

**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP  
THURSDAY, 19 MAY 2022**

Held at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West  
Bridgford

**PRESENT:**

Councillors R Mallender (Chairman), T Combellack, G Dickman, B Gray,  
A Phillips, K Shaw and Mrs C Jeffreys

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

C Caven-Atack	Service Manager - Corporate Services
G Dennis	Legal Services Manager
T Coop	Democratic Services Officer
E Richardson	Democratic Services Officer

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillors B Buschman, D Mason and G Williams

**20 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**21 Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 February 2022**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**22 Become a Councillor Guide and Events**

The Service Manager – Corporate Services reminded the Group that at its meeting in February 2022, the Group were asked to consider the ‘Be a Councillor Guide’ and had made a number of suggestions in respect of the 2022 Guide. They also considered the supporting events and media campaign that runs alongside the publication of the ‘Be a Councillor Guide’.

The Service Manager – Corporate Services provided the Group with a draft version of the ‘Become a Councillor Guide’ information pack for 2022 to take away to consider and provide comment within the week enabling the document to be published in early June.

The Group were informed of a Become a Councillor event for potential new Councillors, which is expected to be delivered on 14 July 2022. The event is expected to bring the ‘Be a Councillor Guide’ document alive with a Q & A session, short videos and a social media campaign.

The Group requested the document be sent electronically and did not provide any comments at the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Member Development Group endorse the campaign and Become a Councillor Guide for 2022.

## 23 **Review of Councillors Community Support Scheme**

The Service Manager - Corporate Services provided a report in respect of the Councillors' Community Support Scheme which is due for review prior to the Borough elections in May 2023 and were advised that the last review was undertaken in 2016 with the current version of the scheme going live in April 2017.

The Service Manager - Corporate Services explained that during the early phase of the Covid-19 pandemic the scheme was adjusted to allow Councillors to draw-down a proportion of their allocation for a swifter distribution to meet community needs. The scheme has since reverted back to normal administration which better meets public transparency and audit requirements.

The Group were informed that applications are approved by the Council's Monitoring Officer and that she has made suggested changes to the Scheme Guidance and Application Form to reduce the number of applications not meeting the Schemes criteria.

The following changes have been proposed by the Monitoring Officer:

- Clarify the arrangements with regard to the Scheme during the pre-election period (including by-elections)
- Details about the annual audit and requirements to submit suitable evidence with the application
- Additional criteria to ensure funds are not misappropriated where there is a more appropriate source of funding (such as a school PTA or equivalent)
- A number of references to the need to demonstrate broad community benefit
- Measures to identify and limit multiple applications from the same applicant through different councillors so that the benefit of the scheme may be widely allocated
- Clarification regarding the use of this Scheme for individual grants where other sources of funding are available
- The requirement to sign the guidance before accessing the Scheme

The Group were asked to review these changes and discuss any further improvements.

The Chairman expressed that the changes suggested by the Monitoring Officer were acceptable and the Group agreed they would provide better public transparency and meet audit requirements.

Members suggested a system where at the end of the financial year any unspent money could be opened up to Councillors to apply for extra funding for their parishes so that the funds allocated for the Councillor Community Support

Scheme are used in full at the end of the year and not paid back to Corporate Council Reserves. The Service Manager - Corporate Services advised that unspent money from 2021/22 was used to support Parish Jubilee celebrations.

The Group noted that in respect of unspent money Councillors in wards where there were two or more ward Councillors advised that they work together to spend the money allocated to them in full and also to prevent multiple applications from the same applicant.

Members asked whether the form could be submitted electronically without having to print and wet sign the application form. The Service Manager - Corporate Services explained that an ink signature is a requirement of the audit process, but explained that she would continue to raise this with the auditors.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Member Development Group:

- a) Approve the changes suggested by the Monitoring Officer
- b) Discuss any additional improvements with officers present at the meeting.

The meeting closed at 6.24 pm.

CHAIRMAN