

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 9 April 2024

Report of: Director Corporate Services

Title: Members' Training

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of work on the Members' training programme and also includes the Members' attendance for the various training sessions, which have been held since November 2023 to present (Appendix A).

1.2 Appendix B of the report identifies the Councillor Feedback statistics to date on training or briefing sessions they have attended.

1.3 Appendix C highlights the current number of training opportunities available on the SSS online training platform and number of completion certificates received.

1.4 The report also provides a summary of the training development work undertaken by the Councillor Development Steering Group for 2023-24.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee note the report.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 To ensure that the current induction and training programme for Members remains fit for purpose and appropriate;

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

4.1 None specific to this report.

Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 There are no financial implications for Council to consider.

5. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 The Council is obliged to ensure that Members receive adequate training to allow them to undertake their duties. This is particularly pertinent for those members who sit on the administrative committees such as Planning and Licensing.

6. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 The Monitoring Officer is pleased that the training provided is valued - the responses show good levels of satisfaction. The officers working together with the Councillor training steering group, will endeavour to continue to strive to improve the quality and range of training offered as well as strive to improve the overall attendance levels.

7. Report details:

8.1 The report provides an overview of Members' attendance at training events, additional training completed, and feedback received since the previous report.

8.2 Appendix A of this report provides a breakdown of attendance at the various training sessions held since 27 November 2023. During this period, there has been 8 training sessions held since the last report, with an average attendance rate of 56% 52%, which is a 4% increase in attendance since the previous report, despite there being 5 less sessions held.

Appendix A also highlights the attendance of Members to committee specific training provided, and Members are reminded of the importance in notifying Democratic Services to advise that they have viewed the training recordings, if they were unable to attend the live session, so that their attendance can be recorded accordingly.

8.3 Appendix B details a summary of the feedback forms for the various training sessions held during the period. The feedback form is issued to all Members after each session to capture Members' views on any training or briefing sessions they attended. It also enables Members to notify Democratic Services to state that they have viewed the training, should they be unable to attend.

During this period, the volume of feedback had increased from the previous report from 19 to 21 responses. The average feedback for very satisfied had increased from 45% to 51% and that 18% were satisfied. Members are encouraged to provide feedback on the courses, and Members who were not in attendance, to indicate that they viewed the training recordings.

8.4 there had been no tours and shadowing opportunities during this period.

8.5 Appendix C highlights the number of completed courses for the SSS training platform. The figures show that the number of Members who had completed the GDPR training had risen from 41% to 44% and that additional training courses have been undertaken on the platform.

8.6 Since May 2023, there have been 39 training and briefing events held with an average of 55% of Members attending the sessions.

8.7 The Councillor Development Steering Group had met on three occasions across the municipal year to continue the making improvements to the induction process and Councillor training opportunities. Some of the highlights of their work include:-

- Encouraging Councillor attendance various training and briefing sessions throughout the year, which had shown a marked improvement of attendance.

- Where Members had not notified Democratic Services, that they had completed mandatory training, the Councillor Development Steering Group had supported the process of copying group leaders into emails to Members who needed reminding to ensure the respective training was undertaken.
- The feedback form had been further refined to include improved navigational links for Members.
- More interaction and engagement had been suggested for training, following received feedback. The Licensing and Planning training would be the first to be more interactive and sessions would include bite sized training, knowledge testing, role play, and clear indication for being mandatory to new Members.
- Feedback from new Members was sought to help develop the 2024 induction plan.
- The SSS training platform, had been renewed for 12 months in September 2023 for Members to access various training options.
- Additional Scrutiny and Meeting Procedures training opportunities were setup provided by Bethan Evans, who would be returning in May 2024 to provide further training sessions, after the election.
- Calendar invites for regulatory committee training had been improved to include the wording 'mandatory' for members of the committee, and that the session was open to other Members if they also wished to attend.
- Carbon Literacy Training had been agreed to be considered as mandatory training and would be offered with a number of options (3 evening sessions, 2x half day sessions and a full day session).
- Information on Councillor safety would be included in the Councillor induction packs.
- Induction training for Portfolio Holder's and effective working with officers was being developed.

8. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

Ensuring that Members are appropriately trained and briefed means that they understand the issues affecting the Council, which in turn enables them to take informed decisions.

9. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

10.1 Ensuring that Members are appropriately trained and briefed means that they understand the issues affecting the Council, which in turn enables them to take informed decisions.

10.2 If inappropriate training was given, or if appropriate Members did not attend the sessions, challenges could be made to any decisions taken, which would not only jeopardise the Council's reputation, but could also lead to potential claims for compensation and review of the decisions taken.

10. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

11.1 In preparing this report, it is accepted that people learn things in different ways, and that some delivery methods are not best suited to all.

11.2 A detailed review of the training programme and briefing sessions, including the delivery methods, have helped identify gaps in this provision and also how best any training difficulties can be overcome.

11.3 There has been a focus on ensuring that training on disability awareness, as well as diversity and equality requirements, form an integral part of any revised training programme.

11.4 In recommending this proposal no potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because the report is for information.

11. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

12.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendation.

12. Are there any other options?

None.

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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