

Notes of the Member Development Officer Group Meeting 1st August 2007 - NWDC

Present: Janice Gibson (IDeA), Paul Trennell (SDC), John Quinton (WCC), Susan Thornton (WWDC), Julie Matthews (NWDC), Sue Pangbourne (NWDC)

Apologies: Steve Milton (SDC), Lynda Williams (WCC), Phil Hamilton (KDC).

1. BTEC

Lynda will run a session on the 5th September before the planned workshops to increase interest. The cost per member will be £370, and that will cover registration, assessment and criteria. We need to consider how to ensure members who haven't attended key sessions can catch up. Suggestion is to re-run the Community Leadership workshops in January or February 2008. These sessions could be run by our own trainers with the IDeA materials.

Actions: Sue to ask the WIP board to sponsor the first 10 members to sign up to the BTEC.

Flyer to be produced for 5th September to highlight the BTEC – Janice & Lynda.

Session to be held before workshops on 5th September and repeated at Salisbury, West Wilts & Devizes at later sessions.

All contacts to send names of interested members to Janice.

2. Feedback on programme so far

Technical hiccups particularly communication between IDeA and Council contacts has resulted in some administrative problems. Everyone agreed that the content of all workshops had been well received. Janice is sorting out the administrative problems with the IDeA to ensure packs are complete and accurate. Janice will alert us if there is a delivery problem for any of the packs and it is recognised that the host authority could always print them if there is a problem.

Actions: Janice agreed to prepare 30 packs for each session just in case.

Pre course questionnaires are not being completed and learning logs are not being done. This work will be important for the South West Member Charter and is essential for the BTEC. It was agreed that we should encourage members to complete feedback sheets before they leave a workshop. We should encourage all members to complete the paperwork but only chase those that have signed up to the BTEC. We need to be clear how the sessions complement each other, rather than duplicate. The flyer for each session needs to be clearer or to give a new marketing paragraph to grab interest and show that there is more to be covered.

Action: Janice to work on the flyers for the new workshops.

We have received good feedback on the Peer Members.

The group considered whether inviting Parish Councillors in to make up the numbers had been a success. It was agreed that John Quinton will send a note round to Towns & Parishes if the content looks like it might be useful. For the next workshops that are planned, it was agreed that we would spend a few minutes asking Councillors to fill in pre course questionnaires on what they want out of the workshops at the start of each session.

Action: A written summary of the whole programme at the end of the workshops as well as the summary of the feedback to be produced by Janice.

The group noted there had been many favourable comments on Janice's facilitation at the workshops and wished to record their thanks to Janice for her hard work.

Action: Sue agreed to take Janice's report to the WIP Programme Board Meeting on 11th September.

3. Community Leadership 2

The content of this workshop should reflect the Unitary decision and Area Boards to some extent. However, it should concentrate on the skills needed to work locally with partners. John mentioned feedback from the County Liberal Democrat Group who suggested that members could bring along to the workshops some scenarios of real issues that they could look at instead of the set exercises. It was agreed that this would be very useful but that Janice should also have prepared exercises up her sleeve in case no scenarios are brought up.

4. The Partnership Workshop

The group discussed whether this workshop should focus on skills or on scenarios and whether it would be useful to invite key partners to attend the workshop in October.

Action: Janice will send an outline of the Partnership Workshop to all of us for our views.

Sue will ask the WIP Board for their views on 11th September.

5. Scrutiny Workshops

The first of these workshops will be about what is Scrutiny and the second will be about particular skills. Janice mentioned a DVD made by the South East Employers which has examples where scrutiny has made a real difference to the community. It was agreed this could be useful. The group agreed the workshops should focus in the role and responsibilities that have come up from the White Paper, not to dwell too much on the current or future structures within Wiltshire.

Action: Janice – need to get the flyers for the workshops out fast for the early September sessions because of holidays, Janice agreed to get the flyers to her contacts by 10th August.

6. Equality & Diversity Proposal from Salisbury

The group agreed that Steve's proposal had a lot of merit and would be useful for officers too. Paul was asked to get a cost breakdown on the proposal so that Sue can take details to the WIP meeting on September.

Action: Paul to sort out with Steve a costings breakdown and suggest that Steve talks to Mary Cullen at WCC

Sue to take the proposal to WIP board in September.

7. Members Survey

The members survey will be re run in September and then finally in January 2008.

8. Workbooks

It was agreed that everybody would provide a list of names of members working through the workbooks to Janice. Janice will follow up with members and run a short workshop in October. North Wilts Members have all received the workbooks and Julie will follow these up. 4 names have been received from Kennet and some names from West Wilts have already been given to Janice.

Action: Paul & John to follow up members in their Councils and give names to Janice.

9. South West Member Charter

The County Council have sent an action plan in but have not yet received the funding. West Wilts now have the funding as do North Wilts. Paul was going to check the situation out at Salisbury. It was agreed that we should work together on the policies that are required to achieve the Member Charter. It was noted that the South West LIFT was sponsoring the learning pool which could provide additional online training for members.

10. Community Cohesion Workshops

The next 2 workshops will be held on the 17th September at North Wilts and the 23rd October at West Wilts. The flyer needs to be sent out fairly quickly.

Action: John to send the flyer to everybody so they can change their details and send it on to members.

The Level 2 workshop has been arranged for the 13th November at County Hall and Lynda will send everybody the details.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 19th September 2007 - 2.30pm – 4.30pm at North Wilts Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham