

## **Members Advisory Panel-New Constitution**

A meeting of Members Advisory Panel-New Constitution was held on Thursday, 16th August, 2007.

**Present:** Cllr Terry Laing (Chairman), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Fletcher (vice Cllr Mrs Rigg), Cllr Robert Gibson and Cllr Ken Lupton.

**Officers:** D.E.Bond, N.Hart, Mrs M.Waggott (LD).

**Also in attendance:** N/A

**Apologies:** were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Cains, Mrs Craggs, Narroway, Mrs Nelson and Mrs Rigg.

### **MAP 6/07**      **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Gibson declared a personal/prejudicial interest in respect of the item entitled 'Land Off Norton Road, Stockton on Tees-Residential Development' as a result of the proposal affecting him personally; and therefore left the meeting during consideration of the item and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

### **MAP 7/07**      **Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd July 2007**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd July 2007 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **MAP 8/07**      **Review of Learning & Development Strategy for Members**

Consideration was given to an update report charting progress made in delivering the aims of the Council's Learning and Development Strategy within the following areas:-

- Induction Training;
- Planning Training;
- Licensing Training;
- Employee Appeal Panel Training;
- Personal Support Planning;
- Progress made against the Charter for Elected Member Development;
- Participation in Mentoring Programme/Leadership Academy

The Panel's views had previously been sought with regard to the content and structure of the Member Induction Programme prior to the May 2007 elections. All elected members were subsequently invited to attend an Induction Programme held over 6 days during early May this year; and were provided with an Induction pack and supporting CD Roms detailing both the content of the presentations; a Guide to Member Roles and a comprehensive Members Handbook.

Evaluation of the event indicated positive comments in respect of the value of the information provided and the opportunity for members to have conducted walk-about sessions was valuable in allowing members to gain knowledge of 'people and places' that were essential to their member role. Comment was

however made that by conducting the event over 6 days, this made the programme too intense, with the possibility of some members feeling overawed by the complexity and diversity of the Authority. Members of the Panel concurred that this reflected feedback that they had received and that having the event so soon after the elections, over an intensive period, had caused difficulties for some members who were unable to take the necessary time off work to be able to attend the sessions. It was noted that the timing of the event did however have to reflect the need for members to receive the necessary mandatory training in order to be able to carry out their quasi judicial role. However, it was proposed that future Induction Programmes be extended to cover 'a Members first 100 days as a Councillor'; therefore spreading the programme out and allowing for flexibility and follow up sessions as required.

Details were provided of member attendance at both internal and externally facilitated mandatory training sessions on Planning, Licensing and Employee Appeal Panels; each of which had prompted positive feedback from members who had attended. The content of these sessions would be made available to all members via the Members Information section of the Intranet. Members made reference to the requirement made within the Constitution for mandatory training to be provided to members on an annual basis; and clarification was requested as to whether this would allow flexibility over the content of the programme, rather than a repeat of previous sessions. It was proposed that clarification of this issue be provided and subject to this mandatory training continue to be provided on an annual basis, supplemented by in house training as required throughout the year. It was noted that a record of all member training undertaken would need to be kept to ensure that members requiring mandatory training were advised in due time; and that records of members of who had received CRB checks should also be maintained.

The Panel was advised that to date, 47 members had undertaken their one to one Personal Support Plan session with Member Support Officers; and had therefore been able to identify both their learning needs priorities based on their own specific role within the Authority and the preferred learning style in which they would wish to see this need met. As a result, a matrix of learning needs had been developed and was submitted for members consideration. In response to member question it was noted that flexibility would be allowed to change members priority learning needs at their request in an effort to reflect changing circumstances/priorities; and that this message would be passed on to all members. The next objective for officers would be to source all the identified learning support required and deliver the resource to members. It was also noted that members would also be encouraged to share their learning with others from training courses or conferences they had attended; and with this aim in mind, all members would be requested to complete a post evaluation form. In addition, work was soon to commence in house with the Council's ICT Section on developing an appropriate Member Learning and Development Database which would integrate all the necessary training information and allow attendance and evaluation details to be kept.

As part of the Council's commitment to Member Development, it was also noted that four members from this Authority had now taken part in IDeA's Leadership Academy, with another two members due to participate in 2007/8; and eight elected members had been identified to take part in the IDeA supported Councillor Mentoring Programme following the success of Democratic Services

in securing the necessary funding from the North East Improvement Partnership.

Finally, Members were requested to note that following the Council's decision to sign up to achieving the North East Charter for Elected Member Development, arrangements were to be put in place for an external assessment of our progress to be made during late September/early October.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Progress made against the strategy be noted and the following recommendations be submitted to Cabinet on 30 August:-

i). The timescale and format for future Induction programmes be extended to cover 'your first 100 days as a Councillor' to allow for flexibility and follow up induction sessions.

ii). Planning training continue to be provided each year, supplemented by in house training as required throughout the year to support the committees ongoing requirements.

iii). Licensing training continue to be provided each year, supplemented by in house training as required throughout the year to support the committees ongoing requirements.

2. Clarification be provided regarding the content of the annual mandatory training required for members in terms of the flexibility of the programme; and members comments regarding the need to record all training undertaken, including CRB checks, be noted in order to ensure that necessary reminders were issued to members as and when required.

**MAP  
9/07**

### **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**MAP  
10/07**

### **Land Off Norton Road, Stockton on Tees-Residential Development**

Consideration was given to a proposal to recognise the particular contribution made by a Councillor and former Councillor of this Borough to both their local communities and the Council, by naming streets after them within the proposed residential development on land off Norton Road (formerly known as Queens Park). The land in question was also the former site of their previous employment together at a joinery site for many years.

RESOLVED that the proposal to name appropriate streets in the residential development on the former Sarek joinery site after Councillor Bob Gibson and former Councillor Stephen Smailes, be approved in recognition of their commendable service to local government and to the local area.

