

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

27th February 2013

Member representatives:

Mr A Archer, Councillor JA Brinsden and Councillor M James.

Officer representatives:

Mr T Jones, Chief Executive; Mrs J Evans, Administration & Democratic Services Manager

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 12.00 p.m. – 1.30 p.m.)

1. **Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was received from Ms C Gwyther.

2. **Minutes**

It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 24th October 2012 be confirmed and signed.

3. **Member Support and Development: Update Report**

The report provided the Group with an update on developments in three areas. Firstly, with regard to Personal Development Reviews (PDRs), the paperwork for undertaking these had been amended to reflect emerging guidance and Members were asked to approve the revised guidance. The Administration and Democratic Services Manager advised that she hoped most PDRs would take place during March, which would allow the identified training needs – and the consequent review of the Member Development Strategy - to be considered by the next meeting of the group in April.

Members sought clarification over the confidentiality of the PDR process and were reassured that the review itself remained confidential between the reviewer and reviewee. It was hoped that the Personal Support Plans would be made available to the Administration and Democratic Services Manager so that training needs could be accommodated in the revised Member Development Strategy. Members felt that it would be helpful if this could be made explicit in the PDR Guidance Document, and the Administration and Democratic Services Manager agreed to e-mail the revised wording to the Group.

With regard to who carried out the Reviews, it was suggested that an additional Member, for example the Chair of the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee, could be included as a facilitator and that two of the three Members could then carry out the Chair's PDR. This



would avoid the potential governance issues that might be raised if the Chair and Deputy Chair carried out each other's PDRs. This was agreed, and the Administration and Democratic Services Manager advised that a briefing session would be arranged for those Members undertaking PDRs.

The second area covered by the report was the Member role description. The Group was reminded that the UK ANPA Member Services Officers' Network Group had been tasked with drafting a national Member role description. This had been published for comment before being circulated to the chairs and Chief Executives of the UK's National Park Authorities for consideration. The draft document was attached to the report, and the Group was asked to endorse it, so that it could be used in the Authority's PDR process. It was clarified that the basic role description would be common across the whole National Park family with only local variations. The Administration and Democratic Services Manager added that revised role descriptions for Chairs of the Authority and its Committees would be produced in due course and these would be brought first to the Group, before all the role descriptions were brought to the National Park Authority for approval.

Finally, the report outlined the results of a survey of Members' preferences for meeting arrangements which had been carried out recently. 73% of Members replied that they were happy with the current arrangements; however a number of comments and suggestions for improvement had also been made.

A wide ranging discussion ensued including a debate on whether a 10.00am start for meetings provided the best service to the Authority's 'customers' eg planning applicants; it was suggested that a survey of users of the Development Management Committee be undertaken to find out what part of the day they would prefer meetings to take place. The issues of holding meetings in different locations within the National Park and the use of tablet computers by Members in order to reduce printing and postage costs were also discussed. It was agreed that a report be presented to a future meeting of the National Park Authority on the results of the survey, with these points highlighted as recommendations. The Chief Executive asked that the survey of Members be repeated in 12-18 months time to see if views had changed as Members became more familiar with the work of the Authority.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the revised Personal Development Review paperwork and process be approved, subject to the inclusion of additional wording to clarify the



- confidentiality of the process and to include the Chair of Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee in the list of Facilitators;
- b) the draft Member role description be endorsed and used in conjunction with the Personal Development Review process with all role descriptions being brought to a future meeting of the National Park Authority for approval;
 - c) a report on the Members' survey be brought to a future meeting of the National Park Authority with the points discussed at this meeting being highlighted as recommendations.

