

Minute of Meeting Cross Party Sounding Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 15 February 2018	11:00	Corporate Meeting Room 1, Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Tom Begg, Councillor Eileen McCartin, Councillor Kevin Montgomery, Councillor Iain Nicolson

Chair

Councillor Nicolson, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

S Black, Chief Executive; L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Commissioning, and L Adamson, Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Manager (both Chief Executive's); K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance and L Belshaw, Democratic Services Manager (both Finance & Resources).

Apologies

Councillor Paterson.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 Member Development Arrangements

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources detailing progress to date in terms of the review of the elected member development programme and to give the Board the opportunity to consider the planning underway for a proposed week of focussed development activity in April 2018.

The report intimated that the Council's Best Value Assurance Report, published in August 2017 - although based on attendance at events by members of the previous Council - identified that councillors had not made the most of the development opportunities available to them. The Best Value report highlighted that following the local government elections in May 2017, the Council had prepared a comprehensive induction programme for new councillors and that a range of introductory meetings and events had been set up on various topics and recommended that councillors should take advantage of development opportunities to ensure that they had the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their role effectively.

It was noted that following the local government elections in May 2017, a focussed two-week programme of member development, prepared in consultation with elected members and senior officers, had been delivered. This was in the main directed at new members but re-elected members were also encouraged to participate. As it was almost a year into the members' current term of office, to ensure that they continued to have all the information and support they needed in their role, the opportunity was being taken to have a focussed week of briefings, clinics and workshops. Some of the topics were based around feedback from members following evaluation of the induction programme. The report proposed that these events take place during week beginning 16 April 2018.

Members considered the proposed focussed week and also the member development programme more generally and made a number of recommendations, including: that the focussed week was welcomed and should be delivered twice each year; that, if possible, there be a link on members' Surfacepro homepage to the Improvement Service on-line materials; that members receive invitations to the focussed week sessions together with the offer that if they were unable to attend, if appropriate, one-to-one sessions would be arranged or the session would be re-run, if possible; that sessions be arranged as soon as possible following the introduction of new legislation, for example the implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and impending planning legislation and that there be a session for members on the planning regime generally and their role, whether a member of the relevant Board or not, and that such sessions be on the basis of workshops rather than by way of presentations; that more assistance was required to ensure members had the necessary ICT skills; that the availability of presentations in the members' library area of the committee management system be more visible to members; and that members were keen that the roll out of the caseworker system took place as soon as possible following evaluation of the current pilot.

DECIDED: The Cross Party Sounding Board noted the arrangements in place to support members' development, including the proposed development week, and the draft programme for the development week; and noted that the proposals by Board members would be taken forward as part of the member development programme.