

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY RESOURCES 16 JUNE 2010

ANNUAL LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2009/2010

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report summarises the Member and employee learning & development activities undertaken during 2009/10.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 2.1 The Council makes a significant resource commitment to learning & development of all employees and of Members. This report summarises the level of that commitment and the impact it has on the opportunities for employees to improve their personal knowledge and skills.
- 2.2 As in previous years a high level of learning & development activity has taken place which is encouraging given the financial constraints that have resulted from the economic downturn.
- 2.3 We are now in the third year of the Equality and Diversity programme and IT development has continued as a priority in the learning and development calendar.
- 2.4 The time tabling and variety of learning & development available ensures that both full and part time employees have equal access to the opportunities available.

3. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT COURSES

- 3.1 Learning & development courses were provided for a wide variety of subjects and can be categorised as follows:
- a) Corporate learning & development
 - b) Management Development
 - c) Member Development
 - d) Interpersonal skills Learning & development
 - e) IT skills
 - f) Academic qualifications
 - g) CPD (Continuous Professional Development) seminars and short courses
 - h) NVQ's

4. CORPORATE LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 A number of corporate learning & development programmes are provided each year for new employees. These include the Induction programme, Appraisal, Customer Care, Diversity, Step-Away Policy and Health & Safety.
- 4.2 Each year new corporate initiatives are introduced and a lot of work has been achieved in 2009/10 regarding Literacy, Numeracy, English language courses (for employees who have English as their second language) and British Sign Language.

- 4.3 An ongoing learning & development programme is provided for Treasury Benefits employees. The programme is in modular form and covers updates in current benefits legislation.
- 4.4 Corporate learning & development initiatives are provided by both external and internal providers. Internal providers are chosen for their specialist subject skills or for their training skills and are taken from operational areas particularly Treasury and the HR unit.

5. MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The management development programme introduced during 2008, which is accredited and nationally recognised has continued to be a great success. The programme is targeted at areas of greatest need for individual managers.
- 5.2 At the end of March 2009 a total of 70 managers had achieved an ILM (Institute of Leadership Management) qualification. The programme has continued during 2009/10 with a further 75 managers enrolling on to the programme.

6. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 Councillors have attended 7 briefings on a variety of subjects this year. The average attendance of Councillors at each briefing was 10.
- 6.2 A number of Councillors have also attended 20 learning & development events held internally and externally on a wide range of subjects.
- 6.3 A total of nine Councillors have undertaken a personal development plan using the new Councillor competency framework that has been formulated for use by Councillors Devon-wide.

7. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

The successful launch of the “90 minute power training sessions” in 2008 continued throughout 2009/10. These sessions cover a range of topics including stress management, managing meetings, and motivation. It is intended to extend this form of learning and development over the coming year to support managers and staff in dealing with a range of issues to support the change agenda for the Council. This is a quick and effective method of learning taking minimum time away from the work base and easily provided by the in-house team, resulting in a cost effective solution.

8. IT SKILLS

IT learning & development is provided on a flexible basis which enables support to be targeted where required. Support over the past year has included basic skills, improvement and development of skills and also training in using specialist software.

9. ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

The Council is currently supporting 34 employees undertaking academic qualifications which include degree-level courses and craft subjects.

10. CPD SEMINARS AND SHORT COURSES

Professional staff are required or encouraged by their professional institute to keep up to date with changes in legislation and updates to their particular discipline. CPD level learning is supported by the Council and 364 staff attended events in the past year.

11. NVQ LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

This year 42 employees throughout the Council have been able to take advantage of the Government funding that supports NVQ's in the workplace. In addition, the Housing Benefits section has now set up an NVQ assessment to provide level three assessment.

12. WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS

24 work experience placements have taken place during the year meeting a range of needs including: overseas students; people with disabilities; unemployed people; school children; and university placements.

13. YOUNG APPRENTICE SCHEME

The joint scheme which was set up in 2008 has supported a further 2 placements this year in Environmental Health Services and Licensing Services.

17. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

2009/10 will offer a variety of challenges for the Council as there will be a need to develop and enhance the skills of our staff to meet the transition and transformation agenda but at same time pressures on all our budgets will mean we need to be creative in how we provide learning and development support. To support our needs we will continue to seek external funding where this is still available and have already approached REIP to help us in funding a Change Management Programme for our senior managers.

We intend to make greater use of our management information data to assess the skills needs and more accurately plan to meet these in the development of our staff. This will include targeting and prioritising organisational needs to enable us to meet future requirements. We will also improve our co-ordination and evaluation methodologies to monitor outcomes of our learning and development initiatives. Making greater use of technology, particularly through e-learning, will enable us to achieve a more cost effective solution in some areas of our work.

18. RECOMMENDATION

That Scrutiny Resources note the learning & development activities undertaken throughout the year and the proposals for the future development of this part of the HR service.

HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) Background papers used in compiling this report:

1. None