



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 14TH MARCH 2023

SUBJECT: MEMBERS SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide feedback to Members on the 2022 Induction Programme for Elected Members and seek their views and endorsement of the next stages of Members Support and Development through the circulation of a Training Needs Questionnaire.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to members on the Induction Programme undertaken following the elections in May 2022 and to seek Member's endorsement of the Training Needs Questionnaire at Appendix 1 which will help to facilitate the next stages of Members Support and Development.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members consider and approve the attached Training Needs Analysis Questionnaire for circulation to All Councillors.
- 3.2 Members note the update on the Members Induction Programme 2022.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 To update members on the Induction Programme for 2022 and to agree the subjects for inclusion in the Members Training and Development Programme.
- 4.2 The Council's Member Training and Development Programme is the key initiative in discharging the Council's responsibility and commitment to supports Members to carry out their roles effectively.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Council has always recognised the importance of supporting Members' many and varied roles through 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. The last award was received in 2019 and expired in 2022.

- 5.2 As members training provision has developed and evolved since the introduction of the Charter, it has become clear that if it is to continue the criteria needs updating to take account of recent legislative changes, policy developments and the evolving practice of Democratic Services across local authorities in Wales.

As a result the WLGA are currently seeking the views of Heads of Democratic Services on how the work on the Charter should progress if it is to continue. Information will be fed back to this committee on the outcome of this survey over the coming months.

- 5.3 In the interim our commitment to member training and development will continue. In order to meet members needs and assist the process a Training Needs Analysis Questionnaire (as attached in Appendix 1) has been compiled and will be distributed to all Councillors, Members of the Standards Committee, Governance and Audit Committee and Co-opted Members. Suggested courses within the questionnaire are based on Wales Local Government Association (WLGA) recommendations and will be comprised of a mix of e-learning and multi-locational facilitator led sessions.
- 5.4 The Questionnaire also asks Members to provide feedback on their views of the Member Induction 2022 which will be used to inform future programmes.
- 5.5 Responses will be analysed, and a training programme developed based on the responses to the training needs that Members themselves have identified.

Members Induction May 2022

- 5.6 Following the local government elections, the Members Induction Programme ran from the 9th of May to the 6th June 2022, the programme was made up of mandatory and recommended training together with Directorate Show Cases, all aimed to provide the best start possible for newly elected Councillors whilst providing the opportunity for returning Councillors to refresh their skill set.
- 5.7 Mandatory Training on Code of Conduct and Governance (Ethics and Standards), Equalities and Diversity and Information Governance achieved 100% attendance and the Recommended Sessions achieved an average attendance of 94%. Recommended session included, Smart and Safe Working Practices, Working in a Digital Environment, Planning, Licensing and Welcome to Scrutiny.
- 5.8 Due to ongoing installation works of the hybrid (multi-locational) equipment, the training sessions were undertaken either virtually or in person and at various times to accommodate Members with their personal and business commitments. Training was also recorded for those members who were unable to make the session times who were then able to view the training at times to suit individual needs.
- 5.9 In addition to the training sessions, the Directorate Show Cases provided an opportunity for Members to meet Senior Officers in an informal setting and learn more about each service area. Feedback given verbally during the event was extremely positive. However, it became apparent that using separate rooms (necessary under the restrictions in place at this time) for each Directorate did hamper the flow of the event. With COVID restrictions fully lifted, Democratic Services would look at facilitating the next showcase solely within the Atrium/Restaurant area, which would resolve this issue, improving the cohesiveness of the event as a whole and making it easier for Members to meet and mingle.
- 5.10 The wider Induction Programme and Seminar Programme included an Introduction to the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Biodiversity and Grass Cutting Regimes, 20mph Speed Limit and Local Development Plan (LDP). Members of the Planning Committee and Licensing Committee will also receive regular relevant training as part of their continuing development.

Seminars do not form part of the Member Support and Development Programme but will

continue to be arranged as required.

Elected Member Handbook 2022

- 5.11 Part of the 2022 Induction included the production of an Elected Member Handbook, the document was circulated to all Members by email and contained information on a variety of topics including: - Member and Officer Relations, Councillor Job Description and Person Specification, overviews of Scrutiny and Executive functions, Calendar of Meetings, WLGA Workbooks and a Directory of useful links and contacts.
- 5.12 Democratic Services will also be asking Members for their feedback on the Handbook as part of the questionnaire.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made in the report which is based on work undertaken by the WLGA Charter for Members Support and Development and the requirements of the Local Government Measure (Wales) Act 2011 and the Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 As the report is asking for the Democratic Services Committee to approve the circulation of a questionnaire to gauge Members thoughts on the 2022 Induction process and the development of a Members Support and Development Programme an IIA is not necessary at this stage.
- 7.2 The Members Support and Development Programme forms part of the Council's commitment to Diversity in Democracy as it seeks to establish Members preferences in terms of training topic, facilitation platform and session times to ensure that Councillors are valued, developed and supported.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The costs associated with the Member Development Programme will be met from the Council's existing Members' training budget provision.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The administration of the Members Training and Support Programme means additional tasks for the Democratic Services staff, but these will be met through existing budgets.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The report reflects the views of the consultees.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Local Government Act 2000, Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021.

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Appendix 1 Training Needs Analysis Questionnaire.