

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Audit and Governance Committee

Date **23 June 2014**

Report of: **Director of Finance and Resources**

Subject: **REVIEW OF MEMBERS TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AND
DETERMINATION OF PROGRAMME**

SUMMARY

The Audit and Governance Committee, is charged with monitoring the arrangements for members' training and development to ensure that the capacity of members to provide effective governance and community leadership continues to develop. This report reviews the delivery of training events in the previous year and proposes a framework for the programme of development for newly elected and existing members in 2014/15.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to

- a) note the report and to approve the framework for members' training and development in 2014/15 which is set out in Appendix A of this report; and
- b) to agree a training needs survey be circulated to all members in February 2015 and the results reported to this committee.

INTRODUCTION

1. In 2003, the Council adopted a strategy for members' training and development which the Audit and Governance Committee monitors to ensure that the capacity to provide effective governance and community leadership continues to develop. This report reviews the arrangements made for delivery of training events in the previous year and invites the committee to note the draft programme for 2014/15.
2. In addition, new member induction training has been revised as approved by this committee at its meeting held on 11 March 2013 (au-130311-r11-ewi.doc) and is presented in module format at Appendix A.

THE STRATEGY

3. The Committee is reminded of the main provisions of the Council's training and development strategy which contributes to the Council's aims and objectives and underpins good practice.
4. The strategy aims to provide members with opportunities for developing a range of skills and a depth of knowledge which will equip them to fulfil their roles and provide effective community governance. It recognises that these skills and knowledge are developed through a variety of means, not just through formal training events. Thus, members' skills and knowledge may equally be developed through informal arrangements such as personal reading and research; newsletters and briefing reports; interaction with other members, officers and constituents, joint working with other authorities and with partners; shadowing, coaching and mentoring.
5. The strategy recognises that in the main, members' development can be managed by the individual members themselves. However, in order to establish a development framework, an annual programme of training events which reflect more precisely the needs of Fareham's councillors would be established. Members are invited to complete a schedule of training needs in alternate years to local council elections to enable them to identify skills and knowledge which need to be developed. The development needs identified feed into a programme of training events to deliver key elements on general topics and a breadth of service related training. In addition, individual needs will be addressed wherever possible and a variety of development methods offered to suit the individual member. In the intervening years, a new member development programme will be reviewed which existing members will be able to attend to refresh their knowledge.
6. It is also recognised that learning and development is effective in building capacity and addresses wider development matters to promote work-life balance for Members and citizenship.

REVIEW OF 2013/14 ARRANGEMENTS

7. The programme of training and development for 2013/14 was approved by the Committee at its meeting in March 2013. Progress in delivering the programme is examined below, as is the take-up and evaluation of events.
8. Delivery of training events against the approved programme has progressed fairly well with events delivered (or offered) in most areas. Where no suitable course has been offered for some of the lower demand events, these will be rolled forward to 2014/15.

9. Most training events have a target audience, for example members of a certain committee, but they are frequently made available to all other members of the Council. The Head of Democratic Services monitors take-up of the training events to ensure that they are reaching the target audience. Take-up in training for the quasi-judicial functions of determining planning and licensing applications is especially monitored, in light of cross party support for ensuring that those members undertaking such functions do participate in essential training.
10. The Committee is advised that take up of the traditional workshop events has generally been satisfactory. During the municipal year 2013/14, there have been 197 member attendances at 16 events. In addition, a number of training sessions have taken place during meetings for the particular members involved. There were no externally funded programmes offered to members this year. This gives an average of 12 members at each session.

THE 2014/15 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

11. Following the election in May 2014, 1 new member has been elected and the new programme has been designed to provide good induction training and invite other members to attend as a refresher. Additional training will be provided throughout the year to address new legislation and complete the programme from the training needs survey carried out in 2013.
12. A comprehensive induction programme will be offered to new members following their election to office. New members will be supplied with a briefing pack on election night. Initially they will be invited to an introduction session followed by a number of modules covering the Council's constitution, financial regulations, budget, code of conduct and role of members. The draft training plan and modules are attached as Appendix A of this report. All sessions will also be open to serving members to attend as a refresher on service operations. Interest in IT skills development is always a high priority as well as different aspects of financial management.
13. The majority of knowledge-based training can be delivered in-house within existing budgets. Where externally-led training does need to be provided, priority will be given to those topics which benefit a number of members. Where budget permits, lower priority items will also be delivered.
14. Members are informed of training opportunities available to them in the following ways:
 - Members Newsletter
 - Flyers
 - Email invites for specialist training such as licencing panel members
 - Links to partner organisations such as South East Employers and Local Government Improvement and Development.

RISK MANAGEMENT

15. The decision the committee is asked to make presents minimal risk but considerable opportunity. Failure to adopt a programme of training and development which is responsive to members' needs is likely to restrict the capacity of the Council to fulfil its

responsibilities of community leadership and local governance. In contrast, the opportunities presented by developing members are considerable.

CONCLUSION

16. The programme of members' training and development events for 2013-2015 is progressing well and the majority of the events requested by members will have been delivered by the end of the municipal year. Some new topics will be addressed where they fit with initiatives being undertaken by the Council. Take up by members of the training events offered by the Council in 2013/14 has generally been good and each event appears to have reached its target audience.

17. With regard to the programme for 2014/15, the framework will be shaped around new members and their needs and additional training sessions will complete any outstanding training required on the matrix of core knowledge previously provided by members elected in 2012. A new training assessment needs questionnaire will be circulated in February 2015 to assess training requirements for 2015/16.

Appendix A – [Framework for Members' Training and Development in 2014/15](#)

Background Papers:

Reference Papers:

Report to the Audit and Governance Committee on member training and development and revised new member induction package (ref au-130311-r11-ewi)

Enquiries:

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