

MEMBER TRAINING PROGRAMME 2003/2004

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members are invited to note the details of the Members' Induction Training Programme (Appendix 1), which commenced after the May elections this year and to give consideration to proposals for the Competency Training (Appendix 2).

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Members agreed at the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 30 January 2003 that training be divided into two types – Induction and Competency as follows:-

- May/June/July (Induction)
- October/November (Competency)
- February/March (Competency)

3 INDUCTION TRAINING

- 3.1 The Induction training, details of which are appended, is now well underway and runs until 30 July 2003. Each session has been categorised as either 'Recommended' or 'Optional', depending on the course content and whether the course is aimed at Members newly elected in May 2003 or not.
- 3.2 Members of the Standards Committee and all Members of the Council were invited to attend the sessions.
- 3.3 In response to a recommendation by the Housing Best Value Sub-Committee, it is anticipated that training on the definitions of key worker and affordable housing be provided. At the time of writing the report, confirmation is awaited from an external source that this could be made available on 23 July.

4 COMPETENCY TRAINING

- 4.1 A suggested programme of competency training is appended for Members' consideration.
- 4.2 Provisionally, the competency sessions have been categorised as 'Recommended/Optional'. Members need to determine that the category for each session is appropriate.

- 4.3 The dates for Part 1 have been provisionally agreed by the East of England Local Government Conference (EELGC) and relevant Officers.
- 4.4 In Part 2 the suggested dates and topics are entirely flexible and have not been confirmed.

5 LICENSING FUNCTIONS

- 5.1 Confirmation of the Royal Assent of the Licensing Bill is anticipated by the end of this month. Training for Members of the Appeals and Licensing Committee on their new roles and responsibilities within the licensing functions will be arranged. This will also be available to all Members.
- 5.2 A date has therefore been set aside in December for this full day's training, to which relevant Officers will also be invited to attend. Reciprocal arrangements will exist with other local authorities to enable Members to have a choice of dates.

6 MEMBERS ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING SESSIONS

- 6.1 At this stage, it would be appropriate to remind Members of this Committee's recommendation that Members of the Council should attend at least one planning related session every year.
- 6.2 A summary report of attendance at training sessions during the period 14 May 2002 to 31 March 2003 was reported to the last meeting of this Committee on 10 April 2003.
- 6.3 Attendance details for the current Induction programme will be reported in to the meeting of the Standards Committee to be held on 6 November 2003.
- 6.4 It is suggested that when details of the training programme are circulated to Members, a cut-off date is given for enrolment at particular sessions. This would enable individual sessions to be cancelled, should the take-up be too small to be viable.
- 6.5 Members are reminded of forthcoming sessions via the Members' Bulletin. In future.

7 RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE ON COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- 7.1 Based on the responses to the recent questionnaire circulated to Members of the Council about the operation of the Committee structure, which also asked for feedback on the 2002/03 Member training programme, the training programme has been very well received. Members have commented that it has been well-balanced, interesting and well presented. New Members have reported that the courses have proved invaluable.

- 7.2 The majority of the responses indicated that Members still preferred training courses to be held in the afternoon and then repeated in the evening, thus providing maximum choice.
- 7.3 In common with what has currently been the case, the ideal length of time for each session would seem to vary between 2 and 3 hours. Where a subject requires more than this amount of time, the preference would be to spread the training across two afternoons or two evenings.
- 7.4 The majority of responses indicated that Members still preferred the venue to be split in the proportion of two-thirds being held at the Civic Suite, Rayleigh and one third at the Freight House, Rochford.
- 7.5 Members of the Committee may wish to give consideration to some of the other relevant responses in terms of content for forthcoming programmes:-
- Follow-up Overview & Scrutiny training (in the proposed competency programme)
 - Complex planning issues to be addressed, particularly around specific reasons for planning requirements or reasons for refusals (in the proposed competency programme)
 - Highways training (in the proposed competency programme)
 - Member/Officer relationships (Code of Conduct issues were covered in the induction training).

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The costs of the training programme can be met from the Members' Support and Training Budget.

9 RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) That the Induction Training Programme be noted.
- (2) That the Competency Training Programme be agreed. (HAMS)

Sarah Fowler

Head of Administrative & Member Services

Background Papers:

None

For further information please contact Margaret Martin on:-

Tel:- 01702 318179

E-Mail:- margaret.martin@rochford.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

INDUCTION PROGRAMME 2003/04

SUBJECT	DATE	R/O
What the Council Does	Tues 20 May	R/O
Rights and Responsibilities of Members/Constitution	Wed 21 May	R/O
Introduction to Development Control/Replacement Local Plan	Thurs 22 May	R/O
Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)	Wed 28 May	R
Leisure/Contracted Services/Environmental Health	Wed 4 June	R/O
Council Tax/Housing Benefit	Wed 11 June	R/O
CPA Training (external presenter from EELGC)	Wed 18 June	R
Housing Strategy and Policy	Wed 25 June	R
Planning Bill	Wed 16 July	R
Key Worker/Affordable Housing (to be confirmed)	Wed 23 July	R
Crime and Disorder/The Role of the Police Locally	Wed 30 July	R

R = Recommended for all Members

O = Optional for Existing Members

COMPETENCY TRAINING 2003/04 (Part 1)

DATE	SUBJECT	VENUE	R/O
Wed 15 October	Overview & Scrutiny (EELGC - workshop based – assess performance against “14 points of scrutiny success”)	Freight House	R
Wed 22 October	Planning (to include RPG 14/specific reasons for planning regulations/reasons for refusal/complex planning issues)	Civic Suite	R
Wed 29 October	Risk Management	Civic Suite	O
Wed 5 November	Budget Strategy (refresher prior to Budget process)	Freight House	R
Wed 12 November	Application of Rules of Procedure (Standing Orders)	Civic Suite	O
Wed 26 November	Planning Bill	Civic Suite	R
Fri 12 December	New Licensing Functions (9.30 am – 3.30 pm)	Freight House	R (essential for Members of Appeals and Licensing Committee)

Note:

- Training on taxi licensing will be arranged later in the year.
- It is anticipated that one or two evening sessions will be arranged during September for some ‘hands-on’ web site induction training.

COMPETENCY TRAINING 2003/04 (Part 2)

DATE	SUBJECT	VENUE	R/O
Wed 18 February	Overview & Scrutiny (consider exact content after October session)	Freight House	R
Wed 25 February	Planning Enforcement	Civic Suite	R
Wed 3 March	Time Management (EELGC)	Civic Suite	O
Wed 10 March	Media Skills (EELGC – this will probably involve an all day or two half-day practical sessions)	Freight House	O
Wed 17 March	Highways (follow-up)	Civic Suite	O
Wed 24 March			