

Ward Councillors Working Group

Minutes

Tuesday, 10 December 2013 at 18:00

Attendees:

Mrs Mary Coleman (Member), Mrs Sue Hacon (Member), Mr Michael Castle (Member), Mrs Marlene Fairhead (Member), Mr Jamie Smith (Member)

Apologies for Absence:

Mr Graham Plant (Member), Mr Trevor Wainwright (Member)

Absent:

No Members Absent

Also in attendance at the above meeting were:

Linda Mockford (Governance Group Manager), Rob Gregory (Neighbourhood and Communities Group Manager), Robin Hodds (Cabinet Secretary) and Karline Smith (Senior Member Services Officer).

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2013 were confirmed.

The Cabinet Secretary reported that the Councillors Compact had been agreed by the Scrutiny Committee along with the Mentoring System and these would both be presented to Cabinet for endorsement.

Members Handbook

The Chairman asked if all members had looked at the handbook and asked for comments.

A correction was noted on page 20 which should say £15 per household.

The Governance Group Manager stated that a new map needed to be included.

Councillor Castle asked how many Councillors were using their I-Pads. The Cabinet Secretary stated that there were four Councillors that do not have I-Pads and have asked for hard copies of the agendas. The Governance Group Manager stated that it would be easier for Councillors to access their e-mails now on the I-Pads.

It was reported that a spreadsheet of postage savings was being compiled which would be presented to Cabinet in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the Ward Councillors Working Group agree to the Members Handbook which would be presented to Scrutiny Committee in January 2014 for approval.

Councillors Induction

The Cabinet Secretary stated that currently he would meet new Councillors to show them around and he then arranges an induction evening where Heads of Departments explain their roles.

Councillor M Coleman stated that a visit with the Cabinet Secretary was more beneficial than the induction evening with the Directors as it was felt that this was too overwhelming and would have preferred to have had a settling in period before having this.

The Neighbourhood and Communities Group Manager stated that he would carry out some mapping work of services and projects being carried out in the new Councillors ward.

It was pointed out that Member Services officers could explain the Committee System to the Councillors. It was agreed that a tour by the Cabinet Secretary was a good idea and that they would like a map of where staff are located in the buildings.

RESOLVED:

That a report on Councillors Induction be presented at the Ward Councillors Working Group meeting in January 2014 and then be presented to Scrutiny in February 2014.

Youth Engagement in Local Democracy

The Neighbourhood and Communities Group Manager spoke of the Youth Mayor in London and the Young Commissioners Programme in Devon. He then explained to the Working Party that there were Seven Youth Advisory Boards across Norfolk and that Members could engage with youths in their areas via the youth action groups.

The Cabinet in Schools Programme had shown that there was a need for youths to understand what is going on in their areas.

Councillor Castle suggested co-opting young people onto committees. It was reported that some Parish Councils have tried to engage with young people.

It was suggested that the Youth Parliament could be given access to the Town Hall and that work could be carried out with school councils directly.

The meeting ended at: 18:50