

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Notes of Virtual Meeting accessible via MS Teams, on Thursday, 29 April 2021.

PRESENT:

Councillors

D Smith (Chairman)
I Brown (Vice-Chair)
A Kay
Z Khan
T Williams

Officers

B Warren, Director of People and Development (LFRS)
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillor Holgate.

NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the previous meeting held 4 November 2020 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

REVIEW OF MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Authority has had a Member Training and Development Strategy in place since 2006 which had been reviewed regularly.

Members reviewed and approved the revised Strategy as presented, which included minor revisions to the CFA Member Role Description and the Member Champion Role Descriptions in line with the Authority's review of its governance and operational policies at its meeting held 22 February 2021 (resolution 126/19 refers). In reviewing the Strategy, Members discussed the benefits of the Member Champion roles and recognised the positive role of the Member Training and Development Group in Member engagement.

It was acknowledged that Members were more comfortable now with the technology used to access virtual Committee meetings and it was noted there would be changes in light of the Government directive to return to 'in-person' meetings after local elections.

MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT - UPDATE REPORT

The Director of People and Development presented the report which detailed the various means available for elected Members of the Combined Fire Authority to access training and development opportunities.

Personal Development Plans

In light of the Covid-19 restrictions, Personal Development Plans (PDPs) had been conducted electronically. One new Councillor had joined the Authority since the last meeting and they had undertaken their initial PDP and induction discussions. All other CFA Members had a PDP in place and of these 18, (75%) had an action plan for 2020/21.

e-Learning

Members were encouraged through the Member Information Bulletin to view North West Employers Organisation and the Local Government Association websites to access training opportunities where these were available online.

Members' Handbook

The handbook for the municipal year 2021/22 would be produced following the local elections and any subsequent changes to the Authority's Membership.

Member Information Bulletin

The Bulletin was considered by Officers as the key document for keeping Members updated and this was valued by Members as very informative. It set out upcoming Fire Authority meeting dates, Member Training and Development opportunities together with news and events.

Members considered the format and content of the Member Information Bulletin. It was agreed that more information on upcoming campaigns be provided for Members to actively support the promotion of relevant fire safety information and advice to their constituents, ideally via links suitable for social media both in the Bulletin and via email as appropriate. Members also agreed the current format for emailing the bulletin should continue.

Co-ordination of Training

Democratic Services continued to contact home authorities where relevant to co-ordinate member training and development opportunities and avoid duplication.

MONITORING, REVIEW & EVALUATION OF ACTIVITIES

This report provided an update on Member Training and Development activities since the previous meeting. The report showed opportunities and outcomes of activity which had been curtailed due to the pandemic with visits to local stations, involvement at local open days and other leadership events not able to take place.

Virtual events attended were:

The LGA Annual Fire Conference

All Members were invited to attend this year's Fire Conference which included 4 webinars and 2 interactive meetings held across 4 days in March 2021. In line with usual practice an evaluation of the event took place and feedback received was positive. It showed that the aims and objectives were explained and covered in each activity; which included a lot of new information. The training was felt to be highly relevant to the role of Members on the CFA. The Trainers were motivated, enthusiastic, had a good knowledge of the subjects and were responsive to people's different levels of knowledge.

Pension's Training

The last meeting of the Working Group agreed that Authority Members receive Pensions training. This training was delivered to all Members in December 2020 by the LGA Senior Pension Adviser. An evaluation was undertaken and feedback showed there was general agreement that the aims and objectives were covered and included a lot of new information.

The training was deemed relevant with the trainer motivated, enthusiastic, having a good knowledge of the subject and very responsive to people's different levels of knowledge including responding to questions raised after the event.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

The next meeting of the Working Group would be held on 4 November 2021. A further meeting date was agreed for 28 April 2022. Details of the venues would be confirmed.

On behalf of the Working Group the Chairman thanked the officers present for their support to Member Training and Development, particularly the Principal Member Services Officer for her tireless efforts.

B WARREN
Director of People and Development

LFRS HQ
Fulwood