

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Internal Audit Report – Member Development

25th June 2009

Report of Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the findings and action plan resulting from a recent internal audit of Member Expenses and Civic Functions, which included Member Development arrangements.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Council Business Committee notes the findings and agreed actions relating to Member Development from the recent internal audit of Member Expenses and Civic Functions.**
- (2) That the agreed actions be incorporated into the review of the Member Development Strategy, as appropriate.**

1.0 Introduction

On 27th May 2009, an Internal Audit report of Member Expenses and Civic Functions was published (attached at Appendix A).

The audit included a risk based review of the Council's arrangements in respect of Member Development.

2.0 Findings

The findings regarding Member Development are generally positive. Special mention is made of the recent success in achieving North West Member Development Charter Status (Level 1) and the work that will be required in preparation for Level 2.

3.0 Agreed Actions

Three actions were agreed for Member Development as a result of the audit and these are detailed in full in the report. In summary, these are:-

- Revision of the Member Development Strategy to set out the roles and responsibilities of key members and how they link to Corporate Plan priorities

Democratic Support to:

- explore opportunities for sharing good practice with other Authorities; to participate in external training wherever possible and provide Members with access to a wider variety of development and networking opportunities
- develop target areas for training which will demonstrate that Member Development has had a positive impact on the community, in preparation for applying for Charter Level 2.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

Option 1 to incorporate the actions agreed with Internal Audit into the Member Development Strategy, as appropriate.

Option 2 not to incorporate the actions agreed with Internal Audit into the Member Development Strategy, as appropriate.

The officer preferred option is 1. The actions agreed with Internal Audit will support and strengthen Member Development and will ensure that the level of assurance provided is reasonable. They will be useful in providing more clarity for Members, especially Members new to a particular role, and will support the early work towards Level 2 Charter Status.

5.0 Conclusion

A report regarding a review of the Member Development Strategy appears elsewhere on this agenda asking Members to consider priorities for the year ahead. It would seem an appropriate time for officers to start to draft information setting out the roles and responsibilities of Key Members and their links to the Corporate Plan. This would then be brought back to this Committee for approval, along with any other revisions to the Strategy agreed today.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)</p>
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<p>None arising from this report.</p>

<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

<p>There is another report on this agenda dealing with the subject of Member Development and any training needs identified as a result of the above will be dealt with within this report and within existing budgets.</p>
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<p>SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p>
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<p>The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.</p>
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<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

<p>Legal services has been consulted and have no comments.</p>
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<p>MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p>

<p>The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.</p>

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Internal Audit report Job 08/0725

Member Development Strategy

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