



**REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF HR & LEGAL & GOVERNANCE**

**TO: STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**ON: 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

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**SUBJECT: Member Induction & Training Programme 2019/20**

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## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To consider the Member Training & Induction Programme for 2019/20.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Standards Committee is asked:

1. To receive the presentation on the MeLearning e-learning solution and confirm the move to e-training and note the selection of courses now open and available to all members
2. To identify any additional areas/courses that they would like to see covered/developed for the platform.
3. Agree courses that the Committee feel should be mandatory for Member's to complete and timescales for completion.
4. Agree the 2019 programme for Strategic Development Sessions for all members (face to face training) and timetable – (Draft programme attached **Appendix B**).

## **3. BACKGROUND**

In 2018/19, the Council undertook a programme of training reflecting the `all out` nature of the elections and the creation of the revised Council Constitution and election of 51 Councillors.

Following the local elections in May 2019 there has been only a small number of new Councillors elected so it is suggested that a full induction programme for all 51 Councillors is not required in 2019. The Monitoring Officer and deputies have met with the new Councillors and arrangements made for their induction on an individual basis.

Members training and development is under the remit of the Standards Committee and a copy of the programme from last year is attached (Appendix A). The programme included items that this Committee has previously considered as mandatory and areas that the committee felt necessary for members to be aware of in carrying out their duties as a Councillor.

During recent years the Council has also introduced a number of short training events and encouraged member attendance. This has been supplemented by Councillors having access to the `MeLearning` platform which provides a range of `online` training courses.

## 4. RATIONALE

The Standards Committee has previously also agreed that a number of topics should be Mandatory for all members of the Council these topics include Child Sexual Exploitation, Data Protection and The Code of Conduct. Training for Members who wish to sit or substitute on the Planning and Highways and Licensing Committees is also mandatory. Corporate Parenting training is also made available to all members.

During the course of the work of this Committee looked at a number of issues that members have felt should be offered as general training for all Council Members to ensure that they are aware of in their role as elected member. This resulted in a broad programme of 'bitesize' training events delivered by officers throughout the municipal year. These supplemented by all Members having access to the 'MeLearning' Portal.

As part of the Digital Strategy, many courses for staff (and partners) in the Council are now managed through 'e-learning' which addresses many of the concerns similarly raised Members who have traditionally tended to prefer to access 'face to face' training events. These concerns where the timing of courses, clashing with personal/work commitments or political surgery or community meetings. Due to such issues it is very difficult to find times and dates which are convenient to 51 councillors at the same time.

It is also recognised that people learn in different ways and at varying speeds depending on the nature of the learning taking place. E-learning offers a solution which means that people can learn at their own pace, privately and without peer or other pressures. E-learning is available 24 hours a day which again given today's society is often considered a valuable option for people with very busy lives.

It is in this context that in creating this year's outline training programme for members, that the emphasis is very much focussed on moving to a majority e-learning platform for most councillor training in 2019/20.

The Standards Committee will have at the meeting a demonstration of the system and the courses readily available today for all members to access.

Last year it was agreed that regularly throughout the year there should be the consideration of some general strategic briefings for all members covering key elements of their roles and responsibilities. This being 'face to face'. The Committee is requested to confirm subjects it considers should be included in these briefings. For each there is a suggested main topic in the draft plan below: -

Each programme of 2 hours would include a main presentation topic and end with a general update on key issues pertaining to the time of year or 'current/live' training/development issues which Members wished to raise with senior officers.

### **Session 1 (September 2019)**

Main presentation - Data Protection & Cyber Security

### **Session 2 (November 2019)**

Main presentation – Adult Safeguarding – A Member Guide

### **Session 3 (January 2020)**

Main presentation - Local Government Finance/Universal Credit/Council Tax support

## **Session 4 (March 2020)**

Main presentation - Corporate Parenting – A Member Guide

As in previous years, it is recognised that throughout the year some events may need to be added to the programme to reflect the ongoing work of the Council or national developments. Where these cannot be addressed by updates at the 4 Strategic Development Sessions above these will need to be added to the draft programme and be reported through to the Standards Committee at their next meeting.

Taking all the above into account, the draft programme for 2019/20 is set out at **Appendix B**.

### **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct policy implications from the report.

### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None, although the increased utilisation of the digital solution to learning and development will result in the delivery of efficiency savings already assumed in the budget.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The attendance of Members of the Planning and Highways Committee and Licensing Committee at Mandatory Training is a legal requirement and reflects the current legislation. Attendance at other mandatory courses (Data Protection, etc) whilst not being a legal requirement are seen as good practice.

### **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The Members Strategic Briefings are delivered in-house and will be delivered within existing budgets. Subject to the agreement of this report the Director of HR, Legal and Governance will evaluate all other areas of development to ensure that maximum use is made of delivery of other training via use of digital technology.

### **9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

Any proposals for change will be assessed to establish any potential equality implications. The provision of training to elected members incorporates elements which will enhance members understanding of equality aspects/implications in the development and delivery of Council services.

### **10. CONSULTATIONS**

The Standards Committee is being consulted through this report.

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Date: 31st May 2019