
MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT 2014/15

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members are invited to give consideration to the proposals for the Member Learning and Development Programme for 2014/15.

2 MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING SESSIONS 2013/14

- 2.1 A summary report of Member attendance at training sessions during the period 9 May 2013 to 13 February 2014 is attached as Appendix 1. From the statistics it can be seen that over half of all Councillors attended two or more of the Highly Recommended courses.
- 2.2 Mandatory training took place for Members of the Development, Licensing and Appeals Committees. All Members of the Development, Licensing and Appeals Committees fulfilled the mandatory training requirement for the Municipal Year.
- 2.3 In addition to the opportunities provided by this Council's learning and development programme, Members were able to take advantage of two Member Away Days on the budget in November 2013 and January 2014. The annual Member tour of planning sites in the District took place in September 2013.
- 2.4 The Review Committee has its own programme of training. Members of the Committee attended three courses in 2013/14. The first was an Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny at Rochford, run by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny officer. The second course, 'Overview and Scrutiny - Developing Scrutiny', was run by Tim Young, an Associate Member from the Centre of Public Scrutiny.
- 2.5 The Council is required to provide training every two years for key officers and Members of the Review Committee on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA). RIPA regulates the powers of the Council to carry out surveillance and investigation. The Council's Review Committee provides a strategic overview of the Council's use of RIPA powers by way of reviewing the policy and considering statistical reports on usage on an annual basis. The Members of the Review Committee attended a training session with officers on the changes to provisions under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).
- 2.6 Following a request for Emergency Planning training at its meeting on 5 February 2013, the majority of the Review Committee attended the scheduled Emergency Planning course held in Part 2 of the 2013/14 training programme.
- 2.7 The Council's Head of Planning and Transportation delivered a mandatory planning training course to new Members in May 2013. Although attendance at this course fulfilled their mandatory planning training requirement, new

Members were also encouraged to attend the Development Committee training session on 9 May.

- 2.8 From 2013/14 mandatory planning training arrangements were amended to transfer the responsibility of achieving the required level of knowledge to the individual Member. There are now four scheduled mandatory planning sessions each year.
- 2.9 Following discussion at the Standards Committee on 1 October 2013, mentoring arrangements for newly elected independent Members were introduced. Under the new arrangements mentors/buddies are identified from District Council Members of the Standards Committee who would make contact with the new Member. This would provide a point of member contact, guidance in meetings, advice on how to participate in debate and an introduction to other Members of the Council.

3 CHARTER FOR ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The Council achieved the Charter for Elected Member Development in October 2010 for three years. The Council committed to renew the Charter and was assessed in January 2014. The assessing body, South East Employers (SEE), advised that they were looking to identify Rochford's 'direction of travel' since achieving the award in 2010.
- 3.2 Following the assessment the Council was advised that it had successfully met the standard of the Charter and was awarded Charter status for a further three years. Cllr Tony Jackson, Chairman of East of England LGA, will be presenting the award to Full Council on 15 April.
- 3.3 To add variety to the training programme officers used in-house made films to deliver training on the Code of Conduct/ Standards and mandatory Appeals Committee training. This was mentioned by Members during the Charter assessment as an innovative and interactive way of delivering training.
- 3.4 A report detailing the assessors' findings and recommendations has been circulated to all Members. These recommendations will be further discussed in a separate report to this meeting.

4 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT – FEBRUARY 2014

- 4.1 In accordance with usual practice, at the end of the annual training programme, all Members were provided with a self-assessment questionnaire seeking feedback on the 2013/14 learning and development programme and details of any individual learning and development requests for 2014/15.
- 4.2 13 questionnaires have been returned to date (a response rate of 33%). A summary of responses is attached as Appendix 2. From responses on the questionnaires received to date the key findings are that:-

- The majority of respondents found the training sessions very useful or useful and answered that 'information obtained', 'the opportunity to discuss issues with other Councillors' and 'ideas you could put into practice' were the most useful aspects of the training. There were also comments that training sessions can provide Members with an opportunity to discuss matters with and take advice from officers.
- For those Members who found it difficult to attend many learning and development sessions, work/family commitments and other Council duties were the most quoted reasons.
- As far as learning styles are concerned, most respondents found interactive training, e.g. workshops/role playing/case studies and a lecture style of training with PowerPoint presentation the most useful.

5 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2014/15

- 5.1 Members are invited to give consideration to the proposals for the Member Learning and Development Programme for 2014/15.
- 5.2 The Member Learning and Development Programme needs to be responsive to the corporate priorities of the Council, as well as the individual training needs of Members identified through the self-assessment questionnaires (see paragraphs 4.1 - 4.2 above).
- 5.3 In accordance with agreed practice, a plan showing all dates for Member learning and development in the 2014/15 Municipal Year was provided to Members early in the calendar year. This plan included specific dates for mandatory training.
- 5.4 As discussed with the Charter Assessment team, the development of e-learning courses for Members will be developed in partnership with Vine HR Limited.
- 5.5 The Guide for Candidates on being a Member of Rochford District Council, produced for prospective candidates standing for election to the Council, has been updated for the 2014/15 Municipal Year. The Guide provides information on the role of the Councillor and includes the dates of mandatory training in the 2014/15 Municipal Year. As well as being distributed to prospective candidates, the Guide will be available on the Council's website.
- 5.6 There will be circumstances where it is advantageous to both officers and Members to be trained together in joint sessions. This can provide a better use of resources in areas such as skills training and understanding new legislation. An example of this in last year's training was the mandatory Licensing Committee training, where officers from the Legal and Licensing teams attended alongside Members. As mentioned in 2.5 above, RIPA training was delivered to officers and Members.

Mandatory/Induction/Refresher Training – May to September 2014

- 5.8 Based on the above, the following Programme is proposed at this stage for the training slots identified from May to September 2014:-

May Mandatory Planning training
 Mandatory Licensing training
 Ethical Framework/Code of Conduct

June/July Mandatory Appeals training
 Corporate Priorities
 Training (subject to be identified)
 Treasury Management
 Training (subject to be identified)

September Mandatory Planning training

- 5.9 The Review Committee has its own specific programme. A date has been allocated in the Council's meetings timetable specifically for Review Committee training.
- 5.10 The learning and development booklet will contain details of the purpose and objectives of each course and who the courses are most suitable for. The booklet will also state that the training programme has been formulated to help the Council meet its corporate objectives and will show linkages between courses and corporate objectives.
- 5.11 In accordance with requests from Members, it is intended that the majority of the training programme will be delivered by officers, supplemented by external trainers where appropriate. Where possible, all training courses will be held in the Civic Suite, Rayleigh.
- 5.12 It is proposed to continue to arrange the majority of courses in the afternoon and then repeat them in the evening. The aim will be for each course to last a maximum of two and a half hours, with a 15 minute refreshment break part way through. There could be occasions when these timings need to be reviewed in order to accommodate training that may need a longer session or where there are costs of using external training providers. Mandatory Licensing training will, as usual, be run as one afternoon session, as will the mandatory training for Appeals Committee Members.

6 PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL TRAINING

- 6.1 The Parish/Town Councils continue to be invited to attend courses organised by the Council either specifically for Town/Parish Councillors or where the training is on a topic where it would benefit the District Council for Parish/Town Councils to attend.

- 6.2 The Council's Head of Legal, Estates and Member Services/Monitoring Officer delivered a course on Standards and the Code of Conduct for Parish/Town Councils in June 2013. In response to requests by Parish/Town Councils, a further session was provided in September 2013.
- 6.3 In September 2013 the Council's Head of Planning and Transportation offered a specially tailored planning course to Parish/Town Councils.
- 6.4 The Council's Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer facilitated a joint event with Great Wakering Parish Council in September 2013, in response to a request by the Parish Council. The event covered the action that would need to be taken in an emergency situation. Based on the positive feedback from such meetings with Great Wakering and Stambridge Parish Councils, the Emergency Planning Officer will be delivering a presentation to a Parish and Town Council meeting on 1 April 2014 in the Council Chamber.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The cost of Member learning and development is met from the Member training budget, which is set at £5,000 for 2014/15. Parish/Town Council attendees are charged if considered appropriate.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) To receive the summary of Members' attendance at training sessions during the Municipal Year 2013/14 as set out in paragraph 2.1.
 - (2) To endorse the proposals for the Member Learning and Development Programme for 2014/15 as set out in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.12.

Albert Bugeja

Head of Legal, Estates and Member Services

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Michelle Power on:-

Phone: 07102 318179

Email: michelle.power@rochford.gov.uk

If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

Appendix 1

MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ATTENDANCES MAY 2013 – FEBRUARY 2014

MEMBERS	Executive	Cttee Chairman/Vice	Probity/Regulatory	Review Committee	Mandatory		Highly Recom		Recom	
					P	A	P	A	P	A
Mrs P Aves					4	4	3	3	5	1
C I Black			*		4	3	3	1	5	0
Mrs L A Butcher			*	+	5	5	3	2	5	2
P A Capon		#			4	3	4	0	4	0
Mrs T J Capon				+	4	3	3	0	5	0
M R Carter			*		5	5	3	0	5	0
J P Cottis					4	2	3	0	5	0
T G Cutmore	&		*		5	5	4	4	4	3
R R Dray				+	5	5	3	3	5	3
Mrs H L A Glynn		#	*		5	5	4	3	4	3
T E Goodwin					4	3	3	0	5	0
K J Gordon	&				4	3	3	1	5	0
J E Grey		#	*		5	4	4	0	4	0
J D Griffin			*	+	4	3	3	2	5	1
Mrs A V Hale			*	+	5	5	3	3	5	3
B T Hazlewood			*	+	4	4	3	3	5	3
Mrs D Hoy			*		5	5	3	0	5	2
M Hoy				+	4	4	3	0	5	3
K H Hudson	&		*		6	6	4	2	4	2
Mrs G A Lucas-Gill	&		*		5	5	3	2	5	4

KEY

- P** – total number of attendances possible
A – actual number of sessions attended
~ – Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the Council
& – Executive Member
– Chairman/Vice-Chairman of a Committee/Sub-Committee
***** – Probity/Regulatory (covering Audit, Appeals and Licensing Committees). All Members are appointed to the Development Committee
+ – Members of the Review Committee

Appendix 1

MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ATTENDANCES MAY 2013 – FEBRUARY 2014

MEMBERS	Executive	Cttee Chairman/Vice	Probity/Regulatory	Review Committee	Mandatory		Highly Recom		Recom	
					P	A	P	A	P	A
C J Lumley		#		+	4	3	4	2	4	1
Mrs J R Lumley ~					4	3	3	2	5	2
M Maddocks	&		*		6	5	3	1	5	2
Mrs C M Mason					4	4	3	0	5	0
J R F Mason				+	4	4	3	0	5	0
Mrs J E McPherson	&		*		5	5	3	1	5	2
D Merrick		#	*		5	5	4	3	4	4
Mrs J Mockford		#	*		4	3	4	4	4	3
T E Mountain		#	*	+	4	3	4	1	4	0
R A Oatham			*		6	5	3	0	5	2
Mrs C E Roe		#	*	+	4	4	4	3	4	4
C G Seagers				+	4	3	3	1	5	2
S P Smith	&				4	4	3	1	5	0
D J Sperring		#	*	+	5	5	4	4	4	4
M J Steptoe	&		*		5	5	3	3	5	4
I H Ward		#	*	+	5	5	4	4	4	4
Mrs M J Webster		#		+	4	2	4	2	4	2
Mrs C A Weston		#	*		6	6	4	0	4	3
Mrs B J Wilkins ~					4	4	4	4	4	4

KEY

- P** – total number of attendances possible
A – actual number of sessions attended
~ – Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the Council
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Appendix 2

Member Development Self-Assessment – March 2014

Total sent out **38**
Total returned **15**
73 % return **38%**

1. In general, did you find the training sessions

Very useful	11
Useful	3
Could be improved	0
Poor	0

2. What did you find most useful about the training?

Information obtained	11
Ideas you could put into practice	7
Opportunity to discuss issues with other Councillors	10

Other individual comments:-

Taking advice from officers

Opportunity to discuss matters with officers

The format and presentation of most sessions allowed participants to benefit fully from all these options.

3. If you answered 'could be improved' or 'poor' to question 1 please indicate in which areas improvements could be made.

Course content	0
Course presenters	0
Style of course	0

The courses did not cover areas I thought should be, e.g. Audit training, Committee procedures

E learning would be useful for some courses

Appendix 2

4. If you found it difficult to attend many of the learning and development courses in 2012/13 please indicate your reason(s) below:-

Work/family commitments	4
Already attended similar course	1
Unsuitable course timing	3
Unsuitable course content	1

Other individual comments:-

- Other duties/commitments in my role as a Councillor
- Portfolio Holder duties and meetings which can impact on training I attend
- Health issues

Self-Assessment of Development Needs for 2014-15

5. What type of development opportunities do you think you would benefit from in the future?

Skills Development

Chairing Committees and other meetings	8
Time Management/Work/Life Balance	3
Dealing with the Media	7
Public Speaking	6
Questioning/Listening Skills	6
Meeting protocols and practices	6
Dealing with challenging situations/people	11

Core Briefing Sessions

Corporate priorities and strategic direction	6
Budget process/financial management	10
Procurement	7

Appendix 2

Performance management	5
Risk management	7
Freedom of Information/Data Protection Legislation	6
Audit Committee/External Auditor	4
Ethical standards and Code of Conduct	4

Key Topic Briefings

Emergency Planning	9
Housing and Homelessness	9
Member Decision-making Structure and Processes	9
Equalities and Diversity	1
County Highways	9
Children's/Youth Service Structure	5
Community Safety/Anti-Social Behaviour	6
Knowledge of major partnerships	10
The Use of Social Media	3

6. What type of learning do you find most useful?

Lecture with PowerPoint presentation	9
Interactive training e.g. workshops/role play/case studies	10
Learning from others, e.g. shadowing, mentoring	2
Visiting other authorities to gain best practice	1
External conferences	1
Video film-based training	1

Appendix 2

Other individual comments:-

- Online training/e-learning would be useful (3 comments)
- Information on New Government bills, i.e. Care Bill
- How partnerships can assist delivery
- Meet the officers event, especially for new Councillors so that they can find out who does what within the Council
- I prefer handouts to be given at the start of the lecture so we can make notes to help us remember

7. Additional individual comments

- Attendance at Planning Appeals – either organised for Members or information on where there are any for Members to independently attend.
- Suggestion that Independent/Parish representatives on the Standards Committee be invited to attend training in respect of that Committee only.
- Some skills development sessions are good to attend for a ‘refresher’.
- If e-learning could be developed, apart from being cost effective it could also then be ‘mandatory’ to complete this training as it can be done at a time that suits the individual Councillor.
- Subject to any Committees to which I may be appointed in return, will dictate some of my training needs.
- Need to help those flooded out of their homes.
- An up to date list of County Highways officers would be useful.