



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

**TO: STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**ON: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

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**SUBJECT: Member Training - Update**

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

To review the Member training programme 2019/20.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Standards Committee is asked:

1. To note the report as presented and endorse the continued digitisation of training interventions for elected members.
2. To make any recommendations for changes to the Member Training Programme and recommendations for the development of further e-learning courses.

### **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.

Members training and development is under the remit of the Standards Committee and a copy of the programme agreed and updated for this year is attached (Appendix 1). The programme includes items that this Committee has considered as mandatory and areas that the committee felt necessary for members to be aware of in carrying out their duties as a Councillor.

Councillors also increasingly having access to the `MeLearning platform which provides a range of `online` training courses supplementing this training

### **4. RATIONALE**

At their meeting in June the Committee received a presentation on the MeLearning e-learning solution, confirmed the move to e training, and noted the selection of courses now open and available to all members. The committee also discussed the identification of additional areas/courses that they would like to see covered/developed for the platform.

This was in response to a number of issues that members had with regular `face to face` training events. Now 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 raised by Members who have traditionally only accessed `face to face` training events. However

members increasingly felt that `face to face` training was not always accessible, clashing with personal/work commitments or political surgery or community meetings. Organisationally due to such issues it was always 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 offered 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.

A report is attached which demonstrates the impact the e-learning solution has on learning opportunities across internal staff, members and external partners who utilise the system. This report demonstrates that there have been over 43,000 course completions to date on a wide and varied range of topics.

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

To date the experience of Councillors has been mixed and the Committee will be provided with an up to date position at the meeting.

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 preferably and more appropriately being `face to face` as set out in the chart attached. These have been retained in the programme for this year.

## **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: 24<sup>th</sup> December 2019