



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on Tuesday, 5 October 2021 at Remote Meeting via Skype at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillors Gina Lewis (Chair), David Brown, Karen Mundry, Stuart Parker and independent (non-elected) member Derek Barnett

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rob Moreton.

2 NOTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That

[1] the notes of the meeting on Tuesday 6th July 2021 be approved as a correct record.

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

The Governance Officer presented the report on the draft Member Development Strategy 2022-24 (the Strategy) and provided a quarterly update on the progress made against the Implementation Plan.

She advised that the Strategy had been updated to make reference to the Member Induction Handbook as part of the Induction process and new dates given for the Implementation Plan. The Member Training and Development Group (the Group) welcomed the Strategy and agreed to recommend its approval to the Fire Authority following the removal of acronyms within the Implementation Plan.

The Group also noted the quarterly update on each of the objectives that were included in the Implementation Plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the Strategy.

Objective 1 – Identify and prioritise Member training and development needs

Members noted that most of the Member Development Reviews had taken place. Further discussion was held during Item 5 on the agenda.

Objective 3 – Provision of an Annual Member Development Programme

Further discussion was held during Item 4 of the agenda.

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

Further discussion was held during Item 6 of the agenda.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the draft Member Development Strategy 2022-24 be recommend to the Fire Authority on 8th December 2021 for approval; and

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

4 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2021-22 - QUARTERLY MONITORING

The Governance Officer presented a quarterly update on the Member Development Programme for 2021-22. She advised that a number of training and development opportunities had taken place throughout the second quarter.

The Group noted that the introduction of Skype training sessions had been well received. It was suggested that additional Skype training sessions be provided on the Rapid Response Rescue Units and response from firefighters on newly issued equipment.

A Member raised concerns that only 2 Members had attended the tour of Safety Central. The Governance Officer assured the group that the tour of Safety Central was provided annually and was mainly for the benefit of new Members who had not yet visited that facilities. The Group requested that Democratic Services contact the new Members to ensure they have the opportunity to visit the centre.

The Group also highlighted the importance of the tour of the new Training Centre scheduled on the rise of the Member Planning Day on 12th November 2021. The Group suggested that smaller groups of 5 or 6 Members from different local authorities be guided around the Training Centre and more dates be arranged to ensure all Members had the opportunity to attend.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the progress on the delivery of the Member Development Programme 2021-22 be noted.

5 MEMBER PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW UPDATE

The Leadership Development Advisor provided an update on the Member Personal Development Reviews. She informed the group that 22 Members had received their Personal Development Review via Skype or telephone and the remaining 2 Members had theirs's scheduled.

New Members were sent a scoring matrix in advance of their meeting with the Leadership Development Advisor. New Members commented that they valued their induction and the first meeting with their Buddies.

Established Members reviewed their scoring from the previous year. Similarly to the new Members, it was noted that they also valued their working relationship with their officer Buddies.

The Leadership Development Advisor advised that the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted on the development of Members. However, most of the training sessions that could not be held last year had been incorporated into the 2021-22 programme.

It was acknowledged that all Member Champions had a better understanding of their roles. The Champions commented that there had been further development of these roles however, it was noted that some were unaware of their lead officer contacts. The Member Champions also asked whether they could update the Fire Authority on their Champion work.

The group discussed the advantages and limitations that virtual meetings presented during the year. The Group appreciated the opportunity to meet in person for future meetings and training events.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Member Personal Development Review Update be noted.

6 DISCUSSION ITEM: MENTORING

The Chair introduced the discussion item which explored Members' expectations of a mentoring system for the Fire Authority. The Governance Officer advised that the Group had requested an item on mentoring during its meeting on 8th December 2020. A number of questions were provided to assist the group in their discussion.

The Group discussed whether a mentoring system featuring officers would benefit Members. It was suggested that mentoring could assist Members when they were asked about new service delivery methods such as cardiac response or when working with Trade Unions. Despite the benefits a mentoring system may produce, the Group agreed that the existing Member/Officer Buddy System was sufficient for handling similar issues.

A Member suggested that the mentoring system could be used between existing Members and new Fire Authority members. The Group noted that Group Leaders act as mentors for new Members on an informal process and there was no need to formalise this existing system.

The Group agreed that there was no appetite to introduce a mentoring system due to the sufficient systems already in place such as the Member Officer Buddy System and informal Group Leader mentoring.

7 DISCUSSION ITEM: MEMBER/OFFICER BUDDY SYSTEM REVIEW

The Chair introduced the discussion item which considered the existing arrangements for the Member/Officer Buddy System. The group discussed their personal arrangements with their officer buddies and noted that they meet regularly and have good working relationships with officers.

The group requested that questions to assess the efficiency of the Member/Officer Buddy System should be included in the Personal Development Reviews. The Leadership Development Advisor agreed that the questions would be incorporated into future Personal Development Reviews.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Member Personal Development Review incorporate questions on the Member/Officer Buddy System.

8 WORK PROGRAMME 2021-22

The Governance Officer provided a copy of the Member Training and Development Work Programme for 2021-22. She advised that further discussion was needed with the Monitoring Officer to determine whether the Member Champion review was required for the next meeting as the Governance and Constitution Committee were reviewing the Member Champion roles.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Work Programme 2021-22 for the Member Training and Development Group be noted.