

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP

10TH JANUARY 2014

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Jimmy Mahon (Chair) and Councillor Leslie Rennie

Apologies of absence were received from: Councillors Steve Niblock and Pat Moloney

Also Present: Democratic Services Manager – Helen Peek
Organisational Development Manager – Lynn Hughes
Democratic Services Officer – Nicholas Pitchers

Apologies received from: Deputy Democratic Services Manager – Kelly Johnson

1. Minutes of Last MDG Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting, held on 13th August 2013, were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the chair.

2. Actions Arising From Minutes

The group considered actions arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

Portal Access for Members:

The Learning Lunch scheduled for 19th November was postponed due to an additional strategy meeting; however clinic days will be arranged for Members once the new Members room is complete.

Feedback from Members Following Attendance at Events:

Members considered that, in light of the limited feedback received to date, it would be worthwhile to submit a report to a future Authority meeting to highlight to Members, the importance of providing feedback to the Authority to enable information to be collated into a report for consideration at the last Authority meeting of the Municipal year. This will enable the Authority to consider the merit in having representation at events, what Members and the Authority gain from attendance weighted against the costs of attendance. This should assist the Authority consider future attendance at events.

Review of Station Visits:

The group considered that station visits offer Members another avenue of training and are useful in understanding operational procedures such as the firefighter watch system.

Provision of Employee Training:

The Organisational Development Manager confirmed that work was currently being carried out with regard to reporting in house training and associated savings to the Authority, which was being considered for submission to the Authority at a later date. Members of the group requested that they be provided with a copy of the report, which will include any details of training conducted with neighbouring Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Accreditation Scheme for Members

Members considered that the minimum cost per person of a 360 appraisal would be around £300.00 which the group agreed was expensive even assuming a split with a Member's constituent council.

Resolved to recommend that:

- a) The decision to proceed with any trial be made by the Chair of the Authority; and
- b) Any trial be limited to one person who is not a Member of this group.

3. Members Feedback Following Attendance At Events

Members considered feedback that was received since the last meeting, and the content of the feedback form which now includes space to record all related costs following this groups' recommendation. The group agreed that the information obtainable from a completed form is vital to ensuring events are worthwhile and meeting needs.

Feedback received was from two Members who attended North West Employers – A Day of Scrutiny event. One Member emailed comments across instead of completing the form. The group considered that the use of the form is a preferable method of recording feedback.

Resolved to recommend that:

- a) The completion, with as much detail as possible, of the Members Feedback Form, following attendance at events, be encouraged; and
- b) A section be added to the form asking, where relevant, what opportunities arose and were taken to meet with Government Ministers and/or other officials.

4. Training/ Development Events

Members considered the training events that had been provided since the last meeting of the group on 13th August 2013. Training and Development was discussed further during consideration of Item 6 on this Agenda.

5. Feedback From North West Employers Charter Celebration & Member Development Conference

This conference was attended by the Deputy Democratic Services Manager who was unavailable at today's meeting.

Resolved that:

This item be deferred to the next meeting of the Member Development Group

6. Update on Members One-to-One's and PDP's

The group heard that the One-to-One's with Authority Members were proceeding well and that Member-Officer relations within the organisation were effective and highly praised. The Organisational Development Manager raised the problem of timing as a recurring issue for a number of Members who have work commitments in addition to their duties as a councillor.

The group considered these matters and added that the training events provided for the Authority, especially in the form of Learning Lunches, were very good being both informative and succinct.

Training needs identified from the meetings that have taken place so far are: a need for basic/introductory financial training, for example the difference between capital and revenue funds; and a need for ICT skills training. Members agreed that training events should also be refreshed at regular intervals.

Resolved to recommend that:

- a) Training opportunities for Members, to cover the topics of *Basic Finance*, and *ICT Skills*, be organised; and
- b) Training provided for the Authority be refreshed at least every two years.

7. Any Other Business

No other business was identified.

Close.

Date of Next Meeting: 27th March 2014