

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. Meeting:	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING PANEL
2. Date:	9th September 2013
3. Title:	Member Development Programme - Update (Autumn 2013)
4. Directorate:	Resources

5. Summary

This report provides an update on progress in respect of Member Development.

6. Recommendations

That Members:

- a. Note the report and its content**
- b. Comment on priority areas for development 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 (PDP) process. As agreed by MDTP at its meeting of 15 April 2013, a phased approach has been taken to scheduling PDPs with Cabinet Members, Chairs/Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny being in the first 'cohort'. At this stage, it is not possible to report issues emerging from the PDPs as few have been conducted. Members are being contacted directly to arrange these.

7.2 Autumn/Winter Programme September 2013- March 2014

A generic programme has been developed based on issues raised by MTDP, feedback from other sessions and updates on current policy/legislative developments. Future programmes will be more reflective of issues raised in PDPs once a sufficient number have take place to assess learning and development needs.

This programme will run from September. These sessions include:

- Social media practical skill session
- Welfare Reform- update
- Adult Safeguarding
- Housing allocations - awareness
- Chairing skills
- Questioning skills (delivered by the Parliamentary Outreach Project)

MDTP approved that work be undertaken to commission sessions on the following issues as part of the programme:

- Dealing with difficult situations
- Mediation between different groups or individuals

Work is underway to identify potential providers.

Members' views are sought on priority areas for development to feed into the autumn/winter programme. On finalisation, a hard copy of programme will be circulated to Members.

- 7.3 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. We are currently exploring options for externally accredited basic skills ICT sessions. Details of this will be circulated in due course.

7.4 Externally provided learning and development opportunities

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 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.

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 other bespoke programmes).

The current Leadership Academy 'offer' includes a number of free programmes and several which are heavily subsidised (for example the Young Councillor weekends.) Decisions to support attendance at Leadership Academy (or external training) are based on identified need or issues arising from PDPs, in liaison with this Panel or the Deputy Leader.

Members will recall that they agreed a set of Training Support Principles at the meeting of MTDP of 17 December 2012; which are as follows:

- The development need should have been identified previously in a Members PDP **OR** be in an area that is subject to continuous change which the Member needs to be kept up to date in
- Priority will be given to sub-regional and regional provision. Attendance at events beyond the region will only be approved if there is no similar local provision possible
- Attendance of more than one Member will not normally be approved, as Members will be expected to cascade learning to colleagues
- There should be no repetition of learning from a previous event attended
- It should be confirmed that the learning cannot be achieved by other no (or lower) cost means
- The event/session/programme should include a high proportion of actual learning.

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

Member Development Programme: December 2012-May 2013

MTDP: 17 December 2012, Minute 12.

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