



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 21ST SEPTEMBER 2016

SUBJECT: UPDATE MEMBER TRAINING AND SUPPORT PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the Member Training and Support Programme to further strengthen the Council's corporate governance through the implementation of a range of Members' training and support sessions.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 On the 22nd April 2014 Council agreed a detailed programme of Members support and development training opportunities. This report will update Members on the progress of the training and support programme arrangements.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The report assists in the implementation of the Member Training and Development Protocol adopted by Full Council on 22nd April 2014.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Council has long since recognised the importance of supporting Members' many and varied roles with a programme of targeted training and development. Indeed, the Council was the first in Wales to be awarded the WLGA's Wales Charter for Member Support and Development in 2007 and was renewed most recently in 2014.

The Training and Development Programme

- 4.2 On the 22nd April 2014 Council agreed a detailed programme of Members support and development training opportunities.
- 4.3 Based on the recommendations contained in that report, a framework of training and development for a full Council term (4 years) was scheduled to follow three distinct categories namely Mandatory, Recommended and Requested.
- 4.4 Mandatory Training is recognised as essential and is associated with Members' statutory responsibilities and regulatory committee membership. Recommended Training is recognised as important but not essential and includes the Annual Refresher and 6 Monthly Update sessions and Requested Training which is based on the needs identified by Members themselves as part of their training needs analysis or personal development review.

Recommended Training

- 4.5 The Annual Refresher Training schedule has been in place for 3 years with an average attendance level of 60%. Following the Annual Meeting of Council each Committee, Sub Committee and Panel receives a 30 minute Officer led, refresher training session prior to its scheduled meeting. These sessions update Members on the terms of reference for that particular committee; provide information on any relevant policy or legislation changes along with any decision making considerations and appeal processes that need to be taken into account. Scrutiny and Regulatory Committees also receive a 6 monthly update session if there have been any important changes made to the committee in the interim period and these achieved a 65% attendance rate.

Mandatory Training

- 4.6 The Mandatory Training schedule runs twice per Council term, with the first sessions delivered in January 2015. 100% attendance was achieved for each of the committees designated under the programme (Audit Committee, Licensing Committee, Planning Committee, Pensions Compensation Committee, Appeals Panel, Appointments Committee, Rights of Way Cabinet Committee and the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee) with individual sessions arranged for any new Members appointment after the initial training had been delivered. 'All Member' Mandatory Training on the Constitution and Information Governance achieved a 90% attendance rate over two sessions. Those Members still outstanding will be offered a further opportunity to attend a final mop-up session.
- 4.7 In terms of 'All Member' Mandatory Training, Democratic Services Officers are looking at alternative methods of delivering mop-up sessions to those Members who for legitimate reasons have been unable to attend the facilitator led sessions. The possibility of providing a recorded training session or a webcast session with a log-on access capability is being considered and further updates will be provided on the progress made.

Requested Training

- 4.8 Feedback on the Requested Training schedule achieved a 100% overall rating of either very good or good and was particularly positive for the sessions run by Melanie Dole (Public Speaking/Presenting to an Audience and Webcasting), Ian Botrill (Negotiating and Influencing Skills) and Lianne Dallimore and Steve Harris (Introduction to Finance). For the first time the training programme offered e-learning modules through the All Wales Academy learning portal. This facility allowed Members to study at their own pace; at a time best suited to themselves and offered a variety of courses from Managing Constituency Casework to Charing Skills.

Requested Training	Facilitator	*Attendance	% Rated Very Good or Good
Webcasting/Public Speaking	Melanie Dole	77%	100%
Effective Communication	Stephen Pugh	67%	100%
Negotiating and Influencing Skills	Ian Botrill	70%	100%
New Thinking in Performance Management	Ros Roberts	100%	100%
Roles and Responsibilities of Cabinet Members	Jonathan Jones	90%	100%
Equalities and Diversity	Anwen Rees Dave Thomas	78%	100%
Finance	Lianne Dallimore Steve Harris	100%	100%

**The attendance percentage is calculated on the number of Members that booked on to a session that attended.*

It is worth noting that the Finance training was first delivered as a workshop to the participants in the Senior Councillor Development Programme and following their recommendation was subsequently offered to all Members. A similar recommendation was made in relation to the Chairing Skills and Public Speaking/Media Interview Skills modules and arrangements will be made to offer these as individual sessions to all Members following the Local Government Elections in 2017.

Senior Councillor Development Programme

- 4.9 During 2015/16 an entirely new training programme was piloted by Caerphilly Council for those Members who hold or aspire to hold senior office. Working in conjunction with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Senior Councillor Development Programme aimed to help participants develop the key skills and knowledge required by members in senior positions with a view to optimising performance and progression within the council.
- 4.10 Delivered over a 6 month period through a series of Saturday seminars, weekday work-shops, guided personal research and reflection and observed practice this informal and interactive programme was offered to Councillors from all parties and positions. Sponsored by the Leader of Council and supported by the Leaders of the Opposition and Independent Group the programme covered wide ranging and strategic topics including Setting the Context – The National Political Landscape, Strategic and Political Leadership, Finance, Performance and Improvement, Chairing Skills and Public Speaking – Media Interview Skills.
- 4.11 14 Members initially signed up to the programme, 2 x Members withdrew after the introduction session for personal reasons, 1 x Member resigned as a Councillor and of the 11 remaining participants 8 (73%) completed sufficient modules and workshops to receive their certification. Although a 35% drop out rate was disappointing it was not unexpected given the nature and duration of the training.
- 4.12 Feedback on the Senior Councillor Development Programme overall received a 100% satisfaction rating from participants and 100% rated the quality of the trainers and training provided as either good or very good. All but one of the participants felt that the Saturday morning provision worked well.

SENIOR COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME				
Module	Facilitator	Workshop	Facilitator/ Preparation	% Rated Very Good or Good
Setting the Context	Daniel Hurford	N/A	N/A	100%
Strategic and Political Leadership	Ian Botrill	Challenges of Being a Cabinet Member	Self Study and Research	100%
Finance	John Rae	Introduction to Finance/Medium Term Financial Planning	Lianne Dallimore Steve Harris	100%
Performance and Improvement	Daniel Hurford Ros Roberts	Performance and Improvements Plans	Ros Roberts	100%
Chairing Skills	Cath Forbes- Thompson Sarah Titcombe	Chairing Skills – Practical Exercises	All Wales Academy e- learning Module	100%
Public Speaking – Media Interviews	Melaine Dole	Practical Exercise and Role Play	Melaine Dole	100%

- 4.13 As a result of the feedback received and the positive outcomes achieved for participants a submission was made to the WLGA for a Good Practice Award and Innovation Award for the programme. In June 2016 the WLGA confirmed that the submission had been successful and the award was made at Council on the 19th July 2016. As part of that submission a further presentation will be made at the WLGA Officers and Members Network meeting on the 8th November 2016, a few of the Members that completed the course will be attending to give their personal views on the programme.

Additional Training and Support

- 4.14 Outside the Mandatory, Recommended and Requested programmes, Members have also made individual requests for specific additional training and support has been provided for attendance at events such as the LGA Young Councillor's Weekend, WLGA Leadership Academy, Institute of Licensing, Gambling Commission and LGA Focus on Leadership.

Conclusion

- 4.15 In that the number and frequency of the different training sessions a Member would need to attend within a training year, is primarily driven by that Member's committee membership some Councillors found the first full year of the training and development programme to be very demanding. Members' comments on the amount of training delivered have been noted and different delivery options will continue to be looked at and piloted in order to try and reduce the demands on Councillors time, whilst maintaining a quality training experience. However Members stated preference is still to receive tutor facilitated modules rather than distance or e-learning options.
- 4.16 All 9 of the Mandatory training sessions received excellent feedback in terms of the content and quality of the training provided. Overall Members fed back that scheduling this type of training twice per Council term was the correct timeframe and agreed that the subject matter was set at the right level. It should be noted that there have been no referrals made to the Standards Committee as a result of non-attendance.
- 4.17 New e-Learning modules are continually being developed by the All Wales Academy (AWA) and Democratic Services will look at lifting the profile of this facility with Members over the next year by highlighting when new modules become available. The present AWA Learning Portal will be moved onto an NHS host site in August 2016 and new links and individual log on details will be forwarded to Councillors as soon as they go live.
- 4.18 Members will continue to be offered an annual review of their training and development needs and the next training needs analysis questionnaire will be circulated following the Local Government Elections in 2017 with a view to formulating a new two year Requested Training Programme commencing in 2018.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Costs associated with training including the Senior Councillor Development Programme are met from the Council's existing Members' budget provision.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The administration of the programme means additional tasks for Democratic Services staff but these will be met through existing budgets.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses not contained in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Members note the update on the Members Support and Development Programme arrangements.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To assist with compliance of the Protocol adopted by Council which is now incorporated in the Council's Constitution.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

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Background Papers:

Members Training and Development - Council 22nd April 2014