

Notes of the Member Development Working Group

29th November, 2010 at 12.00 noon
at Fire Service Headquarters, Birmingham

Present: Councillor K Foster (Chair);
Councillors Chambers, Idrees, Hodgson and
Jackson.

Charter Assessors – Councillors Spence and
Turner.

Officers: **West Midlands Fire Service**
Assistant Chief Officers A Brandon (Director Corporate
Services) and D Johnson (Director Human Resources).
C Kelly.

Clerk to the Authority
S Hancock

14/10 **Notes of 20th September 2010**

Resolved that the notes of the meeting held on 20th September,
2010 be approved as a correct record.

15/10 **Progress on Personal Development Reviews**

The Group noted that just one member had had a personal
development review (PDR) meeting since the scheme was launched in
August 2010.

Some members had indicated that they did not wish to have a PDR but
supported the principle of member development and were happy to
participate in development activities as and when necessary to update
their skills.

The opportunity remained open for those members that wished to have
a PDR to do so.

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16/10 Member Training Record and Skills Analysis

The Group noted a proposed format for recording member training and development activity. It was agreed that training and development activities undertaken within the last three years should be recorded.

The Clerk undertook to obtain the relevant information from the district authorities.

The Group noted that there were still a number of skills analyses to be returned from members.

17/10 Member Development Charter

Further to Note No. 9/10 (20th September 2010) the Clerk reported that the cost of assessment for the Member Development Charter was expected to be in the region of £3,000, plus expenses.

The Group was of the view that the Charter was not necessary to support the Authority's member development work and that, given the current financial position, the Authority be recommended not to pursue the Charter.

Resolved to recommend to the Authority that the Member Development Charter no longer be pursued.

18/10 Member Role Descriptions

The Group received a proposed role description for elected members. The role description would be circulated to the seven district authorities prior to their annual meetings to assist them in making their appointments to the Authority.

The Group felt that the role description should be also be circulated to group leaders.

Resolved to recommend to the Authority that the member role description attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

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19/10 **Fire Station Visits**

The Group received a draft of a proposed form for members to use to assist them in carrying out visits to fire stations. The form identified areas that members should look at on a station visit and would also act as a tool to bring any particular issues identified to management attention.

The Group welcomed the form and the Director Human Resources undertook to circulate it, along with a list of fire station addresses, to all members.

Resolved that the form entitled 'Authority Member Station Visits' be approved.

20/10 **Training Programme**

The Group noted a programme of training and development activities available to members.

The Chair highlighted the need for members to submit an evaluation form following their attendance at any events that had a cost implication above £100.

The Clerk undertook to circulate the programme to members.

21/10 **Work Programme**

The Group noted its work programme.

(Meeting ended at 12.45 pm)

<p><i>Contact Officer: Stephnie Hancock Democratic Services Unit Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council 0121 569 3189</i></p>
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WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE

Councillor Role Description

Purpose of Role

- To ensure that the Fire Authority provides an efficient and effective fire and rescue service, taking into account the needs of all sections of the community.
- To contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the Fire Authority's policies, priorities, plans, targets, budget and service delivery.
- To ensure that the Fire Authority is an equal opportunities employer, and considers the needs of all sections of the community.
- To ensure that the Fire Authority delivers value for money.

Main Responsibilities

- To develop and maintain a sound working knowledge of the Fire Authority's duties, policies and practices.
- To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the organisation's services, activities and other matters, which affect and impact on the local community.
- To comply with relevant protocols and codes of conduct.
- To participate effectively as a member of any committee or other body to which you are appointed by the Authority.
- To participate in performance review of the services provided by the Fire Authority, including scrutiny of policies and budgets and their effectiveness in achieving strategic objectives.
- To participate effectively in any consultative processes with the local community and with other organisations, as required.

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- To encourage the community to participate constructively in consultative arrangements and service provision.
- To develop and maintain good and effective working relationships with the Fire Authority's Chair and Vice-Chair and relevant officers of the Fire Authority.
- To consider recommendations/options put forward by the Treasurer in relation to the Fire Authority's budget and precept and participate in the budget and precept setting process.

Competencies Required

Breadth of Vision

The ability to rise above detail, and to see problems and issues from a wider, forward-looking perspective.

Good judgment

To take a balanced, open-minded and objective approach and to develop an understanding of the environment and context in which the authority and brigade must operate.

Willingness to Challenge

The ability to challenge constructively without becoming confrontational, and to recognise and respond positively to the need for change, identifying ways in which the organisation.

Ability to Scrutinise

To be able to scrutinise and challenge constructively.

Analytical ability

The ability to interpret and question complex written material, including financial and statistical information and other data such as performance measures, and identify the salient points.

Ability to communicate effectively

To be able to explain fire and rescue issues clearly and to engage in constructive dialogue with local communities, employees, representative bodies and key partners and agencies.

Community engagement

To understand the importance of community views represent those views in an impartial way, and participate in policy-making aimed at engaging local communities.

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Effective time management

To be able to identify priorities and make the most productive use of own and others' time.

Enthusiasm and drive

To be pro-active in seeking out learning and developmental opportunities to enhance knowledge and understanding, for example on financial matters and statutory requirements.

Respect for others

The capacity to treat all people fairly and with respect; value diversity and respond sensitively to difference.

Decisive

To show resilience, even in challenging circumstances, remaining calm and confident and able to make difficult decisions.