

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. Meeting:	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING PANEL
2. Date:	17th December 2012
3. Title:	Member Development Programme- Update (Spring 2013)
4. Directorate:	Resources

5. Summary

This report asks Members to comment on the planned programme (until April 2013).

6. Recommendations

That members:

- a. **Note the report and its content**
- b. **Approve the proposed development opportunities outlined in paragraphs 7.5 and 7.6**
- c. **Determine any other sessions to be included in the programme.**

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.

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. 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.

- 7.2 Additional bulletins on courses or training have been circulated to members as development opportunities have arisen. This includes events supported by the Regional Member Development Network, either on a Yorkshire-wide or sub-regional basis arise (for example Community Leadership and use of Social Media) as well as offers of places on courses organised by other authorities or bodies. These courses provide a value for money option as travel and joining costs are kept to a minimum.

- 7.3 As with previous years, every effort is made to support members in their leadership roles by meeting their specific training needs (for example Leadership Academy or bespoke programmes). As greater expense is usually attached to these courses, requests will be brought to this Panel for approval, in order that a decision can be made based on the availability of resources and existing member development priorities (or in the interim, to the Chair for his decision).

There is a separate report on the agenda setting out criteria for approval for training and support.

7.4 Generic Member Development Programme

A generic programme has been developed based on issues emerging from PDPs matters arising from the induction programme and current important topics. These include:

- Questioning skills for scrutiny
- Localism Act 2012
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- New Standards Regime
- Media awareness and skills
- Deprivation: the Rotherham picture
- Countering Child Sexual Exploitation

Training sessions have been delivered on the above topics in the period September to December 2012.

Evaluation sheets have been circulated after each session. When completed, feedback has been, on the whole, positive. Suggestions for additional development or changes have been used to inform future programmes.

7.5 It is proposed that an outline programme will be based on the issues outlined below. The sessions will be scheduled to take place during the period January to April 2013

- Members role in Emergency Planning
- Introduction to Local Government Finance
- Understanding Council priorities
- Health and well-being agenda
- Media awareness and skills
- Countering Child Sexual Exploitation (additional sessions)
- Welfare Reform – dealing effectively with Casework

Members comments are sought on the proposed programme. If approved, details will be circulated early in the New Year.

7.6 **ICT support and e-learning**

In addition to the organised programme, Members have access to one-to-one ICT support via Jean Tracey in Human Resources. A number of Members have received training on email, e-casework and navigating intranet/internet.

There is a separate report on the agenda on Members Skills Profile, Learning Resource Guide and Learning and Development intranet site. The resource guide has a range of e-learning packages that can be accessed by Members to complement planned sessions or support their own learning. Seminar sessions and one-to-one will raise awareness of this resource.

Since the last report to MDTP, the Deputy Leader has approved the adoption of a 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) Policy for the Council, which was an initiative which enabled Council Members and employees to access their Council email, contacts, Intranet and calendar from a non-Council owned smartphone or tablet. Approval has also been given for a trial of Council issued tablet computers as a potential alternative to Council issued laptops in order to test their suitability as laptop replacements and to judge their effectiveness in reducing our reliance on paper agenda packs.

In order to maximise the effective usage of tablets, it is proposed that each Member on the trial is contacted to discuss their individual learning needs, with bespoke one-to-one or group support provided as necessary.

8. **Finance**

All activity is funded through the Member Development and Training Budget. The majority of development sessions are offered in-house, however if specialist skills or equipment are required, an external provider may be sought. The budget is monitored regularly and 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 in recent years. The member development programme should assist Members to understand the implications of these changes and their impact on the Council and wider borough.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Member Development Strategy (2011)
Personal Development Interviews
Regional member development programmes
Evaluation of Induction Programme (10 Sept 2012)

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