MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Venue: Town Hall,
Moorgate Street,
Rotherham. S60 2TH

Date: Thursday, 16 February 2012

Time: 2.00 p.m.

A G E N D A

1.   Apologies

2.   Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 15th December, 2012 (herewith) (Pages 1 - 3)

3.   Civic Heads' Training Seminar - Tuesday, 6th March, 2012 in Bradford Town Hall (documentation herewith) (Pages 4 - 6)

      Approval to be sought for the new Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress (once decided) plus two officers to attend.

4.   Improving the standard of report writing within Rotherham Borough Council (report herewith) (Pages 7 - 13)

5.   Draft Spring Programme - 2012 (report herewith) (Pages 14 - 18)

6.   New Member Induction 2012 (report herewith) (Pages 19 - 22)

7.   Overview of Training Activity 2011- 12 (report herewith) (Pages 23 - 25)

8.   Date and Time of Next Meeting - Thursday, 26th April, 2012 at 2.00 p.m.

MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL
THURSDAY, 15TH DECEMBER, 2011

Present:- Councillor Stone (in the Chair); Councillors Buckley, Dodson, Lakin, Pickering, G. A. Russell, Sharman, Smith, Whelbourn and Wootton.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Gosling.

67.   MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 29TH SEPTEMBER, 2011

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th September, 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

68.   REVISED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2011

Consideration was given to the above Strategy which had been reviewed and updated to reflect the current priorities and direction of the Council in light of changing Government agendas.

The core programme had been updated to reflect the various roles of Members and the challenges presented in terms of Member skills and knowledge. In particular the Council Vision and priority outcomes had been updated together with the business values.

The Strategy provided for 6 monthly reviews of training programmes by the Panel. It was proposed that the Panel reviewed attendance and feedback from events in February and July. Whilst it provided for Members to complete their Personal Development Plans, it currently did not include a target and timeframe in which they should be completed. Other Councils also set targets for a minimum level of annual development hours for each Elected Member.

Agreed:- (1) That the revised Member Development Strategy be agreed.

(2) That a target of 80% completed Personal Development Plans on an annual basis be supported.

(3) That a commitment be made that there be compulsory elements of training e.g. Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Emergency Planning.

69.   MORE (MEMBER ONLINE RESOURCE ENVIRONMENT)

Consideration was given to a report regarding the Members Online Resource Environment (MORE) which had gone live in November. A development group, supported by RIEP funding and the LGYH, had been working on the development of an online resource area for Elected Members.

The purpose of the site was to provide Members with a single point of reference for a range of development resources including upcoming events, conferences and seminars, topical updates and briefings, resources from recent programmes and events, e-learning and specially commissioned resources around crucial topics.

At a later date the site would be developed to provide automated updates on

new resources and a password protected area for Members to exchange ideas and share information.

The development group had requested member representation on a reference group which would look at development of the site and agree content.

It was noted that Councillor Hussain had expressed an interest in becoming the Champion for this project.

Agreed:- (1) That the availability of the MORE website (www.more.lgyh.gov.uk) be noted.

(2) That the sharing of appropriate locally developed resources via the site be agreed.

(3) That Member involvement in the development of and publicity relating to the site be agreed.

(4) That information be circulated to Panel Members on the work of the development group.

70. UPDATED AUTUMN PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to training events that had taken/were to take place during the Autumn, 2011. Planning had started on the Spring Programme.

It was noted that information had been received from the Region on a Local Government Finance Policy Update conference for Elected Members with responsibility for Finance in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Agreed:- (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Spring Programme be submitted to the next Panel meeting.

(3) That the conference be referred to the Deputy Leader, Chair of the Audit Committee and the Self-Regulation Select Committee.

71. REPORT GUIDANCE

Caroline Webb, Scrutiny and Member Support Services, reported that this was an outstanding issue from the Member Development Charter.

It had been hoped to submit the report to the meeting, however, the Plain Language Guidance and the report template was currently being reviewed.

Agreed:- That Tracy Holmes, Communications and Marketing, attend the next meeting of this Panel and report on this issue.

72. ILM LEVEL 3 AND 4 PROGRAMMES

Consideration was given to 2 weekend residential courses being held at Northern College, Barnsley, on Leadership and Management Qualifications for Councillors.

The Level 3 Award in Leadership and Management was to be held on 20th-22nd January and 3rd-5th February, 2012 and the Level 4 Award in Leadership on 24th-26th February and 9th-11th March, 2012.

Agreed:- (1) That the information be circulated to all Members to seek expressions of interest

(2) That the recently Elected Members be offered the opportunity of attending the above courses.

73. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- (1) That future meetings be held bi-monthly.

(2) That the next meeting of the Members' Training and Development Panel take place on Thursday, 16th February, 2012 at 2.00 p.m.

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

www.bradford.gov.uk

Civic Heads' Training Seminar
Distribution list

Department of Legal and Democratic Services

Civic Affairs Unit
City Hall
Bradford
BD1 1HY

Tel:	(01274) 432283
Fax:	(01274) 395529
My Ref:	SEC/CA/RPL/LM/CHTD
Contact:	Richard Lee-Van den Daele
Email:	Richard.daele@bradford.gov.uk

Your Ref:

Date: 17 January 2012

Dear colleague

RE: CIVIC HEADS' TRAINING SEMINAR – TUESDAY 6TH MARCH 2012

I am writing to advise you that once again we are arranging a one day training seminar for incoming Civic Heads and Civic support staff to be held here in the City Hall, Bradford from 1000 until approximately 1545 on Tuesday 6th March 2012.

As in the past, the facilitators for the course are Ronnie Farley and Marilyn Box who operate their own company called Councillor Skills specialising in training for Local Government Councillors and Officers. This course is to be provided nationally on behalf of the National Association of Civic Officers. The seminar is aimed at prospective ceremonial Lord Mayors, Mayors, Consorts, Deputies, Chairpersons and Civic Office support staff.

As you will appreciate, the rôle of the Civic Head is quite unique and some can find the prospect a daunting one. This course will help a prospective Mayor/Lord Mayor or Chairman prepare effectively for the year ahead and polish the skills which will ensure their term in office is as effective as it is enjoyable.
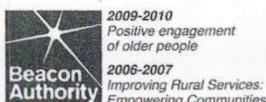
The day will include discussion on the rôle of all the above and will identify any concerns and further needs that the delegates may have in carrying out their duties.

A further aim of the day is to provide the opportunity to meet and network with Members and Officers from other authorities in similar prospective roles.

The enclosed information sheet sets out the aims of the day and some of the topics that will be discussed.

Morning refreshments and lunch will be provided for all participants.

Over.../...

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

2009-2010
Positive engagement
of older people

Beacon Authority

2006-2007
Improving Rural Services:
Empowering Communities

City of BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

The seminar will be very participatory and the facilitation methods used will include direct input, group discussions and syndicate work.

A selection of previous delegates' comments:
"Essential"; "very interesting and informative for both incoming Civic Heads and Civic Office staff"; "I've learned a lot"; "very informative…important aspects of being a Civic head covered in depth"; "excellent"; "very useful – helped to allay all doubts"; "very worthwhile".
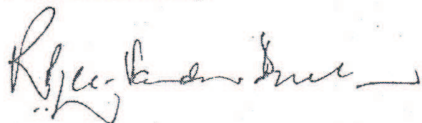
The cost for this full day seminar is held at last year's price of £120 per person.

Please complete and return the attached booking form, by 28th February at the latest, to reserve your place/s on this training course. Places are limited and will be issued on a first come, first served basis. You will be invoiced at a later date or send your Purchase Order when applying.

A full programme for the day will be sent to you on receipt of your booking.

Should there be anything else you wish to know about the day which I have not already covered, please contact me by telephone or email and I will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely

Richard Lee-Van den Daele, BA
Lord Mayor's Diary Secretary

Encs

Civic Heads' Training Seminar

Tuesday 6th March 2012, 10.00am – 3.45pm
City Hall
Bradford
BD1 1HY
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

What are the objectives of the session?

The day will include discussion on the role of prospective ceremonial Lord Mayors, Consorts, Deputies and Chairpersons and will identify any concerns and further needs that the delegates may have in carrying out their duties.

A further aim of the day is to provide the opportunity to meet and network with Members and Officers from other authorities in similar prospective roles.

The seminar will be very participatory and the facilitation methods used will include direct input, group discussions and syndicate work.

What will the session cover?

The role of the Civic Head and Team:
- Individual roles
- Team working
- The Civic role within the Council
- Diary management

Your concerns and personal considerations

Charity appeals

Workshops:
- Civic Heads – Chairing Council meetings
- Officers – Working session
- Other delegates – hints and tips from a former Lady Mayoress

For further information, contact:
Richard Lee-Van den Daele
The Lord Mayor's Office
City Hall
Bradford
BD1 1HY

A hot/cold lunch and refreshments on registration and mid-morning are included.

This event will be of interest to prospective :

Ceremonial Lord Mayors
Mayors
Consorts
Deputies
Chairpersons
Civic Office support staff

The trainers are Ronnie Farley & Marilyn Box of Councillor Skills, an organisation which specialises in training for Local Government Councillors and Officers. This seminar is provided nationally on behalf of the National Association of Civic Officers.

To book your place at this event:
Please complete the booking form and return to:
Richard Lee-Van den Daele
Lord Mayor's Office
City Hall
Bradford
BD1 1HY
Email:
Richard.daele@bradford.gov.uk
Fax: 01274 395529
Or call: 01274 432283

Cost of the event:
£120 per person

Closing date for bookings:
28th February 2012

Venue details:
City Hall
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD1 1HY

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	MEETING:	Members' Training and Development Panel
2.	DATE:	16th February 2012
3.	TITLE:	Improving the standard of report writing within Rotherham Borough Council
4.	DIRECTORATES:	All Directorates All Wards

5. SUMMARY

This report outlines a proposal to raise awareness amongst managers across the council about the need to improve their report writing skills, particularly with regard to the provision of information in support of elected members. It complements existing operational guidance eg Plain English Guide.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members:

a) agree the draft Report Writer's Guidance attached to this report.
b) agree that the guidance be circulated across the Council as a manager briefing to highlight the need for the standard of report writing to be improved – particularly with regard to the use of plain English
c) agree to take a report in six months' time on the perceived impact of the guidance on reports received by elected members

7.   PROPOSALS AND DETAIL

Communicating and engaging with others is a key competency for all managers within Rotherham Borough Council, and report writing is an important element of this. Reports are used within the council to support the work of officers; externally to communicate the position or view of the authority to partner or other organisations/groups; to inform and assist elected members in carrying out their duties, and to support the system of governance through Full Council, Cabinet, Delegated Powers, Overview and Scrutiny Select Commission and other elected member meetings.

Reports can be used to summarise lengthy issues; translate complex or technical information into a language and format that is easily understood by the target audience and put forward recommendations to facilitate the decision-making process. In addition, the style and content of reports (including spelling, grammar and punctuation) can impact positively or negatively on the reputation of the Council.

However, it has been identified on a number of occasions that the standard of report writing – particularly in the context of providing information for elected members – needs to be improved. The report attached at Appendix 1 provides managers with guidance on how they can personally improve their skills and references other operational documents which are also available to provide support, eg Plain English Guide. It is recommended that these documents are also reviewed and refreshed with immediate effect.

It is proposed that the report at Appendix 1 is disseminated across the Council as a Manager Briefing and is available for reference on the Authority's intranet. To determine the impact of the guidance, it is recommended that the views of elected members are sought in advance of the panel meeting in six months' time and any further actions required identified at that time.

8.   FINANCE

There are no costs associated with the dissemination or implementation of the guidance document.

9.   RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

It is the responsibility of individual managers to use the guidance attached, and in turn their line manager to performance manage against the key communications competency. It may be necessary in future to identify further mechanisms for improving performance, such as training sessions.

10.   POLICY AND PERFORMANCE AGENDA IMPLICATIONS

11.   BACKGROUND PAPERS AND CONSULTATION

RMBC Plain English Guide
RMBC Guidance for Reports to Members

Contact: *Tracy Holmes, Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing, direct line: (01709) 822735; e-mail: tracy.holmes@rotherham.gov.uk*

REPORT WRITERS' GUIDE

1.   Introduction and Communication Standards

Communicating and engaging with others is a key competency for all managers within Rotherham Borough Council, and report writing is an important element of this.

Reports are used within the council to support the work of officers; externally to communicate the position or view of the authority to partner or other organisations/groups; to inform and assist elected members in carrying out their duties, and to support the system of governance through Full Council, Cabinet, Delegated Powers, Overview and Scrutiny Select Commission and other elected member meetings.

They can be used to summarise lengthy issues; translate complex or technical information into a language and format that is easily understood by the target audience and put forward recommendations to facilitate the decision-making process.

In addition, the style and content of reports (including spelling, grammar and punctuation) can impact positively or negatively on the reputation of the Council.

There are a number of key principles that officers should adopt when writing a report. Every report should adhere to the standards laid out below. *In effect, these principles should apply to ALL written communication including briefing notes, correspondence, emails and website information).*

- Accurate, open and transparent. Unless there is strong justification for taking a different approach, the council is committed to openness and transparency and undertaking its business in the public domain (see Section 2 below).

- Clear – using plain English and free of any jargon that is unlikely to be understood by the target audience. Sentences are short and concise.

- Corporate – using the official template in place for the particular meeting or forum in which the report is to be considered and complying with style and branding guidelines. Messages should be consistent with the accepted values of the council.

- Consistent – information and messages contained within the report should be consistent with those that have been communicated through other channels, such as reports to other meetings, press releases, information on the Council's website.

- Integrated - the information communicated in the report is complementary to that which has been shared elsewhere on the same subject or issues.

- Timely – the report arrives in time to be appropriately circulated and the information/messages contained within it are being communicated when they are needed and relevant to the target audience.

- Support a two-way flow of information – provide contact details for when additional information is required, or for the reader to provide comment or feedback

- Targeted – the right information and messages reach the right audience at the right time.

2. **Questions To Ask Before Drafting A Report**

With ever-increasing demands on their time, managers may find it helpful to run through the following questions to assist in producing a report that fulfils its objectives and is "right first time".

i) *What is my target audience?*

This should always be the first question posed by the manager preparing to write a report. The answer to this question will inform all subsequent judgements on format, content and timing. Managers should ensure that elected members, who may not have detailed knowledge of a subject area, are provided with the appropriate background and context, and sufficient detail to support any decision-making required. In particular, managers more used to writing for a technical audience should ensure their reports use plain English and are free of jargon.

More information is available in the Council's Plain English Guide.

ii) *Do I need to write a report?*

This is always a judgement call. Some meetings will require a formal report to be presented. Where the issue in question is non-contentious; requires no further debate or consideration, or is simply an update, a short briefing note may suffice. Each individual elected member may have a personal preference for how they receive their information.

If submitting a paper to an Overview and Scrutiny Select Commission, contact the Scrutiny and Policy Manager or adviser, who will offer guidance.

The Council's standing orders should also be consulted.

iii) *How will my report support the decision-making process?*

Formal decisions can only be made once, so reports which support decision-making should be targeted at the appropriate meeting eg if within the remit of a Cabinet Member, then it should go to their Delegated Powers meeting. Decisions requiring Cabinet approval should be presented at that meeting. Cabinet Members should always be briefed appropriately in advance of the report being presented.

If a view is being sought from an Overview and Select Commission on an issue, recommendations may need to be framed differently. Overview and Scrutiny do not have decision making powers, therefore it may not be appropriate to submit the same recommendations to O&S as to Cabinet.. Due consideration should be given to the question being posed and why e.g. "Scrutiny members comments are sought on the attached consultation response" or "Scrutiny members agree the recommendations and forward to Cabinet for their consideration".

iv)   *How should I structure and lay-out the report?*

Reports should follow the standard report format for the meeting in question. More information about compliance is available in the Council's document Guidelines for Reports to Members. Where the report covers complex policy, legal, financial or technical issues, then a one paragraph executive summary should be provided.

v)   *How long should the report be?*

There are no firm rules around the length of reports. They should always be kept as concise as possible and as a general rule, three pages or less in length. However, they should always include any key information required to support decision-making.

They should clearly set out the pertinent issues for consideration in reaching a decision, along with any financial, legal and policy issues which may impact.

All reports should carry a clear recommendation for action and not be left open-ended. For example "Members consider how best to proceed" would be unacceptable.

vii)   *Is there a particular style I should use?*

It is understandable that each manager will have their own style of writing, but there are some common elements which should run through each report. For example, formal reports should be written in the third person (ie avoid "I" and "We") and should refer to "the Council" rather than RMBC. The names of individual officers and members should not be given, but they should be referred to by their post title.

viii)   *How do I decide if my report is to be considered in open or private session?*

The default position is always that reports to elected members are always considered in the public domain, to demonstrate the Council's commitment to being open, transparent and accountable for its actions and decisions. This helps to instil and maintain public confidence in the way we do business. However, there will be occasions where it is appropriate or indeed required that a report is considered in private session – for example, where information is commercial in confidence. Professional colleagues, such as Legal, Democratic Services or HR Managers, can advise where required.

ix) ***How do I know whether my report needs to be considered by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)?***

SLT is now increasingly focused on the significant strategic issues affecting the Council, allowing managers to concentrate on managing their own service and business areas efficiently and with maximum value for money. As a result, only reports covering issues of significant political, legal or financial importance will need to be considered by SLT. Judgement should be based on whether SLT can add value to the process by considering the report. Managers should seek advice from their Strategic Director if in doubt.

Cabinet reports are no longer automatically presented to SLT first. If a Cabinet report does need to be considered by SLT, it should be drafted in the appropriate style for Cabinet.

3.   **Other Supporting Documents**

The Council has a number of other reference documents which managers may find helpful when drafting reports. For example:-

- Plain English Guide
- Guidelines for Reports to Members

February 2012

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING PANEL
2.	Date:	16th February 2012
3.	Title:	Draft Spring Programme 2012
4.	Directorate:	Resources

5.   **Summary**

This report asks Members to consider an outline member development programme for Spring 2012.

6.   **Recommendations**

That members:

a.   Receive this report and comment on the proposals for the Spring Programme 2012

b.   Receive a further report on progress to its next meeting

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 The Elected Member Development Programme recognises the different roles of Members and the needs that arise with changes at a national, regional, sub regional and local level.

At its last meeting the MDTP requested that a draft programme be submitted to its next meeting. Members have previously agreed that programmes will be based on local priorities as identified in the Council's corporate plan and Members individual skills needs identified in the personal development planning process.

7.2 An initial round of personal development interviews took place in summer 2011. Those members who have not recently undertaken a review are being targeted, (with a promising take-up). Issues emerging from these and earlier interviews will inform the programme. Request for general development activities include:

- community leadership and use of social media
- public speaking
- updates on legislation and new Local Government agenda (eg Localism Act and Health and Social Care Bill)
- questioning skills for scrutiny
- chairing skills
- understanding local government finance

7.3 The programme will include sessions on the three agreed areas for mandatory training for members;

- corporate parenting
- safeguarding (adult and children)
- emergency planning

7.4 A detailed programme will be finalised once the budget for member development and training has been agreed. This will be circulated to all Members, supplemented by additional bulletins as development opportunities arise. The programme will incorporate a blended approach to Member Development, using a variety of methods of delivery, including bespoke training, e-learning and use of the Member Seminar Programme. This will suit the needs of different learners, as well as make learning more accessible to Members. It will also compliment the induction programme for new members, commencing in May 2012.

7.5 Based on the review of learning needs and the outcomes of PDPs, Council priorities and other emerging issues, the programme is likely to comprise of the following.

Need	Key areas
ROLE SPECIFIC	
Ward/ individual	• Case work/ E-case work • Emergency Planning • Health and Safety • Chairing meetings • The role of Councillors as corporate parents • Safeguarding • Ethical frameworks • Understanding the 'new' local government agenda (localism, health, policing) • Role of councillors as community leaders – working in your ward/ Area Assembly
Portfolio	• Leadership • Finance and budgets • Familiarity with areas of responsibility • Understanding the 'new' local government agenda – related to portfolios and leadership roles
Overview and Scrutiny Select commissions	• Chairing meetings • Effective questioning • Localism • Finance • Health reforms • Performance management and self regulation

Regulatory	• Updates on new legislation/ developments relevant to
	   – Licensing
	   – Planning
	   – Standards
	   – Audit Committee

Partnership	• Representation on other bodies • Working in the community

Need	Key areas
ICT and inter-personal Skills	• New forms of media and electronic communications • Utilisation of all forms of technology • Social media and community leadership • Handling the media/public speaking • Handling difficult situations

7.6   Briefings on the Localism Act have been scheduled in late February/ March. These will cover some of the key governance issues and specific issues for housing. These are as follows:

Localism Act: Governance   28 February 2.00-4.00
(with an option of running a further one on 13 March depending on interest)

Localism Act: Housing: 20 March 5.00 – 7.00
                                21 March 2.00 – 4.00
                                28 March 10.00- 12.00

Further workshops will be scheduled focusing on other aspects of the Act and implications for services and communities, for example planning.

7.7   In recognition of Rotherham's status as a 'Heart Town', a national initiative to raise awareness about heart disease and healthier lifestyles, the British Heart Foundation is offering some CPR training for up to 15 members. This session will be run on 6 March 2.00-4.30pm.

7.8   In previous years, relevant sessions have been open to parish councillors and co-optees on overview and scrutiny select commissions and independent members on the Standards Boards. It is proposed that this practice continues, subject to demand and availability of resources.

7.9   It should be noted that over the previous 12 months, local activity has been complemented by events supported by the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme, either on a regional or sub-regional basis. This activity will cease at the end of March 2012. We are exploring whether there is scope for commissioning some shared training activities with other authorities or bodies to achieve economies of scale. The outcomes of these discussions will be reported to a future meeting.

8.   Finance

All activity is funded through the Member Development and Training Budget. Depending on the level of demand or emerging needs, a further reprioritisation of resources by MTDP may need to take place

9.   Risks and Uncertainties

The Member Development Strategy aims to train and equip Rotherham MBC Members to take on the duties of the modern local councillor. Failure to put a comprehensive programme in place may limit the opportunity for councillors to develop their abilities and skills, which will in the long term, impact negatively on the effectiveness of the Council as a whole.

10. **Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Local government has faced unprecedented change and previous over the previous two years. The member development programme should assist Members to understand the implications of these changes and learn to adapt to new ways of working. The programme will reflect legislative and policy developments as they emerge.

11. **Background Papers and Consultation**

Member Development Strategy (2011)

Contact: Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser (01709) 822765
caroline.webb@rotherham.gov.uk

Agenda Item 6

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING PANEL
2.	Date:	16th February 2012
3.	Title:	NEW MEMBER INDUCTION 2012
4.	Directorate:	Resources

5.   Summary

This report asks Members to consider draft proposals for the induction Programme for newly elected Members in 2012.

6.   Recommendations

    a.   That Members receive this report and comment on the proposals for new Member induction 2012.

7. **Proposals and Details**

A comprehensive induction programme for newly Elected Members is delivered following each local election. The aim of the induction programme is to help new Members familiarise themselves with the authority and their new role and covers three main areas:

- Getting to know the Council
- Getting to know your Area
- Getting to know your Role

The Member Development Training Panel has an input into the content and delivery of the induction programme to ensure that it meets the needs of newly Elected Members and those Members with new roles / responsibilities.

As with previous years, lead members will be invited to make an input to relevant sessions.

All newly Elected Members will receive an induction pack after the election. This provides valuable information on the day to day running of the Council, the support services available, contact details of support staff and a copy of the Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID) Guide for New Councillors.

As part of the preparation for 2012 induction process for new members, the MTDP is asked to consider and comment on the draft programme, attached as Appendix A. Please note, the timings of the programme have not yet been considered. Feedback from the 2011 cohort of members will also be used to inform timings and content.

Their comments include:
- ensuring that the induction process minimises disruption for working members (if possible).
- briefings on Council services – key functions and contact points
- greater input on e-casework and how to deal with surgeries

Alongside 'in-house' programmes, the LGA is planning a 'New Councillor Roadshow'. Details are to be confirmed but these are likely to be regional events, running in either July or September. There is also the possibility of other regional and sub-regional events being organised to complement local input. It further details of planned events will be provided to a future meeting.

8. **Finance**

The cost of running the Induction process will be met through the Member Development budget.

9. **Risks and Uncertainties**

If there is no Induction programme, new Members will have to learn their way round the council by 'trial and error'. Induction will allow Members to make an early contribution to the work of the council and so represent their local communities more effectively.

10. **Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Ensuring that newly elected members are briefed and equipped to carry out their important democratic and community roles is no easy task. But it is one that needs to be carried out effectively if we are to build the skills and capacity of Members as part of our corporate priorities.

11. **Background Papers and Consultation**

Member Development Strategy (2011)
Member induction programme (2011)
Discussions with members elected in 2011

Contact: Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser (01709) 822765
caroline.webb@rotherham.gov.uk

Draft Programme: **APPENDIX A**

Getting to know the Council	- Welcome and intro to Rotherham (Leader of the Council & Chief Executive) - How the Council Works - Council structures and key contacts - Introduction to Planning - Introduction to Licensing - Emergency Planning Training - The Councillors' Code of Conduct - Finding your way round the Annual Meeting and Full Council
Getting to know your area	- Your Role as a Ward Councillor - including role of Area Assembly - Tour of borough
Getting to know your role	- What I wish I'd known when I first got elected - Allowances & other financial matters - Member support – What we can offer to Members - Understanding scrutiny - Getting the Most from IT: Emails to Facebook - Using e-casework and surgeries - Corporate Parenting - Is it good enough for your child? – The councillor's key role as a corporate parent - Localism Act Briefings

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING PANEL
2.	Date:	16th February 2012
3.	Title:	Initial overview of training activity
4.	Directorate:	Resources

5.   Summary

This report asks Members to note the member development and training activity since May 2011

6.   Recommendations

a.   **That Members note the report and comment on activity to date**

7. **Proposals and Details**

7.1 Since May 2011the following generic courses have been offered:

- Refresher Training on Fraud and Corruption

- Local Development Framework

- New Localism

- Corporate Parenting

- Safeguarding (Children)

- Safeguarding (Adult)

- e-Casework

- Health & Safety

- Project Argus

7.2 Many of these courses were run over repeated sessions (often at different times of the day to accommodate members with either working or caring commitments). Consequently, take-up over the multiple sessions has been good, particularly with corporate parenting, Project Argus and Localism briefings.

7.3 Unfortunately, relatively few evaluation forms have been received; despite feedback being sought after each session. It is difficult therefore to use these to judge the effectiveness of the courses on offer. However, informal feedback and comments given in PDPs have been largely favourable. Where there are clear suggestions for improvement, these will be used to inform future planning.

7.4 Other sessions have been organised for specific groups of members outside of the scheduled programme. As well as updates for members on regulatory bodies, refresher briefings and workshops have been organised for members of Select Commissions on issues such as local government finance or 'Keeping Warm in Later Life'.

7.5 A majority of members (an estimated 49 out of 63) have taken-up at least one organised training or development opportunity since May 2011, with many members attending multiple courses. This does not take account of e-learning, informal sessions with officers or attendance at member seminars. If these are included, it is likely that most members will have participated in a learning and development activity over the year (in addition to their own independent activity).

7.6 In addition, a regional programme has been circulated to members by email and in hard copy. This programme was organised by LGYH and funded through the RIEP (Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme). Although widely distributed, take-up has been limited (approximately 10 members). Nevertheless, informal feedback from members attending

sessions has been positive, although with suggestions for improvements. These comments will inform any future commissioning of courses.

7.7 The generic in-house programme is complemented by bespoke training and development, for example the Local Government Improvement and Development's Leadership Academy or regional leadership programmes offered at Northern College. These have been offered to members with special responsibilities, particular interest or specialism and new members. Because of budget pressures, these have restricted to priority areas or areas of changing policy such as health and well-being and planning. A substantial proportion of courses have been subsidised or run at no-cost (other than transportation). It is not known at this stage, whether these will run on a similar basis in the new financial year.

7.8 As in previous years, relevant sessions have been circulated to Parish Councils. Both Project Argus and Localism Briefings have been attended by large numbers of Parish Councillors (29 and 18 respectively).

8. Finance

All activity has been funded through the Member Development and Training Budget or RIEP. However, limited activity has been organised or funded since December in line with budget pressures.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Member Development Strategy aims to train and equip Rotherham MBC Members as well as possible to take on the duties of the modern local councillor. Failure to put a comprehensive programme in place may limit the opportunity for councillors to develop their abilities and skills, which will in the long term, impact negatively on the effectiveness of the Council as a whole.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Local government has faced unprecedented change and previous over the previous two years. The member development programme should assist Members to understand the implications of these changes and learn to adapt to new ways of working.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Member Development Strategy (2011)
Course attendance records May – 2011 to date

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