

MEMBER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

08 May 2019

Present: Councillor D Clements, Mrs J James, Councillor M James, Dr R Plummer, Councillor A Wilcox.

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 13.30pm – 14.40pm)

1. Election of Chair for the Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that Mrs Julie James be appointed Chair for the current meeting. It was noted that a permanent Chair would be appointed following the Annual General Meeting in June 2019.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Allan Archer, Councillor K Doolin and Councillor M Williams.

3. Disclosures

There were no disclosures of interest.

4. Terms of Reference

It was **RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference be noted.

(Councillor P Kidney arrived at this juncture)

5. Wales Charter for Member Support and Development

The Administration and Democratic Services Manager welcomed Members to the first meeting of the Member Support and Development Committee.

By way of introduction, the Administration and Democratic Services Manager reminded Members that the Committee had been established following a recommendation to the National Park Authority by the former Member Development Strategy Working Group that there was a need for the Authority to reconfirm its commitment to Member support and development and that the most effective way to do so was to raise the status of the body driving the support process. The Working Group had also recommended that the Authority should aspire to attaining the Advanced Charter of the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development.

The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development was launched by the Welsh local Government Association (WLGA) in 2005 to guide, and consequently recognise, those local authorities wishing to provide high standards of support for their Members. There were two levels to the Charter – Charter Level and Advanced Charter Level – and those



authorities who achieved either of the levels were required to be reviewed every three years. The Authority was officially awarded Charter Level in November 2010, and this was renewed in 2014.

The Administration and Democratic Services Manager referred to the Advanced Charter criteria checklist attached to the report before Members that day and noted that, whilst the Authority was meeting many of the criteria required, there was a need to review some elements to ensure they were fit for purpose. As such, she referred the Committee to the revised suite of Member role descriptions and person specifications and the revised Member Development Strategy that were also attached to her report. She wished to record her gratitude to Mrs J James for her help in revising both documents.

Members thanked the officer for the presentation of such clear and useful documents and felt that it would be beneficial for the Welsh Government to use the Member Role Description and Personal Specification in their recruitment process for Welsh Government appointed Members. It was suggested that the Chief Executive could raise this matter at the next meeting of the National Parks Wales Executive. A typographical error was noted on section B3: Description of Authority Approach and Actions of the criteria checklist which should have read September 2018.

Members requested that Code of Conduct training should take place on an annual basis. The Administration and Democratic Services Manager reported that this had generally been the case until the previous year, when circumstances had determined otherwise. She assured Members that Code of Conduct training would be undertaken once a new Monitoring Officer had been appointed.

Members then discussed the mentoring criteria and it was felt that a 'buddying' scheme for new Members would be a more beneficial approach. The Administration and Democratic Services Manager stated that Mrs J James had drafted a 'buddying' scheme and that this would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting. Members also discussed the possibility of all agenda papers being sent out electronically in future.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (a) that the revised suite of role descriptions and personal specifications be adopted;
- (b) that the Member Support and Development Strategy be adopted;
- (c) that the principle of a 'Buddying' Scheme be adopted, subject to more details being presented to the next meeting, and
- (d) that the Advanced Charter checklist be updated and brought back to the next meeting.

