

Meeting Date	12 November 2013
Report Title	Annual Report on Member Training and Development
Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Member for Performance
SMT Lead	Mark Radford, Corporate Services Director
Lead Officer	Joanne Hammond, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open

Recommendation	1. To note the Annual Report on Member Training and Development.
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1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The annual report is submitted to the Standards Committee in accordance with the Member Training and Development Strategy. The report provides an update on progress with Member Training and Development since November 2012, outlining actions taken by the Member Development Working Group to-date and their future work programme.

2 Background

2.1 Member Training and Development

2.1.1 The Council's cross-party Member Development Working Group (MDWG) monitors the Council's Member Training and Development Programme. The Working Group is supported by the Democratic Services Team and the Corporate Services Director. All Members are encouraged to feedback through their Councillor representative on the Working Group.

2.1.2 Since the last annual report the Member Development Working Group's work programme has included:

- Reviewing the Member Training Strategy and Evaluation Statement, and finalising the Councillor Role Profiles, both of which were approved at Council on 20 March 2013;
- Received regular budget updates and feedback from training sessions;
- Agreed and monitored the 2013/14 Member Training Programme;
- Invited Heads of Service and the Leader to meet with the Group and discuss Member Training priorities;

- Met with the Democratic Services Manager from Kent County Council to discuss Member Training;
- Received progress updates from Officers on the Localism Live Project, improvements to the Members' Room, and Scrutiny Training.

Their future work programme includes:

- Reviewing the Council's pre-candidature work and induction process;
- Annual Review of the Strategy Document;
- Developing a training programme for 2014/15;
- Assisting with ideas in the roll-out of the Modern.Gov Committee Administration System with regard to Member Training items;
- Improvements to the Member Training Flyers.

2.2 Member Training Sessions and Attendance

- 2.2.1 A Member training programme is developed at the start of each civic year. The programme lists suggestions for training/briefings received from Councillors, the MDWG and Officers. Each session is given a priority rating (1-3) as this helps to plan the timings of the sessions throughout the year. The MDWG regularly review the training programme to ensure it is deliverable and within budget.
- 2.2.2 Alongside the single-issue training sessions, a programme of regular training sessions has been implemented by the Planning Department since 2010 and the Internal Audit Team is also developing a training programme for Audit Committee Members. Members of the Licensing Committee are required to have attended a training session before they can sit on the Committee. Members have also been reminded of their responsibilities regarding statutory training in areas such as Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding.
- 2.2.3 Following the last review of the Member Training and Development Strategy a procedure was introduced to allow individual Members to identify training, briefings or conferences which they feel would be beneficial for them to attend. A Training Application Form is submitted to their Group Leader and agreement is via the Leader and Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Member Development Working Group. Only two requests were received in the last civic year, with both being approved. The Member Development Working Group is keen to promote this as a way for Councillors to address their individual training needs and take responsibility for their personal learning and development.
- 2.2.4 The table below sets out Councillor attendance at training and briefing sessions which have been arranged through the Democratic Services Team from November 2012 – October 2013.

Title of Training/Briefing session	Date	Number of Councillors in attendance
Planning Training	1 November 2012	25
Gypsy and Traveller Awareness Training (hosted by Maidstone BC)	5 November 2012	11
Welfare Reform Briefing	6 December 2012	18
Risk Management Training	13 December 2012	12
Presentation Skills (hosted by Maidstone BC)	18 January 2013	1 (we were offered 3 places)
Planning Training	24 January 2013	25
Chairing and Managing Meetings	12 February 2013	12 (plus two Members from MBC)
Internal Audit Training	7 March 2013	9
Planning Training	16 May 2013	25
Health and Safety Briefing	30 May 2013	14
Licensing and Gambling Act Training	13 June 2013	14
Health and Safety for Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen	2 July 2013	7
Planning Training	11 July 2013	19
Understanding Your Community - Census 2011	25 July 2013	12
Community Governance Review	25 July 2013	12
Planning Training	12 September 2013	14 (plus Parish Councillors)
Climate Change Briefing	3 October 2013	14
Waste Contract and Other Major External Contracts	31 October 2013	13

3 Proposal

3.1 The Standards Committee is asked to review and comment on the annual report.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 N/A

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 N/A

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Council's Corporate Plan has three priorities: Embracing Localism, Open for Business and Healthy Environment. Members need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to help deliver these priorities and to effectively represent their ward constituents.
Financial, Resource and Property	Provision of £8,000 is made within the budget for Member Training and Development for 2013/14.
Legal and Statutory	<p>Local authorities are complicated organisations that are heavily regulated and must act lawfully when discharging their functions. They can only act where there is a legal power or duty and decisions taken by them must comply with administrative law principles. Members are often required to take complex decisions or to follow prescribed procedures and they can be challenged by individuals or organisations who disagree with decisions taken.</p> <p>Knowledge of the relevant legal frameworks is vital to support them in their roles as community leaders, advocates and policy makers. It also protects the Council from the costs and bad publicity that is likely to result from legal challenges.</p>
Crime and Disorder	None specific to this report.
Risk Management & Health and Safety	None specific to this report.
Equality & Diversity	Each individual Member will have differing backgrounds, and a differing range of knowledge and experience that they bring to the role of Councillor. Members as Community Leaders have a role to help identify equality and diversity barriers that prevent the Council from building more cohesive communities.
Sustainability	None specific to this report.

7 Appendices

7.1 None.

8 Background Papers

8.1 None