



Report of the Chief Democratic Services Officer

Member Management Committee

Date: 30th October 2007

Subject: Member Development

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

The Member Development Working Group meets on a regular basis to formulate, progress and monitor Member Development activities. Over the last quarter this has included work on the following projects:

- Roll-out of the compulsory programme of learning and development for members of Regulatory Panels
- Members IT Upgrade
- Seminar programme for 2007-08
- Personal Development Planning.

This report provides Member Management Committee with an update on progress with the above initiatives and an opportunity to comment on current provision.

A separate paper is included on the MMC agenda about compulsory training for planning and licensing members.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 This report provides Member Management Committee with an update on the following Member learning and development projects and initiatives:

- Member's IT Upgrade – training aspects
- Seminar programme for 2007-08
- Personal Development Planning.

2.0 Members IT Upgrade – training aspects

Background Information

2.1 As the Members' IT upgrade introduces a new system for councillors, a training programme was designed in order to train councillors on aspects of the new system, such as the single sign on process and finding their way around the new system. This opportunity was also used to train councillors on issues such as storage of information and file management. These issues were incorporated into a 'Getting Started' IT training session.

2.2 A pilot training programme was run at the beginning of August which included four 'Getting Started' sessions in which 13 councillors took part. The pilot training was well received by the majority of councillors taking part. Those with more developed IT skills found the training a bit slow in some places, but most found the training to be pitched at the right level. There was an average 'Good' rating for all aspects of the training.

2.3 A number of minor changes have been made to the training following the pilot sessions and implementations. The changes include adding a brief section on the instant messaging facility and a little more in depth information about shared drives. The training manual will be updated to include more screen shots and a 'getting started' quick guide will be provided to councillors when their equipment is installed.

Main issues

2.4 The main roll out of training sessions started in early September 2007 and will continue throughout October 2007. A choice of sixteen training sessions were offered to Members throughout September and an additional evening session was also planned in. Five additional sessions were planned in October, again including an evening session. A maximum of 6 participants were booked for each session.

2.5 As of 24th September, only 11 councillors (who have IT equipment at home) have not booked onto a training session. There are enough spaces in the current training sessions available to accommodate these councillors. However, if diary commitments of Members mean that they cannot attend any of the available sessions then an extra session will be arranged.

2.6 Feedback from the training and installation so far indicates that Members have found the training useful. Whilst some councillors are very IT literate and found the training was fairly basic, most councillors found it to be pitched at the right level.

2.7 Participation in the training has prompted a number of councillors to identify additional IT training needs. Once all IT training needs have been identified (eg through PDPs), these training needs can be addressed.

3.0 Seminar programme for 2007-08

Background information

3.1 The Chair of the Member Development Working Group, Cllr Latty, met with the Strategic Directors or their representatives during July and August to discuss possible topics for inclusion in the Member Development programme for 2007-08.

Main Issues

3.2 The Member Development working group met on 28th September 2007 and agreed a programme of member development arising from these discussions. The programme will include:

- A *'Dealing with Casework'* roadshow on Monday 29th October from 4pm to 7pm. The roadshow will be a very practical event aimed at giving Members access to the appropriate officers on how to deal with casework problems. The practical arrangements are currently being made.
- A *Financial Management training programme for Lead Members*. This will consist of three modules: Budgeting, Budget Monitoring, and Capital Accounting. The programme has been designed by Corporate Services specifically to meet the needs of Lead Members.
- A seminar on the new structure of the council and the functions within each department.
- A series of three events about the strategic future of the city:
 - 1) Strategic Plan, Local area agreements and place shaping
 - 2) The city region, transport and development issues
 - 3) Health services and social care.
- Training needs arising from the ethical audit, such as training on the new Code of Conduct (this training has already taken place) and legislation such as the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act.
- A variety of information and update seminars on issues such as the waste strategy, procurement, culture, transport challenges, customer services, etc.

3.3 The method of delivery of the information and update sessions was discussed by the Member Development Working Group. It agreed that delivery methods need to be innovative and appropriate to the topic and type of event. For example, group briefings or visits might be appropriate methods of delivering learning.

3.4 The Member Development Working Group also discussed the timing of events. Whilst councillors still support the idea of lunchtime seminars, feedback from the deputy whips suggests that many would prefer seminars to be on days when they are already in the Civic Hall, ie not Friday. This will be taken into account by the Member Development team when they are arranging events.

- 3.5 There has also been a growing movement towards wanting events to take place at other times, such as in the evening. 'Twilight' sessions (usually starting at 5pm) have proved to be of limited popularity and councillors have indicated that they would like evening sessions to start later, at around 6:30pm. The Member Development team will try to accommodate these requests and will endeavour to offer alternative times for events. The success of this will be evaluated in the new year.
- 3.6 Members of the Member Development Working Group have suggested that some Monday evenings are a good time for training and development sessions, as the main political groups hold their group meetings on Monday evenings once per month. This would mean that councillors were already in the Civic Hall for their group meeting and would perhaps therefore be more likely to attend a development event. The views of Member Management Committee on this suggestion are sought.

4.0 Personal Development Plans

Background information

- 4.1 Personal development planning is one of the four key learning and development themes identified in the Member Development Strategy 2006-08.

The Strategy states that:

"In order to identify individual learning and development needs, all Members are encouraged to undertake an annual review of their learning, performance and achievement. The actual process for achieving this may alter slightly from group to group, but will usually involve a focussed discussion between individual Members and their group Member Managers. Members are encouraged to use the Member Development Framework to help identify any skills gaps in the following areas:

- *Core Skills*
- *Role Specific Skills*
- *Advanced personal development*

The learning and development needs identified through Personal Development discussions will result in the creation of an individual Personal Development Plan for each Member. All PDP data will be collated by the Member Development Officer in order to inform the Annual Learning and Development Plan, as well as being used to meet specific individual needs."

- 4.2 All Members are given the opportunity to complete Personal Development Plans (PDPs) over the summer to identify any training needs they have.
- 4.3 The Member Development Working Group agreed at its meeting in June 2007 that the members of the Working Group would each hold the PDP discussions with their own group members. Councillors in other groups were offered a personal development discussion with the Member Development Officer.

Main Issues

- 4.4 Completion of the PDPs is still ongoing, though progress has been made in all groups. Members of the working group hope to have all discussions completed by the

end of October 2007. The Member Development Working Group members are asked to send the completed summary sheet of training needs back to the member development team. The rest of the discussion between the deputy whip and the member is confidential between themselves. The summary sheet merely sets out the training needs, priorities and preferred method of learning.

- 4.5 The member development team will collate the training needs and identify any common themes and aim to meet the training needs and contact Members directly to explain development opportunities and signpost councillors to those events which they might find helpful.
- 4.6 The PDP process allows targeted training on areas that Members want most and is key to the whole Member development process.

5.0 Implications for Policy and Governance

- 5.1 Members IT Upgrade – no implications for policy and governance in relation to training.
- 5.2 Seminar programme 2007-08 - Ethical audit action plan training requirements must be met in order to ensure that all councillors comply with governance requirements.
- 5.3 Personal Development Planning - Members who have their training needs met are better able to lead the city. These needs can only be met if they have been identified, eg through personal development planning.

6.0 Legal and Resource Implications

- 6.1 Members IT Upgrade - All Members need to be on the new system by the end of November 2007 (ie they need to have completed their training and had the new equipment installed at their homes by this date). At the beginning of December 2007, the old Legacy system which the councillors were on will be decommissioned. Support from MMC in encouraging councillors who have not yet completed or booked training and implementation slots to book these slots would be gratefully received.
- 6.2 Seminar programme 2007-08 - Ethical audit action plan training requirements must be met in order to ensure that all councillors comply with legal requirements.
- 6.3 Personal development planning is managed within the usual member development resource allocation.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 Member Management Committee is recommended to:
 - a) Note the information provided on the IT Upgrade training for Members.
 - b) To note the member development programme for 2007-08 and comment of seminar timings.
 - c) To note the arrangements for completion of Personal Development Plans by councillors.