



Committee: COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Date: THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2012

Venue: MORECAMBE TOWN HALL

Time: 6.00 P.M.

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes**
Minutes of meeting held on (previously circulated).
3. **Items of Urgent Business Authorised by the Chairman**
4. **Declarations of Interest**
5. **Electoral Review - Consideration of Council Size** (Pages 1 - 8)
Report of the Head of Governance.
6. **Attendance at Training and Member Briefings** (Pages 9 - 12)
Report of the Head of Governance.
7. **Induction Evaluation Report** (Pages 13 - 17)
Report of the Democratic Services Manager.
8. **Appointments to Committees and Changes to Membership**

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

(i) Membership

Councillors Richard Newman-Thompson (Chairman), Roger Mace (Vice-Chairman), June Ashworth, Melanie Forrest, Janet Hall, Sylvia Rogerson and David Whitaker

(ii) Substitute Membership

Councillors Tony Anderson (Substitute), Tim Hamilton-Cox (Substitute), Geoff Knight (Substitute), Jane Parkinson (Substitute), Ian Pattison (Substitute) and Emma Smith (Substitute)

(iii) Queries regarding this Agenda

Please contact Peter Baines, Democratic Services - 01524 582074, or email pbaines@lancaster.gov.uk.

(iv) Changes to Membership, substitutions or apologies

Please contact Members' Secretary, telephone 582170, or alternatively email memberservices@lancaster.gov.uk.

MARK CULLINAN,
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Published on Tuesday 3rd January 2012.

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE**Electoral Review – Consideration of Council Size
12th January 2012****Report of the Head of Governance****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To enable the Committee to consider whether the Council should make a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission on Council size, and, if so, to determine the contents of that submission.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) **That the Committee consider whether it wishes to make a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on the appropriate size for the Council, and, if so, to consider the contents of that submission.**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Members will recall that at its meeting on the 16th November 2011, Council received a presentation from representatives of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England concerning the forthcoming electoral review due to commence on the 9th January 2012.
- 1.2 The review will first decide Council size, that is, the number of councillors, and then the number of wards and their names and boundaries. Council, at its meeting on the 14th December 2011, authorised this Committee on its behalf to consider and approve any submissions to the Commission during the course of the review.
- 1.3 The Commission has indicated that by the end of January it hopes to have received enough evidence to make a decision on the most appropriate council size for the Council, as well as to agree whether a wider public consultation is needed on council size. It has therefore requested evidence by the end of January in relation to the most appropriate council size for the Council. The Commission will accept written evidence in support of proposals but has indicated that it wishes to meet group leaders towards the end of January, and this has been arranged for the 24th January. The Commission has indicated that it is up to the Council whether to make a formal council submission or whether it should be left to political groups.
- 1.4 The Commission will require a good rationale for what is proposed, particularly where any substantial change is proposed, and will test the rationale and underpinning assumptions. Any proposals will need to be based on technical evidence, for example on governance arrangements and committee places.
- 1.5 The council size will subsequently determine the average (optimum) number

of electors per councillor to be achieved across all wards of the Council. This number is achieved by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors on the Council.

1.6 The Committee therefore needs to consider whether it wishes to make a proposal in respect of council size, and if so, to formulate that proposal and authorise the Head of Governance to submit it to the Commission.

1.7 Attached at Appendix 1 is an extract from the Commission's Technical Guidance (May 2011) relating to council size, which should be used as guidance.

2.0 Proposal Details

2.1 The Technical Guidance indicates that proposals for council size are most easily and regularly argued in terms of effective and convenient local government (in terms of choosing the appropriate number of members to allow the Council and individual councillors to conduct the Council's business most effectively). Arguments can also be made on the basis of reflecting communities and allowing for fairness of representation. The factors that influence council size can be drawn together into four broad elements:

- The decision making process
- Quasi-judicial processes eg planning and licensing
- The scrutiny process
- The representative role of the elected member

2.2 As members will be aware, the Council's business is currently conducted through the elected member bodies listed in Appendix 2. There are currently eight members of Cabinet (including the Leader), 18 places on the scrutiny committees, 44 places on regulatory committees and 35 places on the other decision making committees of Council. With 60 members, this equates to 1.75 places per member, and the Committee may wish to consider whether 60 is an appropriate number of members for the current workload. It should be noted that, with the exception of an increase in members of the Licensing Regulatory Committee from seven to nine, the sizes of the other committees have not been reviewed in recent years.

2.3 In considering the appropriate council size, members may wish to bear in mind that the current size pre-dated the Local Government Act 2000 which introduced the Cabinet system. Prior to that Act, the Council had a range of committees each with its own remit and responsibility for overseeing a function of the Council, and under that regime more councillors were required to attend more meetings. The Localism Act 2011 has made provision for councils to revert to the old committee system. The relevant provisions are not yet in force, and are likely to be supplemented by regulations which have not yet been published. Clearly Council may wish to consider this possibility in due course, and Members may wish to bear this in mind in considering the appropriate council size.

2.4 In addition to undertaking cabinet/committee work, councillors represent the Council on outside bodies. Currently Council makes appointments to 62 outside bodies, with a total of 110 appointments to those bodies. Of the 60 councillors, 41 currently represent the Council on outside bodies.

2.5 In addition to attending meetings, councillors have an important role in dealing with ward issues and performing a community leadership role within their wards. It is difficult to assess the time commitment of this role, and indeed this is likely to vary from councillor to councillor.

2.6 The results for Lancaster in the 2010 National Census of Local Authority

Councillors indicate that the average time spent by a councillor on council business was 16.2 hours per week. However, this was based on responses in 2010 from only 23 of the 60 councillors.

- 2.7 There are currently 31 parishes within the district, covering Morecambe, Carnforth and the rural areas. The impact of the existence of parish councils on the role of the local ward councillor is difficult to assess. This is something that the Committee may wish to consider, although it seems unlikely that the existence of the parish councils will be material to the consideration of the size of this Council.

3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 There has been no consultation at this stage. The Council has been invited to submit its views to the Commission, and it is open also to the groups to submit their own representations. The Commission will then decide whether a wider public consultation is required on council size.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

- 4.1 The options open to the Committee are to decline to make a submission on behalf of the Council, leaving it to the individual groups to put forward their views, or to put forward a formal submission on behalf of the Council. If the Committee takes the latter approach, it would be open to it to take a view on appropriate council size and formulate its reasoning in support of that view at this meeting, and, if necessary, to authorise the Head of Governance to finalise the submission in consultation with the Chairman. Alternatively, the Committee may wish to obtain further information, and to meet again to formulate its submission. However, Members are reminded that any submission must be with the Commission by the end of January.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.2 The Committee's views are sought.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)</p> <p>None directly arising from this report. The number of the electorate will be divided by the number of councillors to determine the average number of electors per councillor to be achieved across all wards.</p>
<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>None directly arising from this report. It is open to the Council to suggest any council size provided that it can justify its proposal.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>None directly arising from this report. The eventual size of the Council will have financial implications in terms of member allowances and support, but these cannot be quantified at this early stage where the Commission is simply seeking proposals.</p>

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

None

Information Services:

None

Property:

None

Open Spaces:

None

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has prepared the report in her capacity as Head of Governance.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Ref:

5 Issues to be considered

5.1 The issues discussed in this section of the guidance will arise in all reviews, but will be handled according to review type. Our advice draws on our experience of conducting electoral reviews. It is also informed by the evaluation of the 1996-2004 PER programme, conducted by the Electoral Commission. Finally, our own consultation on review policies and procedures brought forward views and ideas, many of which were based on respondents' own experience of reviews.

Council size

5.2 In Chapter 4, we looked at the importance to the whole review of deciding on council size. As discussed, council size is the starting point in any electoral review since it determines the average number of electors per councillor to be achieved across all wards or divisions of the authority. We cannot consider the patterns of wards or divisions without knowing the optimum number of electors per councillor, which is derived from dividing the electorate by the number of councillors to be elected to the authority.

5.3 We face a number of challenges in deciding on the most appropriate council size for any authority. There is wide variation in council size across England, not only between the different types of local authority – metropolitan and shire district councils, county councils and London boroughs – but also between authorities of the same type.

5.4 In our opinion, local government is as diverse as the communities it serves, providing services, leadership and representation tailored to the characteristics and needs of individual areas. We believe, therefore, that each local authority should be considered individually and not compared with other authorities of similar geographic or population size, or those facing similar issues and concerns. In addition, the demographic make-up and dispersal of communities in England are such that to aim for equality in the number of electors each councillor represents as an average across the whole country would be impractical, if not unachievable.

5.5 Consistent, therefore, with our desire to support the preparation of electoral arrangements based on the local views and circumstances of councils and their communities, we are unwilling to apply strict mathematical criteria for council size or impose nationally a formula for its calculation. This also means that we will not base our decisions on council size on comparisons between local authorities. It is important therefore that, if we are to reach clear and transparent decisions on council size, we receive well-reasoned proposals that are based on the individual characteristics and needs of each local authority area and its communities.

5.6 Despite this respect for diversity it is important to remember that a local authority may not have fully considered the number of councillors for a number of years, and that during that time the role and responsibilities of local government and councillors have changed considerably. Following the Local Government Act 2000 (the 2000 Act), most local authorities changed the way they make decisions and operate internally, some more so than others.

5.7 The political management structures that have come into place in most local authorities since the 2000 Act have changed the roles of all councillors, both those who sit on the executives and those who undertake the scrutiny and representational roles. In addition, various central government and local authority initiatives have affected the roles of local councillors, and the impact of these may affect the number of councillors needed to politically manage the authority. Finally, the development and the sharing of knowledge has provided opportunities for councils to learn from their own experience and that of others, encouraging innovation. Some councils have, however, used their experience of working in new ways in order to reach a view of the council size they think appropriate for their area, and tested that view through local consultation and electoral review. In a number of instances this has resulted in considerable reductions in council size.

5.8 Local authority proposals for council size that are based solely on an examination of national statistics, or simply an attempt to make it more consistent with that of a neighbouring area may mean that opportunities are missed either to reflect new models of political management or to adapt to changes in the responsibilities of local authorities.

5.9 When requesting a review in order to change council size, most councils indicate the new number they have in mind. We will need to ask questions about proposals to increase council size in order to establish whether there is a sound business management case for the proposed increase. In the case of a proposed reduction, we will need to be assured that the reduction will not jeopardise the ability of a council to manage its business effectively.

5.10 Whilst we have no absolute numbers in mind, there are obviously levels at which an authority risks being too small to discharge its statutory functions or too large to be able to function in an effective manner. For this reason, we will normally wish to give detailed consideration to proposals for council sizes of below thirty councillors. Equally, we will wish to examine closely proposals for council sizes of above a hundred councillors.

5.11 We will look for any measure of local consensus underpinning the proposals for council size that are submitted. In particular, where there has been local consultation on council size, we will consider the evidence which arose from that process.

5.12 Our preliminary discussions with principal local authorities to be reviewed will give us the opportunity to hear their views about council size. We will be able to determine whether there is already sufficient evidence on which we can base our judgement about the type of review to be undertaken (A, B or C) and our ability to tell people what size of council we would be minded to approve. Those preliminary discussions will therefore progress most effectively if the local authorities have by the time they take place, considered the council size issue and assembled any evidence. We will want to test the conclusions that local authorities have reached. However, that testing will not be made in order to promote a preference on our part. It will be to ensure that we have a thorough understanding of why a particular council size has been proposed and that the authority has thought through all relevant considerations.

Factors to consider when making a proposal on council size

5.13 Proposals for council size are most easily, and regularly, argued in terms of effective and convenient local government (in terms of choosing the appropriate number of members to allow the council and individual councillors to conduct the council's business most effectively). Arguments can also be made on the basis of reflecting communities and allowing for fairness of representation.

5.14 We believe the factors that influence council size can be drawn together into four broad elements:

- The decision-making process – what decisions, taken where, and how is it managed?
- Quasi-judicial processes – e.g. planning and licensing – what is the workload and how is it managed?
- The scrutiny process – what is scrutinised and how is the total scrutiny workload managed?
- The representative role of the elected member.

5.15 Those submitting proposals to us should examine the political management and working practices of the council under review, and make well-argued and reasoned proposals. We have no pre-conceived views on the number of councillors necessary to run any particular local authority effectively, and we are content to accept proposals for an increase, a decrease or the retention of the existing number of councillors, but only on the basis that they can be justified. We do not accept, for example, that increases in an authority's electorate should automatically result in an increase in council size.

5.16 In the absence of sufficient justification we will consider responses to our challenge to the rationale for the council size being proposed and reach our own conclusions.

5.17 When we consulted on policies and procedures, some people asked us to consider value for money when we are presented with proposals on council size. We believe that value for money is, in part, addressed by our consideration of effective and convenient local government – that an ineffective council is unlikely to offer good value for money. We do not feel that it would be appropriate to make further judgements on other value for money aspects of council size.

5.18 Even if we are content with the rationale provided in support of a proposal for council size, we may choose to consider whether it is necessary to change this number slightly in order to ensure better levels of electoral representation across the district (or county). Having regard to the nature and extent of communities or to appropriate ward/division boundaries, it is often possible to improve the levels of electoral representation across an authority by making minor modifications of one or two to the council size.

Electoral representation

5.19 Electoral reviews are important in upholding integrity in the democratic process. Fairness at local elections – that is, any elector's vote being worth the same as another's – is a fundamental democratic principle.

<u>Council</u>	60 members	
<u>Executive</u>		
Leader and Cabinet	8 (maximum 10)	8
<u>Scrutiny</u>		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	9	
Budget and Performance Panel	9	18
<u>Regulatory Committees</u>		
Planning and Highways	20	
Licensing Regulatory	9	
Licensing Act	15	44
<u>Other Committees</u>		
Council Business Committee	7	
Personnel	7	
Audit	7	
Standards	7 (plus independent and parish members)	
Appeals	7	35
		Total 105
<u>Cabinet Liaison Groups</u>		
Business	5	
Canal Corridor	3	
Climate Change	4	
Planning Policy	7	
District Wide Tenants	3	22
<u>Three Tier Forum</u>	10	
<u>Museum Partnership Advisory Panel</u>	2	

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Attendance at Training and Member Briefings 12th January 2012

Report of the Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To bring member briefing attendance figures to the Committee's attention; to consider a request to make attendance at Member Briefings mandatory for all Councillors, to put forward an officer recommendation that Planning training be mandatory for all Councillors, and to consider whether financial training should be mandatory for all Councillors.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To note the report and consider a means of boosting attendance at member briefings and other Member training and development events.
- (2) To recommend to Council that Planning training be mandatory for all members of Council.
- (3) To consider whether financial training should be mandatory for all members, and if so, to make a recommendation to Council.

1.0 Introduction

Member briefings are held on a monthly basis and, to date this year, have featured an overview of each council service from the relevant Service Head. Whilst these events are particularly helpful to new members of the Council, they are designed to be of equal use to returning members who may appreciate a refresher on how the Council delivers services.

Officers recently received a request from a Member to make attendance at these briefings mandatory for all councillors. The elected member was disappointed that only seventeen councillors had attended a member briefing on shared services, held on the evening of 31st October 2011. This represents 28% of all councillors.

In the context of attendance at briefings and training, officers have also been considering the need for all members of Council to have a knowledge and understanding of the work of the Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee, given that members who are not members of the Committee will on occasions attend to speak at the Committee.

2.0 Attendance in 2011/12

The table below gives an oversight of the formal member briefing sessions which have been held this year, subsequent to the induction programme:

Topic of Briefing	Date	Number of councillors in attendance
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Environmental Services	7 th July 2011	14 (23%)
Health and Housing Service	8 th September 2011	12 (20%)
Community Engagement	6 th October 2011	18 (30%)
Planning / The Local Plan	3 rd November 2011	19 (32%)
New Leader Model of Governance	1 st December 2011	9 (15%)

Below is a table of informal briefings held since the induction. It shows only the non-mandatory and non-committee specific training sessions.

Topic of Briefing	Date	Number of councillors in attendance
Housing Needs Survey	6 th July	12 (20%)
Local Government Finance	26 th July	11 (18%)
Morecambe Area Action Plan	12 th September	27 (45%)
Treasury Management	20 th September	8 (13%)
Town Hall Tour, with Stephen Metcalfe	28 th September	10 (17%)
Guide to Budgeting	17 th October	11 (18%)
Civil Contingencies	19 th October	3 (2%)
Shared Services	31 st October	17 (28%)
Procurement	22 nd November	8 (13%)
Changes to Housing Revenue Account	25 th November	15 (25%)

Average attendance stands at 21% across the two tables.

3.0 Mandatory training

Training which the Council deems obligatory almost always relates to specific committees and is mandatory because it is considered necessary for members to carry out their role on the Committee properly and effectively, for example Planning, Licensing and Personnel. If a member were to fail to attend the training then they would not be able to serve on the committee, so this is a simple matter for Democratic Services to regulate through Group Leaders and Administrators.

In July 2010, Council resolved “that Community Cohesion (equalities) training be mandatory for all newly elected Councillors as part of the induction process with effect from May 2011 and all Councillors be encouraged to renew this training every 4 years.” This resolution was implemented after the elections this year. An external trainer delivered several sessions of Community Cohesion training over many weeks to ensure coverage of all 60 Councillors at dates and times that they could attend.

Planning

With regard to planning training, this has in the past been mandatory for those serving on the Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee because to allow untrained members to make decisions on planning issues would leave the authority more open to challenge through the courts.

However, officers are mindful that there are often occasions when ward Members attend the Planning Committee to express views on behalf of local residents or applicants either

against or in support of applications. It is likely with forthcoming major infrastructure projects such as the National Grid upgrade that even more Members will be motivated to attend and speak at the Planning Committee. As ward members are not obliged to restrict themselves to proper planning considerations, there is a risk that they could unintentionally seek to influence the Planning Committee to consider matters which are not material to the planning decision to be taken. In such cases if the Planning Committee decision was so influenced this could leave the Council open to complaints of maladministration and the Committee's decision open to legal challenge. It is felt to be highly desirable therefore that all Members of the Council should be required to have some training on material planning considerations to provide them with sufficient background knowledge should they wish to speak at Planning Committee.

Finance

The question of whether some degree of financial training should be mandatory has also been raised with the Section 151 Officer by some Members in recent briefings. **This will be appraised in due course but in the interim, the views of the Committee are sought.**

4.0 Options

Briefing Sessions

The suggestion put forward that attendance at member briefing sessions should be compulsory for all councillors would not be possible to enforce. Briefings sessions are held once and it would be impractical to demand that every Councillor be available to attend on that night.

However, should the Committee wish to improve the attendance levels at these member briefings and information sessions, it may wish to discuss ways in which the sessions could be made more convenient to Councillors. The timing of the meetings (evening sessions) has already been addressed, but officers would be happy to take forward any other suggestions from this Committee to improve attendance. For example two different dates/venues could be offered for each briefing

Alternatively, the Committee may also wish the Chairman to send a letter to group administrators which brings the current low level of attendance to light, highlights the benefits of member briefings, and encourages greater participation over the coming months.

Planning Training

With regard to planning training, the officer recommendation is that this should be mandatory for all members of the Council, and the Committee is asked to recommend full Council accordingly.

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

There are no direct implications.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. Planning training would be undertaken internally, and the cost met from existing budgets.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has been consulted and her comments are incorporated in the report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Mandatory planning training would help to reduce the risk of challenge of planning decisions.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been involved in the preparation of this report in her capacity as Head of Governance.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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Ref:

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Induction Review

12th January 2012

Report of the Democratic Services Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the implementation of the Members' Induction Programme following the 2011 local elections.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

To note the report and Member feedback on the 2011 councillor induction programme.

1.0 Training and development events taken place

As part of the commitment to member development, a comprehensive induction programme was arranged for members in the two months following the 2011 local elections. Successful candidates were presented with a comprehensive pack of information at the count, and the following events took place as part of the induction programme.

Date	Time	Event	Location
Tues 10 th May	10.00 - 12.00pm	Signing Declaration session	Lancaster Town Hall
Tues 10 th May	2.00 - 4.00pm	Signing Declaration session	Lancaster Town Hall
Tues 10 th May	5.00- 7.45pm pm	Induction Evening	Lancaster Town Hall
Wed 11 th May	10.00 - 12.00pm	Signing Declaration session	Morecambe Town Hall
Wed 11 th May	2.00 - 4.00pm	Signing Declaration session	Morecambe Town Hall
Thurs 12 th May	11.00 – 2.00pm	Induction Day	Morecambe Town Hall
Thurs 12 th May	4.00- 6.00pm	Signing Declaration session	Lancaster Town Hall
Mon 16 th May	2.00pm	Code of Conduct	Lancaster Town Hall
Wed 18 th May	5.30pm	Code of Conduct	Morecambe Town Hall

Fri 20 th May	12.00 noon	ANNUAL COUNCIL – MAYOR MAKING	Lancaster Town Hall
Mon 23 rd May	4.00pm	Mock Council: Speaking in the Chamber	Morecambe Town Hall
Mon 23 rd May	6.00pm	BUSINESS COUNCIL	Morecambe Town Hall
Tues 24 th May	10.00am	Code of Conduct	Lancaster Town Hall
Wed 25 th May	11.00am	Licensing Reg training	Lancaster Town Hall
Thurs 26 th May	11.00am	Licensing Act training	Lancaster Town Hall

Wed 1 st June	2.00pm	Code of Conduct	Morecambe Town Hall
Thurs 2 nd June	2.00pm	Planning training	Lancaster Town Hall
Fri 3 rd June	10.00am	Planning training	Morecambe Town Hall
Mon 6 th June	2.00pm	Standards Committee training	Lancaster Town Hall
Wed 8 th June	6.00pm	Code of Conduct for Parishes	Lancaster Town Hall
Wed 8 th June	10.00am	Equalities Training	Lancaster Town Hall
Thurs 9 th June	10:00am	Introduction to Finance	Lancaster Town Hall
Friday 10 th June	10:30am	Personnel Committee Training	Lancaster Town Hall
Tues 14 th June	2.00pm	Decision Making Process	Lancaster Town Hall
Wed 22 nd June	2.00pm	Equalities Training	Lancaster Town Hall
Mon 29 th June	5.30pm	Decision Making Process	Lancaster Town Hall

Fri 8 th July	10 – 4pm	Overview and Scrutiny Training	County Hall, Preston
Mon 11 th July	10am	Chairing Skills	Lancaster Town Hall

Coupled to the 28 planned events listed above, Democratic Services organised a number of additional events in the subsequent weeks and months in response to feedback from members and senior officers of the Council.

Two Induction Days were held as part of the Induction, one during the day time and one during the evening at Morecambe and Lancaster Town Halls with a 'freshers fayre' style event of Service stands. Five Declaration of Office sessions were held at various times and days in Morecambe and Lancaster Town Halls with the Chief Executive.

Specific training was arranged for Members of the Planning, Personnel, Standards and Licensing Act and Regulatory Committees and training on the Code of Conduct was held for all Members. For the first time, Equalities Training was made compulsory for all new members of the council, as well as a pre-requisite to taking membership of the Personnel, Appeals and Licensing Regulatory Committees.

Initial finance training was held, and new events continue to be held throughout the course of the year on various facets of the council's budgeting and finance procedures.

1.1 Evaluation

An evaluation of the induction process recently took place, to which 18% of councillors responded. Whilst the response rate was a little low, the findings were positive, with 91% of those who took part agreeing that they 'feel much more informed about my role as a councillor having undergone the induction'.

A summary of the key points that were raised are set out in the two tables below:

Positive	Negative
Service stalls were an extremely effective means of meeting senior officers, and finding out about the council's work.	Service stalls were 'very good, but department titles and job descriptions are not clearly related to council functions'.
Members Handbook was an extremely useful source of information	The daytime scheduling of certain events was inconvenient for some of those who are in full-time employment.
The committee taster sessions gave a very clear insight to decision-making on the Council	Some sessions featured excessively long powerpoint presentations .
The Guide For New Councillors DVD , which was given out at the Induction Days, was very useful. 'A variety of media formats is good...it could be taken away and watched in your own time...there is a tendency to come away from these events with information overload and the DVD helped with this'.	
Member Briefings: '[these are] very good as councillors can see firsthand how the Council operates. In some cases a meeting with a powerpoint is necessary but can be dull.'	

Suggestions
Financial training should become mandatory for all members, this should include training on how to read and understand balance sheets (see report elsewhere on agenda);
The civic and ceremonial aspect of the Council should be given a higher profile, both in the course of the induction events, and within the Members' Handbook
A more comprehensive telephone directory , which includes all members of staff, would be an extremely useful component of future members' packs, as given out to successful

candidates at the count.

Sessions on how to be an effective ward councillor would be helpful
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In addition to the evaluation, all Members have been offered the opportunity to have a discussion with an officer from Democratic Services about their individual training needs for the forthcoming year.

These discussions are ongoing at the present time and, together with findings from the induction evaluation, information gathered from these discussions will be used to prepare a programme of training for the year ahead, and inform future induction programmes.

1.2 Forthcoming training and development events

Officers from Democratic Services will continue to provide a comprehensive programme of internal training events for members throughout the remainder of the municipal year. This involves a mixture of monthly member briefings, sessions on current topics, and other priority areas as set out in the Member Development Strategy.

In addition, this year officers have organised two training events to which members from neighbouring authorities were invited. The sessions provided high quality training and the chance to network and exchange ideas with members from different councils, who were charged at the going rate. This resulted in consistently positive feedback from members, internal and external, and very good value for money training for the council.

Following on from the success of these events, Democratic Services are holding discussions with authorities in Cumbria about establishing a Cumbria and Lancaster training partnership. This would arrange high quality training events, for which the costs, accommodation, and administration would be shared between authorities.

1.3 Conclusion

Despite a low response rate, the induction evaluation indicates that this year's programme was extremely beneficial to new and returning councillors alike.

As such, future induction programmes will be structured along similar lines but will reflect the suggestions made by councillors as part of the evaluation process, enabling the council to combine the most effective elements of this year's programme with suggestions for improvement from the target audience.

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

There are no direct implications.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The budget for 2011/12 was set at £14,800 to allow for additional training required for new members and the costs of all members training for this year will be met from within this budget allocation. The 2012/13 budget estimate will reduce back to £10,500.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from the report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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