# MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT 2015/16

## 1    SUMMARY

1.1    Members are invited to give consideration to the proposals for the Member Learning and Development Programme for 2015/16.

## 2    MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING SESSIONS 2014/15

2.1    A summary report of Member attendance at training sessions during the period 29 May 2014 to 12 February 2015 is attached as Appendix 1. From the statistics it can be seen that 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 Budget Away Days in October 2014 and January 2015. The annual Member tour of planning sites in the District took place in October 2014.

2.4    The Review Committee has its own programme of training. Members of the Committee attended two courses in 2014/15. The first was entitled 'Developing an Effective Work Programme'. The second course was based on the observations by the trainer of a Review Committee meeting. Both courses were 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 next training course will be arranged in 2016/17.

2.6    The Council's Head of Planning and Transportation delivered a mandatory planning training course to newly elected Members in May 2014. Although attendance at this course fulfilled their mandatory planning training requirement, new Members were also encouraged to attend the Development Committee training session on 29 May; most of the new Councillors were able to attend this training.

2.7    The Treasury Management course run by the Council's treasury management advisers, Capita Asset Services, was offered to neighbouring authorities free of charge: a Castle Point Borough Council Member attended.

2.8     Council on 21 October 2014 resolved that Members could apply for funding for attendance at external conferences/training courses but that the allocation of such funding is subject to the agreement of all Group Leaders. Cllr Ian Ward requested attendance at a seminar held in London in December 2014 entitled 'The Brownfield Challenge'; about the development of brownfield land. The Head of Planning and Transportation confirmed that the course was appropriate and relevant to Cllr Ward's role as Portfolio Holder for Planning. The Group Leaders all agreed that funding of £120.00 plus travel costs be allocated from the Member training budget to enable Cllr Ward to attend the seminar.

2.9     A Standards Committee Tribunal in December 2014 heard an application from a Member requesting dispensation from a mandatory Planning training session missed during the year. The Tribunal ruled that the Councillor had demonstrated that the appropriate standard of knowledge of fellow Councillors had been achieved. Dispensation was granted and the Member was entitled to attend future meetings of the Development Committee as a full voting Member.

2.10    Rochford District Members were invited to attend a Member briefing on rural issues and the work of Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) in March 2015 at County Hall, Chelmsford. Cllr Mrs Glynn attended the course.

**3      MEMBER DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT**

3.1     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 2014/15 learning and development programme and details of any individual learning and development requests for 2015/16.

3.2     15 out of 39 questionnaires have been returned to date. A summary of responses is attached as Appendix 2. From responses on the questionnaires received to date the key findings are:-

3.3     The majority of respondents found the training sessions very 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.

3.4     As far as learning styles are concerned, most respondents found a lecture style of training with PowerPoint presentation the most useful, closely followed by interactive training, e.g. workshops/role playing/case studies.

**4      LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015/16**

4.1     Members are invited to give consideration to the proposals for the Member Learning and Development Programme for 2015/16.

4.2     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 3.1 to 3.4 above).

4.3     In accordance with agreed practice, a plan showing all dates for Member learning and development in the 2015/16 Municipal Year was provided to Members early in the calendar year. This plan included specific dates for mandatory training.

4.4     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 2015/16 Municipal Year and will be available on the Council's website.  The Guide provides information on the role of the Councillor and includes the dates of mandatory training in the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

4.5     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.

4.6     Council on 21 October 2014 resolved that a charge be set of £45 per attendee for neighbouring authorities for places on certain courses in the RDC training programme. Relevant courses in the 2015/16 municipal year can be identified and offered to neighbouring authorities accordingly.

4.7     Further to discussions by the Standards Committee at its last meeting, the Licensing officer will look into arranging a visit for Licensing Committee Members to an outdoor music event in the Southend borough. This will be to broaden Members' knowledge and understanding of such events in terms of licensing issues/requirements. It is understood that there will be no cost associated with this, apart from the cost of any mileage claims.

Mandatory/Induction/Refresher Training – May to September 2015

4.8     The following Programme is proposed at this stage for the training slots identified from May to September 2015:-

May          Mandatory Planning training
             Mandatory Planning training for newly elected Members

June         Mandatory Licensing training
             Corporate Priorities
             Mandatory Appeals training
             Training (subject to be identified)

July            Health and Wellbeing Board (priorities, aims and work)
                Economic Development/support of local businesses
                Ethical Framework/Code of Conduct

September        Mandatory Planning training

4.9     The Review Committee has its own programme: a date has been allocated in the Council's meetings timetable specifically for Review Committee training.

4.10    The learning and development booklet will contain details of the purpose and objectives of each course and who the courses are most suitable for.

4.11    Where possible, the training programme will be delivered by officers, supplemented by external trainers where appropriate. For 2015/16 external trainers will be used for Ethical Framework/Code of Conduct training and mandatory Licensing Committee training. Where possible, all training courses will be held in the Civic Suite, Rayleigh.

4.12    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.

**5      E-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

Local Government Association (LGA) e-learning courses

5.1     The LGA has very recently launched the LGA e-learning platform for Councillors and has so far developed two e-learning modules. The first of these modules is 'The Effective Ward Councillor'. The second e-learning module is 'Facilitation and Conflict Resolution'.

5.2     These LGA e-learning modules are free of charge to Rochford District Councillors; each Councillor can be provided with logon details to enable them to access the courses from the LGA website.

5.3     Further modules are in the pipeline and are likely to be available during the course of 2015, including 'Handling Complaints for Service Improvements' scheduled for April and 'Induction for newly Elected Councillors' scheduled for May.

5.4     The first two courses 'The Effective Ward Councillor' and 'Facilitation and Conflict Resolution' are now available. All Councillors could be given immediate access: it is a simple process that involves providing Members with login details to the LGA website, which can be accessed from iPads or PCs. The courses are designed to be dipped in and out of and are user-friendly.

Members are asked to consider whether this e-learning option should be progressed and rolled out to all Councillors.

## 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 Parish/Town Councillors or where the training is on a topic where it would benefit the District Council for Parish/Town Councils to attend.

6.2 In Part 2 of the 2014/15 Programme Parish/Town Councils were invited to attend the Safeguarding course, which was delivered by the Essex Safeguarding Children and Adults Board. Representatives from Ashingdon, Barling, Rawreth, Stambridge and Hullbridge Parish Councils and Rayleigh Town Council attended.

6.3 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 July 2014.

## 7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The cost of Member learning and development is met from the Member training budget, which is set at £6,500 for 2015/16. Parish/Town Council attendees and attendees from other local authorities 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 2014/15 as set out in paragraph 2.1

(2) To endorse the proposals for the Member Learning and Development Programme for 2015/16 as set out in paragraphs 4.1 – 4.12.

(3) Whether to roll out the LGA e-learning courses, as set out in paragraphs 5.1 – 5.4, to all Councillors.

John Bostock

Assistant Director, Democratic Services

**Background Papers:-**

None.

For further information please contact Michelle Power (Committee Administrator) on:-

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

# MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ATTENDANCES MAY 2014 – FEBRUARY 2015

| MEMBERS | Executive | Cttee Chairman/Vice | Probity/Regulatory | Review Committee | Mandatory | | Highly Recom | | Recom | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | P | A | P | A | P | A |
| C I Black | | | | + | 4 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| J C Burton | | | | + | 4 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Mrs L A Butcher | | # | * | + | 4 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| P A Capon | | # | * | | 5 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Mrs T J Capon | | # | * | + | 4 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| M R Carter | | # | * | | 5 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| T G Cutmore | E | | | | 4 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| R R Dray | | # | | + | 4 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| J H Gibson | | | | | 4 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| Mrs H L A Glynn ~ | | | | + | 4 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| K J Gordon | E | | | | 4 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| J D Griffin | | | | + | 4 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Mrs A V Hale | | # | * | + | 5 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| J Hayter | | | | | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 8 |
| B T Hazlewood | | | * | + | 4 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| N J Hookway | | | * | | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Mrs D Hoy | | # | * | | 6 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 2 |
| M Hoy | | | | | 4 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| K H Hudson | E | | * | | 6 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| J L Lawmon | | | * | + | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 |

**KEY**

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

# MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ATTENDANCES MAY 2014 – FEBRUARY 2015

| MEMBERS | Executive | Cttee Chairman/Vice | Probity/Regulatory | Review Committee | Mandatory | | Highly Recom | | Recom | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | P | A | P | A | P | A |
| **Mrs G A Lucas-Gill** | E | | * | | 5 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| **Mrs J R Lumley ~** | | | | | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| **M Maddocks** | | | | | 4 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| **Mrs C M Mason** | | | * | | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| **J R F Mason** | | | | + | 4 | 4 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| **Mrs J E McPherson** | E | | * | | 5 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| **D Merrick** | | # | * | | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| **Mrs J Mockford** | | # | * | + | 4 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| **T E Mountain** | | | | | 4 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| **R A Oatham** | | | * | | 6 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| **Mrs C E Roe** | E | | * | | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| **C G Seagers** | | # | | + | 4 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| **S P Smith** | E | | | | 4 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| **Mrs M H Spencer** | | | * | + | 4 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 4 |
| **D J Sperring** | | | * | | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| **M J Steptoe** | E | | * | | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| **I H Ward** | E | | * | | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| **Mrs C A Weston** | | # | * | | 5 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| **Mrs B J Wilkins** | | | * | | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 3 |

**KEY**

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| **E** | – | Executive Member |
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| **\*** | – | Probity/Regulatory (covering Audit, Appeals and Licensing Committees). All Members are appointed to the Development Committee |
| **+** | – | Members of the Review Committee |

## Member Development Self-Assessment – March 2014

**Total sent out    39**
**Total returned    15**

**1.**    In general, did you find the training sessions

Very useful                                      | 11 |

Useful                                           | 4 |

Could be improved                               | 2 |

Poor                                             | 1 |


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

Information obtained                            | 10 |

Ideas you could put into practice              | 8 |

Opportunity to discuss issues with other Councillors | 6 |


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

Course content                                  | 2 |

Course presenters                               | 1 |

Style of course                                 | 0 |


**4.**    If you found it difficult to attend many of the learning and development courses in 2014/15 please indicate your reason(s) below:-

Work/family commitments                         | 1 |

Already attended similar course                 | 3 |

Unsuitable course timing                        | 1 |

Unsuitable course content                       | 1 |

**Self-Assessment of Development Needs for 2015-16**

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

**Skills Development**

| | |
|---|---|
| Chairing Committees and other meetings | 2 |
| Time Management/Work/Life Balance | 4 |
| Dealing with the Media | 4 |
| Public Speaking | 3 |
| Questioning/Listening Skills | 2 |
| Dealing with challenging situations/people | 7 |

**Core Briefing Sessions**

| | |
|---|---|
| Corporate priorities and strategic direction | 8 |
| Budget process/financial management | 8 |
| Procurement | 3 |
| Performance management | 2 |
| Risk management | 7 |
| Freedom of Information/Data Protection Legislation | 4 |
| Audit Committee/External Auditor | 4 |
| Ethical Standards and Code of Conduct | 6 |

**Key Topic Briefings**

| | |
|---|---|
| Emergency Planning | 5 |
| Housing and Homelessness | 5 |
| Member Decision-making Structure and Processes | 4 |

**Appendix 2**

| | |
|---|---|
| Equalities and Diversity | 3 |
| County Highways | 9 |
| Children's/Youth Service Structure | 1 |
| Community Safety/Anti-Social Behaviour | 6 |
| Knowledge of major partnerships | 5 |

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

| | |
|---|---|
| Lecture with PowerPoint presentation | 13 |
| Interactive training e.g. workshops/role play/case studies | 9 |
| Learning from others, e.g. shadowing, mentoring | 5 |
| Visiting other authorities to gain best practice | 5 |
| External conferences | 4 |
| Video film-based training | 5 |

**7.    Additional comments**

- Training please around Tourism and Economic Development and working with Parishes

- Training for Parish Councillors is a must

- Generally, I found all sessions very worthwhile

- Safeguarding course poor

- Important to have regular updates on planning regulations, which are constantly changing.

- Different styles of course delivery make courses more interesting

- I have attended nearly every session and benefitted from the advice on offer