



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 17TH MARCH 2022

SUBJECT: MEMBERS INDUCTION 2022

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report outlines the proposed induction programme for newly elected and returning Councillors following the local government elections in May 2022 for the consideration of Democratic Services Committee prior to its approval by Council.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The work of a Councillor is complex and challenging and the political, legislative and local landscape in which they work is changing constantly. Communities have high expectations of their elected representatives from the day of their election and throughout their period of office. It is therefore essential to be able to quickly and successfully navigate the different aspects of local government. This report outlines the importance of induction and presents a draft induction programme for the approval of the Democratic Services Committee prior to its presentation to Council.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members consider and note the Induction Programme as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report and recommend its approval to Council.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To support newly elected and returning Councillors understand their roles and responsibilities as elected Members

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 An induction programme is an important development opportunity as it enables Councillors to quickly become familiar with how the council works, the rules and procedures under which it operates and the complexities of the elected member role.

- 5.2 The proposed induction programme (Appendix 1) will be delivered over the first few months of the new Council term and will provide Members with an opportunity to clearly establish their roles and responsibilities and to build positive working relationships with Officers from the outset. The programme has been designed to highlight key council information and its policies and procedures which should enable Councillors to actively and rapidly participate in the business of council, increasing their confidence in their ability to make informed and effective decisions from the start of their term of office. The draft Induction Programme has been informed by the [WLGA Competency Framework](#) and will also tie into the wider Members Training and Development Programme that will run for a 2-year period following the election.
- 5.3 To support the induction programme an electronic Members Information Pack will also be produced and will include a timetable of meetings, links to core policies and procedures, frequently asked questions and useful contact numbers and will be distributed to Members when they sign the Acceptance of Office register and collect their IT Equipment. Paper copies will also be made available on request and all documents will comply with accessibility requirements. It is also proposed to circulate a copy of the Induction Programme as agreed by Council to prospective candidates in advance of the elections as an awareness raising exercise.

Overview of the Induction Programme

Presentation and Directorate Show Case 'Your Council'

- 5.4 The programme will commence on Tuesday, 10th May 2021 with a 'Directorate Show Case' exhibition and Presentation. The Presentation from the Chief Executive will be held physically and digitally and along with detailing the key services provided by the Council the Chief Executive will outline Caerphilly's organisational values and behaviours. The Show Cases will also be made available as a live event to those Members wishing to connect remotely. The Show Cases will provide Members with the opportunity to find out more about the Councils' services and meet Senior Officers as well as other Councillors. Heads of Service will be in attendance and provide Members with useful point of contact information and an organisational chart (including officer photographs) of their service area.

Each meeting room will host a Corporate Directorate, where the services provided will be highlighted, Rhymney Room will host Corporate Services and Education, the Sirhowy Room will host the Communities Directorate and the Ebbw Room will host Social Services and Housing.

As we need to plan these activities now but cannot know the position in terms of COVID 19 in May 2022, it is felt that the Showcase Exhibition as run in 2017 would not be appropriate to duplicate given continuing uncertainties. The committee room Show Case set up also helps to support staff that maybe utilising the agile working hubs throughout the day as it would minimise disruption this area of the building.

Mandatory Induction

- 5.5 The Mandatory Induction seminars presented are considered to be essential and encompass Members' statutory responsibilities and regulatory committee membership. These seminars will include Code of Conduct and Governance Arrangements, Information Governance and Data Protection, Licensing and Planning and Equalities and Diversity and will be delivered before the full committee cycle

begins.

Recommended Induction

- 5.6 The Recommended Induction seminars presented are considered to be important but not essential and include Smart and Safe Working Practices, which will look at Social Media and managing an on-line presence and hints, tips on working safely in the community and help provided to support mental health and work life balance; Introduction to Finance which will explain where the Council gets its funding and help Members to understand financial terminology, budget setting and medium term financial planning.

Part of the feedback that we received on the 2017 Induction Programme was that Members felt there was not enough information on the different directorates and how they worked. We have taken these comments on board and have incorporated a series of Introductory Sessions that will be facilitated by each Corporate Director and will provide Members with more detail on that Directorate's areas of responsibility, projects and plans coming forward.

The Recommended Induction programme also includes a series of mini 'Introduction to Committee' training sessions. All new Councillors, along with the committee membership, will be encouraged to attend these sessions which will explain the terms of reference for that committee, introduce them to the Officers they are likely to see on a regularly basis and take them through any decision-making considerations or appeal processes that they need to take into account. Newly elected Members will also be encouraged to attend and observe meetings if possible as an induction activity.

5.7 Wider Induction Process

As the end of the year progresses Members Seminars will incorporate topics that will introduce Partnership organisations such as the Gwent Public Services Board, and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and will also inform Members of their commitments as part of their wider Councillor role such as Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and Unconscious Bias and Protected Characteristics.

- 5.8 It should be noted that there may need to be minor date and or facilitator changes to the attached induction programme, and the subsequent Members Support and Development Programme depending on facilitator availability. Where such changes are required, we will notify Members in advance.

After Induction - Training Needs Analysis – Requested Training

- 5.9 During December 2022-January 2023 a training needs analysis questionnaire will be compiled and distributed. Members' responses will be analysed and from this the 2023-2025 Members Support and Development Programme will be developed which will be presented to the Democratic Services Committee for approval prior to its recommendation to Council.
- 5.10 We will continue to offer a mix of tutor led training sessions physical and online sessions, e-learning modules and seminars. As always, we will continue to support Members individual training requests within budgetary constraints.

5.11 Conclusion

The proposed induction programme will provide the best footing possible for newly elected Councillors as well as updating and informing returning Councillors. Allowing them to embrace roles and responsibilities with confidence and hit the ground running.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 No assumptions have been made.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 As this report is asking Democratic Services to note and comment on the Members Induction Programme 2022 an IIA is not necessary at this stage.

7.2 The Induction Programme 2022 forms part of the Councils commitment to Diversity in Democracy as it has been developed in line with the Diversity in Democracy Action Plan by providing training opportunities via multiple media and at staggered times. Sessions have been designed to ensure that Councillors are valued, developed and supported.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Costs associated with the Induction Programme will be met from the Council's existing Members' training budget provisions

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The report reflects to views of consultees.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 2001

Author: Emma Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer)
sullie@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: C. Harrhy (Chief Executive)
D. Street (Acting Chief Executive)

R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services)
M.S. Williams (Corporate Director Communities and Economy)
R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer)
L. Lane (Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Democratic Services)
Councillor P. Marsden (Leader of Council)
Councillor C. Mann (Leader of Plaid Cymru Group)
Councillor K. Etheridge (Leader of Independents Group)
Councillor M. James (Chair Democratic Services Committee)
Councillor G. Kirby (Vice Chair Democratic Services Committee)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Induction Programme 2022

Background Papers:

[WLGA Competency Framework](#)