

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Member Development Update

31 October 2019

Report of the Democratic Services Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Council Business Committee with regard to the recent Member Induction Programme and seek the Committee's views on the content of a draft Councillor Training and Development Statement of Intent.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee:

- (1) **Notes and considers the comments and responses from Members attending the induction events as set out in the report.**
- (2) **Considers and comments on the draft Councillor Training and Development Statement of Intent 2019/2023 (at Appendix A) for possible adoption.**

1.0 Induction Training

1.1 In May 2019, 38 new members were elected to the City Council. Most were entirely new to the Lancaster City Council, some were returning to the City Council after a break of four or more years. A range of induction events and training courses were offered and whilst Councillors were not requested to complete evaluation forms, they were invited to comment on the effectiveness of the training.

1.2 In adopting the new Constitution in April 2019 Members agreed to increase the mandatory training requirements as follows:

"All Councillors shall undertake mandatory induction training to include:

- Equalities
- Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct
- Information governance and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Safeguarding/child sexual exploitation
- Local Government Finance
- Any specific training required for being appointed to particular staffing or regulatory committees." **(Part 2 - Section 5 Note 3)**

- 1.3 Feedback from a Member Training and Support Satisfaction consultation with councillors last year suggested various methods of training should be embraced including online training, using external providers as well as internal delivery and the Member Induction Programme contained elements of each.
- 1.4 In addition the consultation indicated that Councillors were keen to receive media training, ICT training, Charing training and Overview and Scrutiny training and this was included in the Member Induction with plans to offer further training in these areas to Councillors who were unable to attend the various sessions that were initially delivered.
- 1.5 Further details on the take up of the induction training is detailed below:

Mandatory Training

Code of Conduct - All but 3 Councillors attended one of the four training sessions which were provided by the Monitoring Officer. The 3 non attendees were returning councillors so would have received code of conduct training between 2015/6.

Equalities - This is the only course which members were requested to undertake solely online. It appears that a number of new and returning councillors have not yet undertaken this training and feedback suggests that there is some frustration that this can only be undertaken online so we will need to make alternative arrangements to ensure everyone has received this training.

Licensing - All Members of the Licensing Committee have received training on relevant law and procedures .

Planning - All Members and Substitutes with the exception of one substitute attended one of the two Planning training sessions delivered by the Planning Manager.

Personnel - All Members received the necessary training on relevant law and procedures provided externally by Forbes Solicitors with the exception of two substitutes. All but two members and two substitutes from Personnel received the Recruitment training, which was arranged through the same external provider. Arrangements have been made with the Head of HR to provide the mandatory training to the substitutes.

Safeguarding - 7 Members of the Licensing Committee received this training in a training session provided by the Police. Those unable to attend that session will need to undertake the online training on this issue along with other councillors.

Finance - All but 3 Members, two of whom were returning councillors, attended one of the 3 Finance training sessions provided by the Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer.

Appeals - 6 Members and subs attended the externally provided determining appeals hearing training. A further session will be provided internally to those that were unable to attend that session once the new Tree Preservation Officer is in post.

Information Governance and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) - This training could be undertaken by attending one of the two GDPR sessions delivered by the **Information Governance** Manager (attended by 33 Councillors) or undertaken on line. At the

time of drafting this report a small number of Councillors have yet to complete this training. One Councillor described the training session as 'excellent.'

Additional Training

Audit - Officers have provided all members on the Audit Committee With relevant training.

Overview & Scrutiny - 15 Councillors attended the day-long external training session delivered by Colin Copus, an emeritus professor of local politics at de Montfort University.

Standards – 8 members and substitutes attending the externally Standards training.

Media - 9 members attended this training delivered internally by the Communications and Marketing Team Leader. Feedback suggested the training was 'useful' and a number of Councillors unable to attend the workshop expressed an interest in attending a future session.

ICT training - It is apparent that some members are less confident using computers than others and arrangements have been made with a local facilitator to provide basic ICT training to assist them. These training sessions will have been provided by the time the Committee considers this report. As the intention is to go digital it is anticipated that we will need to procure further ICT training in due course particularly around the committee admin system and the new intranet when that is operating.

On the whole feedback for the training has been positive illustrated by the following comments:

- *"a quick note from me to say that the finance training this morning was very useful and I thought that it was pitched at just the right level."*
- *"On the whole they have been good, informative and run for the right length of time."*

Feedback from the Lone Working (attended by 18 Councillors) and the Chaining Skills (attended by 15), both externally provided by the same facilitator was less positive. Several Councillors expressed their 'disappointment', and being 'thoroughly underwhelmed' with one suggesting that, 'for future training of this type we look to in-house delivery and drawing on the mix of talents and experience from within the Council.' However, following on from the Lone Working workshop one Councillor raised the possibility of developing a Lone Working Policy and it is hoped to bring a draft to the next scheduled meeting of the Council Business Committee on 5 March 2019 for consideration.

2.0 Member Development over the remaining 4 year term

2.1 Councillors are asked to consider adopting a 'Councillor Training and Development Statement of Intent.' The advantages to having a statement of intent is that it can be easily refreshed whenever the Committee or the Council's priorities change, or new approaches to delivery are adopted but it does not have to be re-drafted each year. A draft Councillor Training and Development Statement of Intent is attached at Appendix A.

2.2 Please note that the paragraph in bold in the statement of intent, reproduced below, is dependent on the outcome of the report earlier in the agenda regarding Members' attendance at Conferences and Training Courses.

Councillors will be able to access external training courses, where these are relevant to their role as a Cabinet Member Committee Chair or Vice-Chair, and can be made available within the existing budget.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note the evaluations from the induction programme and pass on any thoughts or comments for future improvements to the Democratic Services Manager.
- consider the format and content of the Councillor Training and Development Statement of Intent for possible adoption.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT
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(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
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LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments

DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

This report is in the Deputy Monitoring Officer's name in her role as Democratic Services Manager and she has been consulted throughout.
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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