

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

18 January 2023

Report of the Assistant Director Policy and Strategy
Portfolio of the Leader, Executive Member for Policy, Strategy,
Partnerships

MEMBER INDUCTION

Summary

1. The member induction programme was discussed at Audit and Governance Committee on 30 November 2022 when it was confirmed it would be brought to the Committee for consideration on 18 January 2023.
2. The induction for new and re-elected members at the council has been overhauled, with LGA providing support, and external providers identified where appropriate. The member induction programme is in **Annex A**.
3. Training is provided online and in person, with officer, external providers and LGA facilitation depending on the subject. Training materials will be published, including recorded sessions, for future reference. All training is compulsory although members can choose whether to access the training “live” or view recorded sessions in their own time. The exception is mandatory training for committee members where it is advised these should be attended in person.
4. The member induction programme aims to increase understanding about aspects of the council, its operating framework, statutory responsibilities and public sector duties. Officers will facilitate or host training providing opportunity to share expertise and build trust helping address cultural issues discussed in the public interest report and cited by Audit and Governance.

Recommendations

5. Audit and Governance Committee are asked to:

1) Consider the member induction programme

Reason: For the Committee to consider whether the member induction programme sufficiently provides different ways of accessing information about how the council operates to support new and current members learn more about the Constitution, their role, expected conduct, decision making and to build confidence and trust between members and officers.

Background

6. As part of the work identified within the Council Plan to provide more effective governance procedures, work to review induction training to members has been explored in line with the updated Constitution.
7. In addition to this, the Public Interest Report ([Public Pack\) Agenda Document for Council, 04/05/2021 18:00 \(york.gov.uk\)](#)), proposed that a more comprehensive member induction programme would better support elected members discharge their duties and build a more appropriate culture between members and officers.
8. The member induction programme has been drafted in consultation with the LGA who are also facilitating/attending different sessions (indicated in **Annex A**).
9. In addition, there is comprehensive elected member leadership training available from the LGA and this will be signposted as part of the induction programme with the expectation that, particularly newly elected members, will be supported to engage in it:
<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/highlighting-political-leadership>

The member induction programme

10. The member induction programme was developed via an officer-led task and finish group comprised of different areas of the council with representation from each Directorate. The task and finish group designed the programme to cover different learning styles, with the following considerations in mind:
 - a. Compulsory: the majority of sessions are compulsory with the schedule published in advance. Although compulsory, online sessions will be pre-recorded and can be viewed at the members convenience.

- b. Mandatory: for individuals who have certain duties to exercise (such as member of a Licensing Committee), it is expected that these sessions will be attended in person.
- c. Optional: for members to consider whether they would like to learn more about specific aspects of the council. Optional sessions are indicated.
- d. Whether online or in person (face to face): The sessions which are in person have been chosen to start to build relationships with key officers from day one.
- e. Schedule: The sessions has been scheduled and will be promoted in an online calendar. The programme (**Annex A**) will also be provided to newly elected members as part of their welcome pack.
- f. Format: Providing information in small bite sized chunks, builds knowledge and allows elected members to revisit topics if they wish.
- g. Content: The content approach means all members will receive a broad overview of different aspects of the council, with specific information targeted to key committee members. External providers are indicated. The LGA are supporting several sessions.
- h. Learning platform: A private section of modgov will be shared with members only - with a calendar of induction sessions and materials published on it in advance. Online sessions will be recorded and uploaded to modgov for future reference.

Registration and learning records: We are exploring whether modgov can link to MyLo (the council's development platform) so members can register to attend sessions and keep a learning record for future reference. This is likely to be significant. Although we cannot enforce any training, it is important to remember that the council is required to respond to FOIs and also, where required, provide evidence of training where a regulator, such as the ICO, requires that information for an investigation.

- i. Feedback: All facilitators will invite feedback using a standard form which will be collated and shared as part of the review and to inform future sessions.
 - j. Review: A review will take place in December (after 6 months) with members invited to share their thoughts about what worked/didn't, what additional information they would like and to consider next steps.
11. A pre-election session is being planned for prospective members to help answer questions and encourage more candidates.
12. The first stage of the programme is a two day introduction to the council. This is face to face on 10-13 May 2023. All members will attend 10 May and then split into smaller groups for 11 / 12 May to cover the West offices induction and introduction to member's new tech pack including devices.
13. To help engage people contemplating being members, the programme will be published in advance to show the commitment the council has supporting members become familiar with the workings of the council with a pre-election session being considered to answer questions.

Consultation

14. Executive, Political Assistants and the LGA have been consulted about the member induction programme.
15. Audit and Governance together with Joint Standard Committee chairs were also provided with copies of the emerging member induction content plan during summer 2022.

Council Plan

16. The member induction programme is designed to help develop and steer delivery of the Council Plan and responds to an open and transparent council

Implications

- **Financial** Costs of external providers will be processed through the governance directorate budget. The Director of Finance will provide development sessions. Finance was part of the task and finish group to create the member induction programme.

- **Human Resources (HR)** the Head of HR will provide development sessions. Understanding member roles in employment issues is included, together with lone working. HR were part of the task and finish group to create the member induction programme.
- **Equalities** Equalities and Human Rights training has been added to the programme. Making sure the programme is accessible has been considered by the task and finish group.
- **Legal** Legal Services are included in the programme and were part of the task and finish group to create the member induction programme.
- **Crime and Disorder** Enforcement, Environmental Services and Community Safety are part of programme and part of the task and finish group to create the member induction programme.
- **Information Technology (IT)** Elected members will be given the same devices to ensure they all have the same ability to access the programme. The member programme will be provided on their laptops in advance. ICT policies are included in the programme. A drop-in session has been arranged to help members become familiar with MSTeams and day 2 of the induction includes time to learn about their new tech and devices pack.
- **Property** Facilities management and the West Offices induction is part of the programme. Sessions have been booked well in advance to ensure available rooms.
- **Other** The subject matter will involve different functions across the council delivering and facilitating sessions.

Contact Details

Author:

Claire Foale
Assistant Director Policy
and Strategy

Rachel Antonelli
Head of Democratic
Services

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Bryn Roberts
Director of Governance

**Report
Approved**

Date

9 January
2023

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *List information for all
Member induction task and finish group*

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

Yes

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Public interest report 2021 – action plan ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for Council, 04/05/2021 18:00 \(york.gov.uk\)](#),
[Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 6 April 2022, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 86
[Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 29 June 2022, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 8
[Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 30 November 2022, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) – item 26

Annexes

Annex A – member induction programme