

**Report of Chief Officer (Democratic and Central Services)**

**Report to Member Management Committee**

**Date: 23 October 2012**

**Subject: Member Development**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

This report updates Member Management Committee on the work of the Member Development Working Group.

The purpose of the Group is to formulate, progress and monitor Member Development activities. In addition to arranging events and regional programmes, the Group has recently been concentrating on the following:

- Evaluating this year's Member induction programme
- Organising the autumn Member Development programme
- Reviewing the Personal Development Plan process.

This report provides Member Management Committee with an update on progress with the above projects.

**Recommendations**

1. Member Management Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on training and development issues relating to elected Members. Specifically, this report contains the following items:

- A review of the Induction programme 2012
- A summary of the autumn programme of events
- An update on the Personal Development Plan (PDP) process.

## **2 Background information**

2.1 Member Development is a key component of the Council's Annual Corporate Governance Statement, specifically in relation to the principle of *Developing Skills and Capacity*, where the Council states that it will ensure that those charged with the governance of the Council have the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform well.

2.2 The Member Development Working Group is instrumental in devising the array of learning and development opportunities that are available to Members. In conjunction with Executive Members and the Chief Whip, the group works on key projects such as the annual learning and development programme, new Members' induction and various learning and development initiatives.

## **3 Main issues**

### **3.1 Induction programme**

This year a comprehensive series of local and sub-regional events was offered to the 14 councillors elected in May. This programme built on the positive aspects of previous years' events and included the following new features:

- a greater number of tea-time and early evening sessions
- the opportunity for small group or one-to-one repeats, where Members were unable to attend on the original date
- more opportunities to meet existing Members through meet and greet/input into events.

Feedback from this year's programme is currently being gathered via a short on-line survey. The consultation is due to finish at the end of September; findings to date are summarized below:

- the majority of events were rated as 'good' or 'excellent'
- where Members did not attend individual events, it was because they could already demonstrate the skills or were familiar with course content
- the ICT session did not differentiate enough between different ability levels
- the Corporate Parenting event with young people 'Total Respect' was particularly valued.

One councillor noted that induction was 'thorough, helpful and enjoyable'.

The full programme evaluation will be shared and discussed by the Member Development Working Group this autumn and any improvements or changes built in to future programmes.

### 3.2 Autumn Programme

This autumn we have arranged a number of seminars and workshops focusing around specific portfolio areas. These include:

- **Health is Everyone's Business**; a continuation of the programme led by Cllr Mulherin which commenced last year. Events include an update on the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and a workshop on Fuel Poverty.
- **Adult Social Care Programme**; This programme, led by Cllr Yeadon, will include events on the White Paper, Charging and Safeguarding.
- **Planning**; as well as the compulsory update for Plans Panel Members we are offering events on Neighbourhood Planning and the fourth in our regional Leeds/Bradford Planning Series; focusing this time on Housing. An event on Planning for non-panel Members is also planned for the new year.

Skills development sessions for Members will include the opportunity to learn about social media (Twitter in particular), at practical sessions during Social Media Week (24-28 September), and the Information Governance programme as agreed by Member Management Committee in July.

- 3.3 Consultation with Executive Members will continue in the autumn to ensure that key themes from all portfolios are included in future programmes.
- 3.4 A number of free national and regional events are also being arranged through Local Government Yorkshire and Humber and the Local Government Association. These include Leadership Academies for various portfolio areas, a New Councillor Roadshow, a regional Climate Change programme and a conference for BAME councillors.
- 3.5 Contact has recently been made with the group Parliament Outreach – a service run by the Houses of Parliament offering free learning opportunities for local authorities on topics such as:
- Understanding the work of parliament and the passage of legislation
  - Good practice sharing between Select Committees and local authority Overview and Scrutiny Boards.

Parliament Outreach are putting together details of an learning offer for Leeds City Council (Members and officers) which will be discussed with the Working Group and Member Management Committee in due course.

### **3.6 Personal Development Planning**

This year we have reviewed the Personal Development Plan (PDP) process so that it includes opportunities for coaching where Members have specific goals and aspirations. Access to qualified coaches in the region is facilitated through the West Yorkshire Member Development Officers group, and the aim is to share coaching expertise reciprocally between Councils in the sub-region in order to minimise costs.

- 3.7 Coaching has many benefits; it can enable individuals to progress and build on their skills more quickly than through traditional training and allows time for reflection and focused discussion in a confidential environment.
- 3.8 As well as allowing access to coaching, PDPs allow Members to consider their own skills and strengths against their roles and interests. Any identified learning and development needs can then be fed into our on-going programmes to ensure that individual needs are not overlooked.
- 3.9 The new PDP process is now being trialled with this year's newly-elected councillors. Existing Members will be offered the opportunity to update their PDP or create one later this autumn.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 The Chair of the Member Development Working Group is currently meeting with Executive portfolio holders to ensure that key themes are included in this year's events programme. Members can feed in any ideas for learning and development activities to the Working Group representative for their group, or the Member Development Officer at any time.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 The Member Development Working Group ensures that any initiatives and projects take account of equality issues. We include equality and diversity elements in our training programmes to ensure an embedded approach.

### **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

- 4.3.1 The aims of Member Development Working Group support the priorities and reflect the themes of the Council Business Plan and City Priority Plans.

### **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

- 4.4.1 The Member Development Working Group considers creative methods of learning and reciprocal arrangements with other Councils to ensure that any Member development activity is delivered at low cost and is sustainable. Examples of this include our work with the West Yorkshire authorities to develop shared programmes and coaching opportunities. In addition we use the MORE website ([www.more.lgyh.gov.uk](http://www.more.lgyh.gov.uk)) to develop and share resources across the region.

## **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 This section is not relevant to this report.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 Some elements of the training programme for Members are compulsory; for example, Planning and Licensing. Councillors are also strongly urged to attend sessions on Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding (Children and Adults) to ensure that they have the relevant legal and procedural knowledge required to manage issues where vulnerable children and adults could be at risk.

## **5 Conclusions**

5.1 This report provides Member Management Committee with an update on the work of the Member Development Working Group and an evaluation of this year's Induction programme for new councillors.

## **6 Recommendations**

The Member Management Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

None used.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.