



Standards Committee Report

Report of: Gillian Duckworth, Interim Director of Legal & Governance

Date: 22 January 2015

Subject: Member Development

Author of Report: Gillian Duckworth
x4018

Summary: To develop a policy and programme of Member Development which is overseen, monitored and reviewed by the Standards Committee.

Recommendations:

1. To approve the principle of the Standards Committee widening its role with regard to Member development;
2. To request that the Interim Director of Legal & Governance develops a policy and programme for Member development in accordance with the principles outlined in this report and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources; and
3. To recommend to Full Council, amendment of the Standards Committee terms of reference to take the additional responsibilities into account.

Background Papers: Member Development Strategy 2010-12

Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES/NO Cleared by:
Legal Implications
YES/NO Cleared by:
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES/NO Cleared by:
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
YES/NO
Human rights Implications
YES/NO:
Environmental and Sustainability implications
YES/NO
Economic impact
YES/NO
Community safety implications
YES/NO
Human resources implications
YES/NO
Property implications
YES/NO
Area(s) affected
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in
Not applicable
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
YES/NO
Press release
YES/NO

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As a result of budget reductions in 2011 the post of Member Development officer was deleted as a saving for the Democratic Services budget. The budget for training however was not deleted and since then has been used as training requirements have been identified.
- 1.2 The team have continued to provide Member development such as induction and training associated with specific committee roles, however there has not been any structure or plan as to how the budget should be used.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 To develop a policy and programme of Member development which is overseen, monitored and reviewed by the Standards Committee

3.0 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Why do we need a Member Development programme?

- 3.1 Elected members in present day local government are expected to have a wide range of skills and knowledge and the Council wants to ensure that its Members are provided with the support they need to be a well-regarded Ward Councillor, Scrutiny or Regulatory Committee member, Committee/LAP Chair, Opposition Group Leader, Cabinet Member, Shadow Cabinet Member, Cabinet Adviser, or even Leader of the Council.
- 3.2 Recent developments in the law and practice have emphasised the need for elected Members to be properly trained, for example, the Public Sector Equality Duty and its impact on decision making and the recommendations arising from the recent report on Child Sexual Exploitation issues in Rotherham.
- 3.3 Members currently receive support from their respective political groups. This development programme will be designed to complement the support given by the groups.

Who will set the programme?

- 3.4 The Standards Committee already has within its terms of reference:

“Advising, training or arranging to train Councillors, Co-opted Members

and Representatives on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct".

- 3.5 The proposal is to extend the terms of reference to include setting, promoting, maintaining and monitoring an annual Member Development programme. This could be by way of a sub-committee tasked with the specific remit.
- 3.6 A draft programme will be developed by the Interim Director of Legal and Governance in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, whose portfolio includes responsibility for Member development, and will be submitted to the Committee in due course for approval.
- 3.7 It is proposed that the programme will be divided between:
1. General Core Development (which will include matters such as induction, code of conduct, corporate parenting and safeguarding, including the recommended additional training arising from the recent assessment of Child Sexual Exploitation services in Sheffield);
 2. Specific Core Development (which will include Planning & Licensing and will be core for those Members undertaking those duties); and
 3. Optional Development (which will include skill development on matters such as chairing skills for Committee/LAP Chairs, effective questioning (i.e. for scrutiny members), media skills and public speaking (i.e. for Cabinet Members, Lord Mayor and Group Leaders) and (for all Members) IT skills, social media skills).

The Committee is invited to offer any further suggestions as to what should be included in the programme.

- 3.8 In terms of the optional development, the following were agreed in 2011 as the priorities for the use of Member development resources:-
- Support Members' ICT needs
 - Support leading Members to meet the responsibilities and expectations of their role (above aspirational development activities), with priority in the order of Leader, Cabinet Members, Leader & Deputy of the opposition group(s), Chairs of Committees, Shadow Cabinet Members & Cabinet Advisers, Backbench Members.

The Committee is invited to consider whether these priorities have changed or remain appropriate.

- 3.9 The restructure of Democratic and Member Services has provided an opportunity to reintroduce the administration of a programme for Member

Development. Paul Robinson, Head of Democratic Services will administer the programme. However, the resource available to dedicate to this is less than in 2010 and therefore I do not intend to replicate the strategy that was developed then but will use it to develop a programme that delivers the required training with the minimum administration.

- 3.10 In order to encourage Members to engage with the programme, the proposal is for the Standards Committee to identify priorities, develop a programme, oversee, monitor and review the programme.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To approve the principle of the Standards Committee widening its role with regard to Member development.
- 4.2 To request that the Interim Director of Legal & Governance develops a policy and programme for Member development, in accordance with the principles outlined in this report and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources.
- 4.3 To recommend to Full Council, amendment of the Standards Committee terms of reference to take the additional responsibilities into account.

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