

Governance Committee

26 November 2018

Part I

Report of the Member Development Group

Report by Chairman

Summary

The Member Development Group (MDG) is the custodian of all aspects of the member role and has responsibility for managing the member development process. It is a sub-group of the Governance Committee and provides regular reports to the Committee on its work.

This report provides an overview of activities since the Group's last report in May 2018, including details of member development sessions.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 The Member Development Group (MDG) is the custodian of all aspects of the member role and has responsibility for managing the member development process. This includes the programme of all-member sessions and an induction programme following elections every four years. MDG is also responsible for wider development activity including member training, skills development and obtaining feedback on the member role.
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of activities since the last report to Governance Committee in May 2018, including MDG's current and upcoming programme.

2. Member Development Activity, April 2018 to March 2019

- 2.1 The table below sets out Member Day sessions and member training held since April 2018. All feedback analysis is shared with service, along with suggestions on further engagement and how to improve future sessions.

Date	Topics	Attendance
25.04.18	• Clean and Green – Air Quality in West Sussex	27
23.05.18	• Broadband and Digital Infrastructure for the Future • West Sussex Crowd	26 27
05.06.18	• Chairmanship Skills for Members	12 (max 15)

Date	Topics	Attendance
27.06.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Waste Service (held at the Mechanical Biological Treatment facility, Warnham) 	32
11.07.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road Safety in West Sussex 	29
05.09.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairmanship Skills for Members • Adults: Lifelong Services 	13 (max 15) 20
07.11.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health 	28

- 2.2 MDG has reviewed member feedback from the sessions held between April and September. Attendance has varied depending on the topic and whilst MDG recognises that all members won't be able to attend all sessions, attendance may be encouraged by ensuring Q&A sessions have a strategic focus, with less local discussion; allowing as much time as possible for group work and member engagement; keeping time spent on presentations to a minimum.
- 2.3 The Introduction to Waste session was particularly well received. The tours of the MBT and the information provided by officers were very informative. MDG is keen to look at other opportunities for visits and for holding sessions at other locations where relevant. MDG welcomed the fact that cabinet members for district and borough councils had been invited to the Air Quality session, and would like to see invitations to Member Day sessions (and training) extended to other local councils, where appropriate. The involvement of partner organisations is also welcomed, such as through the Road Safety in West Sussex session. Although not well attended, the Lifelong Services session received overwhelmingly positive feedback. The involvement of service users, who shared their experiences made a strong impact. The two Chairmanship Skills training sessions provided by South East Employers, were very useful and received positive feedback. MDG has requested that this should be included as a standard in future member induction programmes.
- 2.4 MDG will review member feedback, comments and attendance at sessions held from mid-October to November at its next meeting on 3 December 2018; this will then be included in the next appropriate report to the Governance Committee.
- 2.5 Plans for future Member Days and training opportunities are set out below, although it should be noted that the programme and session dates and timings are be subject to change. MDG considers all proposals for Member Day topics, taking into account member needs, priorities and service requirements.
- **16 November 2018** (new date) – Briefing on Gatwick Master Plan
 - **5 December 2018** – Armed Forced Covenant (morning) and a bookable workshop on LocalView Fusion (afternoon), plus drop in sessions for support with using social media
 - **7 November 2018** (new date) – Questioning Skills (morning)
 - **9 January 2019** – County Council Revenue Budget 2019/20

- **30 January 2019** – TBC
- **27 February 2019** – Adults and Health: service overview and general updates (all day event) TBC
- **22 March 2019** (change from 27 March) – Transformation Programme

3. Review of the Format of Member Days

3.1 At its meeting of 8 October 2018, MDG reviewed the format of Member days, following on from some Democratic Services meetings with members and also an assessment of common themes from feedback from member days. MDG's conclusions, which have been incorporated into guidance for services, are as follows:

- There should be clear ownership of the agenda and programme for the Member Day by the lead member (e.g. the Chairman/Vice- Chairman of the Council, relevant Cabinet Member or committee chairman, MDG member), who should also chair the event.
- Whilst members have requested much more time to participate in discussions, as well as briefer presentations and shorter PowerPoint slide-shows, the programme should still remain flexible, depending on the topic and needs of members. The value of a presentation can depend on the quality of the presenter.
- Alternative ideas and exercises should be used for handling questions, so as to gain maximum benefit from good quality questions and points made by members (e.g. members to put questions on post-it notes, to be 'grouped' according to themes).
- More interactive exercises should be included, e.g. quizzes.
- Witnesses or guest speakers should be encouraged because they can provide a powerful message and a positive viewpoint.
- Strong facilitators are needed to ensure member discussions are of value.
- Full member day timings should be: 10.30 a.m. start, half hour lunch and 3 p.m. finish.
- Alternatives to training and / or follow-up information should be explored for those unable to attend. To this end, MDG will review opportunities for members to use the County Council's Learning and Development offers, including online training and courses, at its next meeting in December.

4. The Journey to the 2021 Elections: Three-year Programme to Promote Local Democracy

4.1 At its meeting in June, MDG reviewed proposals for a three-year programme to promote local democracy, leading up to the 2021 County Council elections, incorporating:

- (a) The provision of information to/events for people thinking of standing for election, building on learning from 2017.
- (b) An exploration of the barriers to people standing for election and ways to address these.
- (c) A review of member roles, including the role profiles last reviewed in March 2013.

(d) Promotion of the role of members and the Council to the wider general public, including through opportunities such as Local Democracy Week and engagement with the Youth Cabinet.

4.2 MDG agreed to set up a working group to take this work forward, made up of the following members: Janet Duncton (Chairman), Kate O'Kelly, Sue Mullins, Viral Parikh, Elizabeth Sparkes. The working group will explore the issues set out in paragraph 4.1 over three phases, beginning with reviewing the barriers to people standing for election between September 2018 and February 2019.

4.3 The working group has held one meeting to date and will making a progress report to MDG in December, so a more detailed update can be provided to this Committee in January.

5. **MDG Work Programme**

5.1 The next MDG meeting on 3 December 2018 will consider Member Day session feedback and new proposals. The Group will also consider the following:

- **The County Council's Learning and Development Offer** – opportunities for member to be involved in online training and 'staff' courses.
- **The Journey to the 2021 Elections: Three-year Programme to Promote Local Democracy** – update from the working group.

Factors taken into account

6. **Consultation**

6.1 No consultation has taken place because this is a report dealing with internal or procedural matters only.

7. **Risk Management Implications**

7.1 It has been previously agreed that Member Development Group will regularly report to the Governance Committee. To not do so would jeopardise the vital overview that the Governance Committee maintains regarding member development, training and engagement activity.

8. **Other Options Considered**

8.1 There are no other options to consider because this is a report dealing with internal or procedural matters only.

9. **Equality Duty**

9.1 An Equality Impact Report is not required for this decision because this is a report dealing with internal or procedural matters only.

10. Social Value

10.1 There are no social value implications because it is a report dealing with internal or procedural matters only

11. Crime and Disorder Act Implications

11.1 There are no crime and disorder implications decision because this is a report dealing with internal or procedural matters only.

12. Human Rights Implications

12.1 There are no Human Rights implications because this is a report dealing with internal or procedural matters only.

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Background Papers

None