
MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members on two aspects of Member training: how subjects for training are chosen and how the content is decided upon.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Member learning and development is divided into two phases each year – May to September (phase 1) and October to November (phase 2). Each phase contains a mix of mandatory and non-mandatory courses, the latter of which are classified as Highly Recommended, Recommended or Optional.

3 THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

Subject Selection

- 3.1 In 2010 the Council was awarded the Charter for Elected Member Development, which described the Council's Member training programme as an example of best practice. The process of determining the programme was largely established by the work of the Charter Implementation Group, a cross-party Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee.
- 3.2 The Member learning and development programme is determined by the Standards Committee. To inform the Programme setting report into the Committee, a Self-Assessment form is sent to all Members in which they are asked for their comments on the training provided in the current year as well as what they would like to see in the training programme for the forthcoming year. This gives Members an opportunity to reflect on the past year's training as well as inform the training for the forthcoming year. The data from these self-assessment forms, including topics for training, is summarised and presented in a report to the Standards Committee in its meeting in April. Included in this report is a tally of the type of training Members wish to see included in the forthcoming year's training. Only 14 forms were returned this year, which represents a gradual decline in response over the years since achievement of the Charter, when over 80% of forms were returned. Reminders are sent to Members to return the assessment forms.
- 3.3 Additional post course evaluation forms provide immediate feedback on each course run for Members.
- 3.4 As well as Member input, the Leadership Team is asked to provide details of topics for training in their specific service area that they consider would be useful for Members (see example of email sent below).

The programme of Member training for the forthcoming municipal year is being drafted. Dates have been identified for mandatory Planning, Licensing and Appeals

training. Below are suggested areas for the remaining sessions (although obviously this list is not exhaustive):-

- *What the Council Does*
- *Member Decision-Making Structure and Processes*
- *Finance/Budget Process/Council Tax*
- *Audit/Procurement/Risk Management*
- *Emergency Planning*
- *Safeguarding*
- *Data Protection*
- *Revenues and Benefits*
- *Housing Functions/Homelessness*
- *Community Safety/ASB*
- *Children's/Youth Service Structure*
- *Health and Safety*
- *Voluntary/Community Sector Partnerships*
- *Environmental Health/Food Safety*
- *Refuse Collection/Street Cleansing*
- *Leisure Services*

I would be grateful if you could let me know if there is training that you would like to deliver to Members with regard to your specialist areas. A draft programme can then be drawn up and reported to the Standards Committee.

- 3.5 The Standards Committee agreed that input into the three sessions of mandatory planning training provided each year be determined by the Assistant Director Planning & Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Chairman of the Development Committee. It has also agreed that 'the initial session of mandatory planning related training, be of a fixed format covering planning policy and planning legislation'.
- 3.6 Mandatory training for Members of the Licensing Committee was introduced by the Standards Committee in 2008. In the last two years a specialist in Licensing Law has delivered the training and included a 'mock hearing' in the Council Chamber as well as information on licensing legislation. Feedback from Members on the effectiveness of the training and relevance to their role resulted in using the trainer again this year.
- 3.7 Mandatory training for Members of the Appeals Committee was introduced by the Standards Committee in 2009. The training is delivered by the Licensing and Legal teams, with course content based on guidance for Councillors for the licensing of taxis from the Home Office.
- 3.8 Treasury Management training and Audit Committee training have become staple courses for Part 1 of the Programme.

- 3.9 Ethical Framework/Code of Conduct training is held each year as the Monitoring Officer feels that this annual update is useful to enable Members to fulfil their role.
- 3.10 The content of training organised for Members of the Review Committee is determined by the Overview and Scrutiny Officer in liaison with the Chairman of the Review Committee. This training does not form part of the general Member training programme and is for Members of the Review Committee only.

Content

- 3.11 As detailed in paragraphs 3.5 to 3.7, the content of the mandatory training is designed to accord with the requirements of the Standards Committee and reflect knowledge appropriate to the needs of the role of the specific Committee.
- 3.12 Training that is delivered by external providers is generally structured to cover necessary legislation and knowledge, to accord with what a Member will need to know to fulfil their role effectively. An example of this would be the Audit Committee and Treasury Management training, run by the Council's external auditors and representatives from the Council's Treasury Management Service provider, Capita.
- 3.13 A course outline covering the aim of each course and course objectives is provided to Members in the Member training booklet that is produced for each phase of the programme.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The cost of Member training is met from the Council's Member training budget, which is set at £6,500 for 2017/18.

5 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

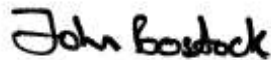
- 5.1 Prior to designing the annual planning training session for Parish/Town Councils, scheduled to be held on 10 October, Parish Clerks were contacted to ask for the planning topics their Council would find it useful to be covered. This was to assist the Assistant Director, Planning and Regeneration to provide training that was relevant to the needs of the Parish/Town Councils. A number of responses were received.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None.

7 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** that the contents of the report be considered.



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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.