

MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP
WEDNESDAY, 28 APRIL 2021
Held at 7.00 pm via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT:

Councillors R Mallender (Chairman), T Combellack, B Gray, A Phillips,
J Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood and G Williams

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

C Caven-Atack	Service Manager - Corporate Services
T Coop	Democratic Services Officer
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager
L Webb	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

Councillors K Shaw

10 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

11 Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 January 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2020 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

12 Councillor Community Grant Scheme Consultation

The Service Manager – Finance and Corporate Services presented the report of the Monitoring Officer which provided the Group with an update on the councillor community grant scheme review. It was noted that following feedback from Councillors it was proposed that a consultation of the community support scheme be brought forward to the summer of 2021. It was noted that the community support scheme was revised in early 2020 so that funds could be accessed swiftly in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and that over £39,000 was allocated to community groups, schools and charities over the 2020/21 period. The Group were informed that the Democratic Services Manager would undertake an audit of the funds allocated during 2020/21 and that the £1000 allocated to each councillor every year was considered as part of the Council's annual budget process.

The Group were asked to consider the current process of the community support scheme and the following suggestions were made to take into consideration in the review of the community support scheme:

- Some organisations are contacting multiple councillors – this should be monitored and communicated to councillors why some applications could be successful or unsuccessful for the same organisation.
- A tick box to ensure that evidence for the application is received for example invoices, receipts, email from applicant with breakdown of costs.
- Progress updates to councillors which would include when an application has been approved, processed and paid to the applicant.
- An update to all councillors to inform them how much each councillor has been spent.
- to publish the successful applications of the community support scheme on the Council's website to improve transparency.
- A simplified application form and guidance.
- The community support scheme be included in the induction programme for new councillors and for them to be provided with examples of successful applications.

It was **RESOLVED** that

- a) the report of the Monitoring Officer be noted;
- b) the Community Support Scheme be reviewed in the summer of 2021 taking into account the suggestions of the Member Development Group; and
- c) a consultation take place for all councillors to express their views of the community support scheme in its current format.

13 **Councillor Training Programme 2021/22**

The Service Manager – Finance and Corporate Services presented their report which presented a draft councillor training programme for 2021/22. It was noted that the training programme had primarily been constructed from the training which should have been delivered during 200/21 but was put on hold due to the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Group asked questions regarding e-learning courses for Councillors. The Group were informed that training courses covering topics such as GDPR were mandatory for all councillors and would need to be completed face-to-face if they were not completed through the e-learning portal. It was also noted that councillors would need to complete training on GDPR within 12 months and then would have to re-take the training every four years if re-elected. The Service Manager – Finance and Corporate Services agreed to investigate whether e-learning courses could be requested by councillors.

It was also suggested that training on topics such as planning, planning enforcement and 'your role as a councillor' should be made mandatory with regular refresher training. Additionally, the Group requested that councillors receive annual updates that included training that they had attended. It was noted that this would be helpful when requesting for substitutes for meeting

such as planning committee which required mandatory training.

It was **RESOLVED** that

- a) the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services be noted; and
- b) the training programme for 2021/22 be noted.

14 **Councillor Learning and Development Policy**

The Service Manager – Finance and Corporate Services explained that the Councillor Learning and Development Policy was due to be reviewed in July 2021.

The meeting closed at 7.53 pm.

CHAIRMAN