

## Member Development Meeting/Wiltshire Capacity Building Programme (WCBP)

Friday, 28 April 2006, NWDC Offices

### Present:

- Karen Cook, Kennet DC
- Yvonne Johnson, Wiltshire CC
- Niki Lewis, Wiltshire CC
- Nicola Mathiason, West Wilts DC
- Steve Milton, Salisbury DC
- Sue Pangbourne, North Wilts DC

### Notes from the meeting & actions arising:

Notes	Action
Current & planned Member Training & Development - Key Points from each authority:	
<p><b>Kennet DC:</b></p> <p>Current training includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific roles at the Council</li> <li>• Skills training e.g. Chaining skills and softer skills (including one session on community leadership and one on setting SMART targets); Audit Commission Workshops</li> <li>• There are no Personal Development Plans in place.</li> <li>• A well-developed induction programme is in place, programmed throughout the first year, concentrating on regulatory and general skills and 'how to be a councillor'</li> <li>• Sub Committee in place looking at member development</li> </ul> <p>Karen would find the following helpful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for members to visit other councils</li> <li>• Mingled training (mixing up authorities)</li> </ul>	Karen to share induction programme details with group.
<p><b>West Wilts DC:</b></p> <p>Current training includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ad-hoc training when needed – no planned programme</li> <li>• Focused on legislation, rather than skills training</li> </ul> <p>Nicola would be keen to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop full induction programme</li> <li>• Put a more structured programme in place</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Salisbury DC:</b></p> <p>Salisbury have just completed an extensive Scrutiny Review looking at member training &amp; development including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction</li> <li>• Pre-induction (attracting new members)</li> <li>• A survey of members (which showed that to be successful training had to be on their terms with a flexible, pick &amp; mix approach including self-learning and home working.)</li> </ul> <p>Feedback from review was that there was too much in place for members and they found it difficult to access as it requires a lot of time (members felt approx. 20 hours a year would be about right).</p>	Steve to circulate Scrutiny Review paper to group

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each political group has a training co-ordinator.</li> <li>• Have a modular training programme in place (including I&amp;DeA Leadership Academy) with supporting materials available.</li> <li>• 1-1 IT training done (one-off) &amp; was well received as it was personal and tailored to the individual</li> </ul> <p>Outcome of scrutiny review is that programme will be slimmed down so core parts are delivered with optional extras to give modular training based on a generic Councillor. Members will be asked to sign up to the Charter on election (an opt-out not an opt-in approach!) and their previous experience and qualifications may exempt them from some parts. Aim to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 minute sessions (modules) aim for 3-4 hours a month so can complete in 8 months. Information compiled into Councillor handbook. Aim is to keep in contact with individual members and push on a 1-1 basis for them to do the next session.</li> <li>• New system being established to facilitate on-line learning (CDRoms etc.)</li> <li>• Budget of £25k (plus a further £10k this year)</li> <li>• Personal Development Plans based on Bristol's format.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Wiltshire CC:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny review was carried out a few years ago. Self-assessment questionnaire done (good response 38/48) - instigated as result of poor attendance.</li> <li>• Covered timings and types of training and whether members are happy to be mixed with other parties and/or staff.</li> <li>• Budget is now only £8k but departments have specific training budgets for members too.</li> <li>• Programme developed and launched with taster sessions (covers IT, personal skills, media). Attendance improved for a while but has tailed off.</li> <li>• Good scrutiny training in place</li> <li>• IT personalised training from members' homes is good</li> <li>• Big potential area for training includes all community leadership skills: e.g. negotiating; chairing; interpersonal skills etc.</li> <li>• Learning Champion within each political group has been tried but this wasn't taken up.</li> <li>• Induction programme has gone well.</li> <li>• Personal skills audits have been done (self-assessment) that can lead into Personal Development Plans. Only 1 member has taken up a PDP at the moment (and a mentoring scheme is being established for this member).</li> <li>• A small group of members will be brought together in July.</li> </ul>	<p>Niki to share details of induction programme with group</p>

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<p><b>North Wilts DC:</b></p> <p>Current member training includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programmed days in member meetings calendar but no programme of training.</li> <li>• Induction programme in place (delivered both in-house and using external facilitators – notably SW Employers) but needs revamping</li> <li>• Good IT training – well supported by members (done on 1-1 basis)</li> <li>• Training budget between £25k and £35k to cover conference attendance and training: split between Exec, Overview &amp; Scrutiny and general member training</li> <li>• Member training &amp; development working group in place</li> <li>• Leadership Academy accessed by 7 members. 1 member has gone through the Bristol-based NVQ.</li> <li>• 'Respect for People' equalities &amp; diversity training using a workbook approach has been useful</li> <li>• No current Personal Development Plans in place but a commitment to get these done.</li> <li>• Members recently agreed to sign up for Member Development Charter committing them to 20 hours training a year.</li> </ul>	<p>Sue to send details of Respect for People to all</p>
<p><b>Views on I&amp;DeA/Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation Local Leadership Academy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modules and content look good and cover the right areas.</li> <li>• Concern over the time it would take. (All authorities recognised the difficulty members have in committing time for training sessions. It was felt that short, focused sessions - possibly before planned meetings - were better received than day time or evening sessions.)</li> <li>• Would be expensive to deliver if only a few people took it up</li> </ul> <p>Agreement that we want a more effective, blended learning approach.</p> <p><b>Proposal that WIP discuss with NIF/I&amp;DeA that we pay them to put the content together in a different and flexible format (e.g. short sessions, CDroms, DVDs etc.).</b></p> <p>This group would like to view the toolkit and to have an early meeting with NIF/I&amp;DeA to discuss this further if they're interested. (Would give them the potential to develop and trial it in Wiltshire and then sell it elsewhere!)</p> <p>Each authority will look further at the current course content (check their priorities are met) and see if there are any gaps.</p>	<p>Sue to put proposal forward to WIP</p> <p>All</p>
<p><b>Other areas to explore through WCBP:</b></p> <p>Roles, Responsibilities and Representation (could fit into induction plans) to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influencing and shaping community planning &amp; partnership working</li> <li>• Representing the Council - when you're not in control or not on the Exec (e.g. handling concerns that are raised about services)</li> <li>• Representing the Council through role on outside bodies</li> </ul>	

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<p>Pre-induction - Attracting new members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>possibly a joint approach but definitely share approaches. E.g. Salisbury DC job advert approach</li> </ul> <p>Joint induction training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>particularly on regulatory functions</li> </ul> <p>Scrutiny training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre for Public Scrutiny run a self-evaluation framework that could be useful.</li> <li>Member swaps for scrutiny reviews could be explored.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Member Launch Event:</b></p> <p>Agreed it would be useful. Comments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fridays are generally good days.</li> <li>Devizes (Corn Exchange) venue is suitable.</li> <li>Numbers may not be very high whatever the time of day</li> <li>Can this be in October not September?</li> <li>Keynote speaker on community leadership could be LGA highflier, rather than a minister.</li> <li>Innovative case studies from each authority would be a good idea</li> <li>Could get members to sign up and pledge their commitment to the training on the day</li> </ul>	<p>Sue to feed back comments to WIP on 4 May.</p>
<p><b>Baseline Assessment:</b></p> <p>Draft baseline assessment considered. Not thought that Leadership Academy (as opposed to Local Leadership Academy) was a good measure as take up would be very limited. Not much interest in the National Mentoring Scheme from most authorities – better to focus on a local buddy scheme.</p> <p>Baseline Assessment Measures to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short survey that could be run by each authority (by email) – based on a subset of the Salisbury Survey.</li> <li>Number of Personal Development Plans in place.</li> <li>Number of members who access Local Leadership programme</li> <li>Number of members who participate in a buddy scheme</li> <li>Number of members who participate in a swap scheme for scrutiny reviews</li> </ul>	<p>Steve to send Sue survey.</p> <p>Sue to suggest baseline measures and survey questions to group</p>
<p><b>Communication with Members about the WCB Programme:</b></p> <p>Agreed it would be best to route all communications via the appropriate officer in each authority. This would apply to baseline survey, information about the launch event and other WCBP activities.</p>	
<p><b>Future of this Group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would be useful to meet again – either as arranged with NIF/I&amp;DeA or in approx. 6 weeks to catch up if needed.</li> <li>Interim communication to be via email – no meetings for the sake of them!</li> <li>Key documents (highlighted in notes) to be sent round to all.</li> </ul>	<p>Sue (on receipt from others)</p>