

## MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2011/12 – MID-PROGRAMME REVIEW

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report contains the mid-programme review of the 2011/12 Member Learning and Development Programme.

### 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In line with budgetary considerations, Member training sessions are now arranged in two phases – May to July and October to November.
- 2.2 The mandatory training requirements in respect of membership of the Development, Licensing and Appeals Committees have been achieved for Phase 1 of the Programme. A planning-related course is being offered in Phase 2 of the Programme, with attendance at this or the Members' Tour of the District on 17 September fulfilling Members' mandatory training requirement for Phase 2.

### 3 TRAINING PROGRAMME TO DATE

- 3.1 The following courses were held in Phase 1 of the Programme:-
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|---|---|--|
| * | Mandatory training for Members of the Development, Licensing and Appeals Committees | - Development<br>- Licensing<br>- Appeals  |
| * | Induction/Refresher Courses for all Members   | - Managing Difficult Situations/People with Improved Presence<br><br>- Corporate Priorities<br><br>- Local Government Finance<br><br>- Ethical Framework/Code of Conduct |
| * | Course for Audit Committee Members (held in September 2011)                         | - Role of the Audit Committee and the External Auditor   |
- 3.2 The sessions have been provided through a combination of specialist training providers and Council officers. Wherever appropriate, Rochford District Council officers have been used.
- 3.3 The Standards Committee has agreed that the mandatory Development Committee training session, which is held in May each year prior to the first

meeting of the Development Committee, should follow a format that covers planning policy and legislation and be delivered, where possible, by District Council officers. Accordingly, the planning training held on 12 May 2011 provided an outline of the principles underpinning the operation of the planning system and the roles and responsibilities of Members in determining planning applications. It was delivered by the Council's Head of Planning and Transportation and the Planning Manager.

- 3.4 Following a request from a newly elected Member of the Audit Committee, a training session entitled 'The Role of the Audit Committee and External Auditor' was held on 15 September. This was particularly useful for new Members of the Audit Committee. Audit Committee Members who were unable to attend the training have been sent the paperwork distributed at the training.
- 3.5 As part of the budget exercise aimed at minimising costs it has been decided to use the Civic Suite, Rayleigh for all Member training courses in the future, where possible. All of the courses in Phase 1 of the Programme will be held at the Civic Suite, as well as all courses in Phase 2.
- 3.6 The attendance by Rochford District Council Councillors, including Independent and Parish Members of the Standards Committee, at the training courses to date is set out at Appendix 1.

#### Review Committee

- 3.7 A course was held for Review Committee Members on 1 June 2011 entitled 'Introduction to Scrutiny in Rochford', which was delivered by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Officer. A course entitled 'Overview and Scrutiny – the Broader Picture' on 7 July 2011, was delivered by Tim Young, an independent scrutiny advisor.

## **4 FORTHCOMING OPPORTUNITIES**

- 4.1 The following courses are scheduled to take place within the second part of the programme in October and November 2011:-

**Mandatory Development Committee** 'The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Considered'. (This is in addition to the Tour of the District which was held on 17 September.)

#### **Courses for all Members of the Council:-**

The Voluntary Sector in the Rochford District

Domestic Abuse/Community Safety

Safeguarding Children/Young People and Vulnerable Adults/Equalities and Diversity.

The first three courses and the Equalities and Diversity part of the fourth course will be delivered by Rochford District Council officers. The Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults part of the fourth course will be delivered jointly by District Council and Essex County Council officers.

- 4.2 The planning course will consider the implications for the District of the draft NPPF. This will identify establish Members' views to feed into the Council's NPPF consultation.
- 4.3 Due to a high level of demand for planning training sessions in May and space limitations, it was decided to offer a separate planning training course for Parish/Town Councils in Phase 2 of the Programme. This training session has been scheduled to take place at 7pm on 25 October in Room 4, the Civic Suite, Rayleigh and Parish/Town Council clerks have been advised accordingly. Although this training will be covering the same topic area as the District Councillor training, it will be tailored specifically for the needs of the Parish/Town Councils.
- 4.4 The Standards Committee agreed that monitoring should be introduced to ensure that attendees of mandatory training sessions are present at the training for the specified 2 hours by way of a signing out column added to the attendance signing sheet. This will be introduced for the mandatory planning training session on 4 October. The Head of Planning and Transportation has confirmed that all attendees at the mandatory planning training in May attended for the full period.
- 4.5 A training date scheduled for Tuesday 1 November will be utilised for a special budget session for all Members.

## **5 OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY THE EAST OF ENGLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA)**

### Localism for the New Councillor

- 5.1 The LGA is delivering a 'new Councillor' event, aimed at Members elected in 2011, which will focus on the Localism agenda and its impact on the role of Councillor. It will address regional concerns as well as national ones. The session for this region will take place on Friday 16 December in the LGA offices in Smith Square, London SW1. All Rochford District Council Members who were elected in May 2011 have been invited to attend this event and have been given the programme details.

### Peer mentoring for new Executive Members.

- 5.2 The LGA has also offered a bespoke 'peer support' programme of development tailored to the requirements of the authority for new Executive Members of the Council and consideration is being given to the best way of taking this forward.

**6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The cost of Member training is met from the Council's Member training budget, which is set at £8,800 for 2011/12.

**7 PARISH IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 It is proposed to continue to offer Parish/Town Councils places on relevant courses. It continues to be the practice that when Parish/Town Council Clerks are provided with details of the training sessions, it is made clear that the training is offered to all Parish/Town Councillors and Clerks. This information is sent out at the same time as the training booklet is provided to District Councillors.

**8 RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** to note the 2011/12 Mid-Programme Review.

Albert Bugeja

Head of Legal, Estates and Member Services

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**Background Papers:-**

None

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

## MEMBER TRAINING PROGRAMME 2011/12

### MID PROGRAMME REVIEW

#### Attendance Figures to Date

	Date	Title of Course	No. of Attendees
<b>Mandatory Training Sessions</b> (For Members of the relevant Committee)	12 May 2011 (2 sessions)	Development Committee	38
	24 May 2011	Development Committee (Extra session)	2
	28 June 2011	Development Committee (Extra session)	1
	19 May 2011	Licensing Committee	7
	4 July 2011	Licensing Committee (Extra session)	1
	26 July 2011	Licensing Committee (Extra session)	1
	10 August 2011	Licensing Committee (Extra session)	1
	9 June 2011	Appeals Committee	12
<b>Induction/ Refresher Courses for All Members</b>	24 May 2011 (2 sessions)	Managing Difficult Situations/People and Improved Impact at Meetings	18
	16 June 2011 (1 session)	Corporate Priorities	10
	14 July 2011 (2 sessions)	Local Government Finance	15
	19 July 2011 (2 sessions)	Ethical Framework/Code of Conduct	15
<b>For Members of the Audit Committee</b>	15 September 2011	Role of the Audit Committee and External Auditor	5

Note: These figures include attendance by Independent/Parish Members of the Standards Committee.