

## MEMBER TRAINING PROGRAMME 2006/07 – MID PROGRAMME REVIEW

### 1 SUMMARY

1.1 This report contains the mid-programme review of the 2006/07 Member Training Programme.

### 2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 At the meeting of the Committee on 18 April 2006 the Training Programme for 2006/07 was agreed based on 3 strands of work:-

- Role development (covering priority areas such as leadership and decision-making skills).
- Technical skills (covering how the Council works corporately and in specialist service areas).
- Personal skills (covering the skills associated with a Member's role in the Council and in the community).

2.2 The detailed programme had been devised to continue to be responsive to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Improvement Plan, which had identified priority areas for training.

### 3 TRAINING PROGRAMME TO DATE

3.1 The following courses have already been held:-

- Role development strand – Chairmanship Skills
- Technical skills strand – What the Council Does/Corporate Priorities/Budget
  - Development Control
  - Ethical Framework/Services for Members
  - Large Scale Voluntary Transfer of Housing
- Personal skills strand – Information Technology (IT) Skills

3.2 The sessions, organised as courses for new Members or 'refresher' courses for more experienced Members, have been provided through a combination of specialist training providers and Council officers.

3.3 The venues have either been the Freight House, Rochford or the Civic Suite, Rayleigh. Both daytime and evening sessions have been organised to

accommodate Members' commitments. IT training has taken place at the Castle Point and Rochford Adult Community College.

- 3.4 The attendance at the training courses to date is set out at Appendix 1. Overall, attendance at some types of courses has been quite low. The reasons for this will be examined as part of the Member feedback on this year's programme. Meanwhile every opportunity will be taken to publicise the opportunities on offer.

#### **4 FORTHCOMING OPPORTUNITIES**

- 4.1 The following courses are scheduled to take place within the second part of the programme (September to December 2006):-

- Technical skills
  - External Audit/Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA):Update
  - Affordable Housing and Planning: The Council's Role
  - Waste Management/Recycling and the Procurement Project for the Refuse Collection, Recycling, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Contracts
  - Risk Management
  - Gambling Act 2005
- Personal skills
  - Information Technology (IT) Skills

- 4.2 A training need has been identified for Members of the Appeals Committee in respect of taxi licensing appeals, and appropriate training is currently being organised.

- 4.3 A part 3 programme (February to March 2007) is currently under development and will seek to cover: Rochford District Council Partnership Development, Performance Management, Speed Reading, Transportation/Concessionary Fares, Code of Conduct issues and Press/PR/Media Skills.

#### **5 WORKING WITH OTHER COUNCILS**

- 5.1 Rochford, Castle Point and Basildon Councils continue to offer appropriate courses to the Members of each Authority from their individual training programmes on a reciprocal basis.

- 5.2 The Joint Member Development Programme which Rochford, Castle Point and Basildon commissioned, was introduced in June 2006. Training sessions were organised and presented by the Improvement and Development Agency's (IdeA) experienced facilitators. This has covered four themes from the IdeA skills framework, with courses being offered as follows:-

- Community Leadership
  - 22 June, Castle Point
  - 29 June, Rochford

- Regulating and Monitoring – 11 July, Basildon  
– 19 July, Castle Point
- Scrutiny and Challenge – 13 September, Rochford  
– 21 September, Castle Point
- Working in Partnership – 12 October, Rochford

5.3 Afternoon and evening sessions have again been provided to maximise attendances, and these figures are shown in Appendix 2.

5.4 In the medium to longer term there are potential opportunities of working together to provide an improved range of courses tailored more to needs and cost sharing instead of duplication. Maldon District Council has expressed an interest in becoming involved in this joint work. It is envisaged that future joint working is likely to focus on skills development rather than technical content from IdeA.

## 6 OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 Training was provided to the Members of the Review Committee by RADA, who use a highly practical approach to training, including aspects of role play and theatre based exercises. This was deemed very effective and to have been a successful session on the whole.

6.2 The Chief Executive has also led Member development opportunities on the subjects of Visioning and Local Development Framework.

## 7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The cost of Member Training continues to be met from a combination of the Council's training budget and the Government Capacity Building Fund grant.

## 8 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** to note the 2006/07 Mid-Programme Review.

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**Background Papers:-**

None

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