

Standards Committee Meeting

Meeting Date	14 November 2017
Report Title	Annual Report on Member Training and Development
Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance
SMT Lead	Mark Radford, Chief Executive
Lead Officer	Jo Millard, 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 2016, 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 Senior Democratic Services Officer and the Chief Executive. 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:

- Continued investigation and development of Members' access to information and on-line training including the Elms learning programme accessed by staff to carry out statutory training such as Health and Safety and Safeguarding
- Setting the 2017/18 Member Training Programme
- Finalising the review of Role Profiles, which were agreed by Council on 25 January 2017
- Finalising the updated Member Training and Development Strategy, which was agreed by Council on 25 January 2017

- Evaluating the training provided in 2016/17
- Discussions with external trainers to provide bespoke training according to Members' requirements

2.2 **Member Training Sessions and Attendance**

- 2.2.1 A Member training programme is developed at the start of each civic year. Ideas of future training sessions are sought from Members and Members of the Member Development Working Group agree relevant topics. Additional training and presentations are also put forward by Officers. The MDWG regularly review the training programme to ensure it is deliverable and within budget. It also strongly recommends that Members take up shadowing opportunities as a way to learn more about the services that the Council provides.
- 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 2016 – October 2017**. Parish Councillors are invited to planning briefings. Members will note that there have been 21 briefings covering a variety of topics, an increase of 6 sessions on the same period last year.

Title of Training/Briefing session	Date	Number of Councillors in attendance
Customer Services	3 November 2016	18
LLP Presentation by Public PLC Transformation Project	15 November 2016	18
Risk Management	17 November 2016	16
KCC Protocol – Planning Applications & Local Plan	24 November 2016	16
NHS Briefing	8 December 2016	14
Data Protection & Code of Conduct	15 December 2016	20
Wheelabrator Kemsley	7 February 2017	17
Counter Fraud & Corruption	14 February 2017	9
Swale Youth Services Update	16 February 2017	13
MKS Update & Skype for Business Demonstration	28 February 2017	18
Police Update	16 March 2017	10
Compulsory Planning Training	13 April 2017	11
Planning Enforcement/Legal	18 May 2017	20
Transformation Project	23 May 2017	18 (plus 25 Parish Councillors)
Local Plan Inspectors Final Report	15 June 2017	12
Air Pollution	13 July 2017	18
Smart Towns	4 September 2017	18
Revenue & Benefits & Homelessness Update	14 September 2017	10 (plus 6 Parish Councillors)
Compulsory Licensing Refresher	26 September 2017	13
Manston Briefing	12 October 2017	2
	24 October 2017	16

2.3 Future Work

- 2.3.1 The main focus over the coming months will be developing Members' access to information and on-line training using the Elms Learning programme and setting up Learning and Development workshops using an external provider.
- 2.3.2 The MDWG are keen to increase the number and variety of learning opportunities available to Members, and will be sharing training dates in the future with Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils. As mentioned previously, it would also encourage Members to take up shadowing opportunities available.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The Standards Committee is asked to review and comment on the annual report.
- 3.2 The Member Development Working Group is keen to reinforce the need for Members to understand their statutory responsibilities; such as Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding. These sessions will be covered within the

training programme and information will also be available on the Elms Learning programme. Two Members were recently trained in the use of the Evac chair in order to assist in case of an emergency evacuation outside of normal office hours. It is recognised that some Members may receive relevant training through their paid or voluntary work, or their involvement in other organisations. However past sessions have often shown that attendance figures at sessions related to statutory duties are often lower than average and the report therefore welcomes the Standards Committee's support and the support of Group Leaders in promoting the importance of these sessions to Councillors.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 N/A

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 The report is submitted by officers on behalf of the Member Development Working Group, who have approved the content and recommendations.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Council's Corporate Plan has three priorities: A Borough To Be Proud Of, A Community To Be Proud Of and A Council To Be Proud Of. 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 2017/18.
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> <p>Members of the Planning and Licensing Committees sit in a quasi-judicial capacity and training is therefore a mandatory requirement. All Members should be fully aware of their statutory duties and the requirement to have sufficient</p>

	knowledge on these matters to properly exercise their responsibilities in-line with legislation.
Crime and Disorder	None specific to this report.
Sustainability	None specific to this report.
Health and Wellbeing	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.

7 Appendices

7.1 None

8 Background Papers

8.1 None