Group provided positive feedback to the officers on the proposals within the discussion item. It was noted that the welcome pack contained relevant information and Member Induction Handbook was a helpful tool. The Governance Officer advised that the Handbook was in the process of being updated and was expected to be distributed in time for the first Fire Authority meeting of 2024-25.

The Governance and Corporate Planning Manager requested suggestions on topics for webinars that could take place in the Member Development Programme for 2024-25. A Member suggested that the winner of the IFE Lecturette competition could present their winning presentation to all Fire Authority members.

RESOLVED: That

[1] officers continue with the proposed arrangements for new Fire Authority member induction for 2024-25; and

- [2] officers schedule a webinar on the winning presentation of the IFE Lecturette competition within the Member Development Programme 2024-25.**

9 DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2024-25

The Governance Officer presented the draft Work Programme of the Member Training and Development Group for 2024-25. Members noted the content for upcoming meetings and were satisfied with the virtual format.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the Work Programme for 2024-25 for the Member Training and Development Group be approved.**