Notice of a public meeting of
Member Support Steering Group

To: Councillors Douglas (Chair), Boyce, Galvin, Looker and Runciman (Vice-Chair)

Date: Thursday, 30 January 2014

Time: 5.00 pm

Venue: The Thornton Room - Ground Floor, West Offices (G039)

A G E N D A

1. **Declarations of Interest**
   At this point in the meeting, Members are asked to declare:

   - any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
   - any prejudicial interests or
   - any disclosable pecuniary interests

   which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
   To approve and sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 28th November 2013.

3. **Public Participation**
   At this pointing the meeting, members of the public who have registered their wish to speak regarding an item on the agenda or an issue within the Committee's remit can do so. The deadline for registering is **5:00pm on Wednesday 29th January 2014.**

4. **Update on Members Lagan Lite by the ICT Business Engagement and Implementation Manager.**

   Officers from ICT will be in attendance to provide an update on Councillors Lagan Lite. This is a self service system for Members to log requests and track their status.

5. **Member Training Budget Update 2013/14.**   (Pages 7 - 10)

   This report gives details of the current and projected budgetary position in relation to Member training at the end of the 2013/14 financial year.

6. **Draft Core Programme of Member Training** (Pages 11 - 18) **and Development 2014/5.**

   This report sets out the draft proposed core programme of training and development opportunities for Members for the 2014/15 municipal year.

Democracy Officer
Laura Bootland
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For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting
Laura Bootland. Contact details set out above.

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

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Scrutiny Committees
The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:
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- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

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City of York Council	Committee Minutes

Meeting	Member Support Steering Group
Date	28 November 2013
Present	Councillors Boyce, Galvin, Hodgson (Substitute) and Runciman (Vice-Chair)
Apologies	Councillors Douglas and Looker

9. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interests they may have in the agenda. None were declared.

10. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 1st July 2013 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

11. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Councils Public Participation Scheme.

12. Personal Development Reviews.

Lesley Whiting from Association of Local Government Yorkshire and Humber was in attendance to introduce an example Personal Development Review (PDR) to the Steering Group.

The Head of Democratic and Civic Services advised that Lesley had been invited to the meeting to speak to the Steering Group as there had been difficulties with the previous system of one to one PDR's and a subsequent exploration of 360° reviews had been met with a mixed reaction from Members so alternatives were being sought.

The PDR introduced by Lesley was a self assessment style document which can be filled in electronically. Members were advised that the questions could be amended to fit any Local

Authorities needs but the example tabled was the one used by Bradford Council.

Following time to read through the PDR, Members had the following comments:

- Would the PDR lead anywhere for Members once it had been completed as it looked similar to other PDRs.
- The key thing most Members need to know is where to go to find information they need.
- The PDR could be useful to identify areas of training that some Members may require.
- Some of the questions in the example were not relevant for York and it was considered it may take too much time to fill in which may deter some Members from responding.
- A shorter PDR form would be preferred.

Members were reminded that Officers require something to underpin the training programme and to help co-ordinate resources and PDRs help to identify what may or may not be required.

The Vice Chair agreed to look at the PDR form suggested by Lesley along with the Chair and a representative from Democratic Services. Any recommendations would then be brought back to the Steering Group.

Resolved: That the Chair, Vice Chair and an Officer from Democratic Services work on a suggested form that City of York Council could use and report back to a future meeting of the Steering Group.

Reason: To identify a suitable PDR process for City of York Council elected members.

13. **Update on Member Training Core Programme.**

Members considered a report which provided an update on the Member Core Training Programme for the current municipal year.

Officers outlined the report and advised that take up of events had generally been low following the abolition of training targets for Members, although take-up had been good for the statutory legal training sessions and pre-Council Seminars.

It was reported that the new University Accredited Course in Local Government had been well received, the Vice Chair who attended the course endorsed this view. Should the course continue after this pilot year, it was likely the free places for Members and Council Officers would need to be renegotiated with the University.

The Head of Civic and Democratic Services advised the Steering Group that the new Leader of the Liberal Democrats had approached Democratic Services to enquire if the Group could use funds from the Member Training Budget to set up some training on being an 'Effective Opposition'. Views from the Steering Group were being sought before this request was progressed. Members advised that they did not consider it was appropriate to use Council money to support a particular group in this way.

Resolved: (i)   That the Steering Group noted the report.

(ii)   That the Steering Group did not support the proposals for the Liberal Democrat Group training.

Reason: In order to comply with the monitoring arrangements set out in the Steering Groups Terms of Reference as approved by Council.

14. **Work Plan**

Members considered the Work Plan for the Committee to March 2013 and were asked to suggest items for the forthcoming meeting in July.

Following discussion, it was agreed that reports on the following areas would be brought forward:
- Draft Core Programme 2014/15
- Member Development Budget Update
- Update on Councillors Lagan Lite

Resolved: That the work plan be noted.

Reason: To provide the Steering Group with a work programme for future meetings.

Councillor Runciman, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.10 pm].

City of York Council

Member Support Steering Group   **30 January 2014**

Report of the Assistant Director: Governance & ICT

Member Training Budget Update 2013/14

Purpose

1.   This report gives details of the current and projected budgetary position in relation to Member training at the end of the 2013/14 financial year.

Background

2.   The total available budget for Member training in the current financial year amounts to £13k. As part of the budget setting process in February 2013, Members agreed to reduce this budget to a total of £5k for the coming financial year 2014/15.

Current Expenditure

3.   To date, committed expenditure against the budget stands at £374 relating to the attendance of Councillors at conferences. The current core programme which is analysed in a separate report on this agenda has been put together at no external cost.

4.   Each Group has been asked to provide up to date information on any spend against their allocated 'pot' in 2014/15. That information is still awaited and will be reported to the Steering Group at the meeting. As a reminder, the 'pots' are allocated as follows based on a per head spend to a total budget of approximately £5k, which is set aside from the total member training budget:

Labour Group - £2,850

Conservative Group - £1,044

Liberal Democrat Group - £1,044

Greens - £212

Independent Members - £106 each

5. It should be noted that one Independent Member has always indicated that, fundamentally, he would not call upon the Council to fund any external training from his allocation of £106.

6. It is anticipated, based on the programme offered for 2014/15, that the budget will be considerably underspent at the end of this financial year. Indeed, the Steering Group anticipated this and specifically chose to offer a very focussed Core Programme (delivering designated essential training) this year in preparation for the reduced budget in 2014/15 and beyond. Additionally and in light of the reduced budget, Members chose not to apply for renewal of the Council's Member Development Charter Status, which have required a more intensive programme of training and taken considerably more Council resources to deliver.

7. Although not relevant for the coming financial year, the Steering Group needs to be mindful of the upcoming election year and the need to provide a full induction for newly elected Members. So, in 2014/15, it may be necessary to ask the Council to provide additional funds to support the provision of that training during 2015/16.

Consultation

8. No specific consultation on this report is required. Members require the information in order to inform their decision making about the provision and delivery of any training for Members in 2014/15.

Options

9. This report needs to be taken in conjunction with the report on a draft Core Programme for Member training in 2014/15, also on this agenda. There are no options available specifically other than to consider what kind of Core Programme Members wish to provide within budget and whether the allocation of 'Group pots' is to continue.

Council Plan 2011-2015

10. Providing funds for training for Members ensures that the Council invests in developing their understanding, knowledge and skills around key issues that may affect their residents and the city as a whole. This leads to improved decision making and service design.

Implications

11. **Financial** – There are no known financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

12. There are no known HR, legal or other implications associated with the contents of this report.

Risk Management

13. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, there are no risks associated with the contents of this report, other than the impact, potentially, of a reduced budget on the provision training for Members.

Recommendations

14. The Steering Group are requested to note the budgetary position and take it into account when considering what kind of training programme to offer for Members in 2014/15, elsewhere on this agenda.

    Reason: In order to comply with the role of the Steering Group in overseeing the provision of training for Members.

Contact Details

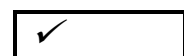| **Author:**	**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**
Dawn Steel	Andrew Docherty
Head of Civic & Democratic Services	Assistant Director: Governance & ICT
Tel: 01904 551030	Tel: 01904 551004

Report Approved ☑ **Date** 22.01.2013

Specialist Implications Officer(s) None

Wards Affected: All ☑

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

Member Support Steering Group 30th **January 2014**

Report of the Assistant Director Governance and ICT

Draft Member Training & Development Core Programme 2014-15

Summary

1. This report sets out the draft proposed core programme of training and development opportunities for Members for the 2014/15 municipal year.

Background

2. As part of the Council's budget setting exercise, in February 2013, Budget Council decided to reduce the annual base budget available for developing Members to £5k, as from 2014/15. In turn, this has led this Group to start looking to the future and to focus on providing a core programme of compulsory (statutory) or essential (to the Council, in achieving its ambitions) training, supplemented by a cost effective means for Members to obtain other keys skills or knowledge central to their role. In response to the latter, an optional accredited certificate in 'Local Government & Democracy' has been developed, in partnership with the University of York.

3. The programme for 2014/15 therefore, will be a little lighter than past programmes to reflect the reduced budget and refocused provision.

4. The core programme will continue to be supplemented by ad hoc in-house additions; these usually arise when there is new information or practices that Councillors need to be made aware of. The programme is also supplemented by regional events where these are known and available through the regional network of contacts in advance of the programme being produced every year. However, consideration needs to be given to how any additional external activities will be funded in 2014/15. A separate report on this agenda sets out the current budgetary provision and comparative rates of spend in 2013/14.

The Programme

5. At this stage only the skeleton of the proposed programme is being presented to the Steering Group. There is still much work to do be done to finalise the programme, with dates to be confirmed and officer and trainers' availability established. The provisional timings/dates set out in the programme are, therefore, subject to change.

6. The paragraphs below set out some of the highlights of the programme and should set out enough information for the Steering Group to consider approving the draft proposed core programme:

   i. Training on statutory responsibilities – training will be provided for those Members sitting on all three Planning Committees, Corporate Appeals Panel, Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee and Standards Committee.

   ii. Policy Sessions – these were introduced to the core programme in 2012/13 and proved popular with Members and Officers. They provide an opportunity for Members to receive information on forthcoming key national policy changes in an informal setting. Discussions still need to take place between officers to identify suitable topics, but it is envisaged that we will offer one or two opportunities for Members.

   iii. Pre-Council Briefings – there will be four of these throughout the year; subjects to be confirmed. Members are invited to suggest areas of interest for these.

   iv. Equalities Training and Risk Management Training– these areas have been identified as essential training for Members in 2014/15 by Officers. Certainly the equalities training is in response to the ongoing Peer Equalities Review Assessment and the Council's strive to become an 'Excellent' Authority. Currently, a Scrutiny Review is underway looking at improving the Council's approaches to democratic engagement across all communities. As a part of that work, that Task Group is also looking at what training would benefit Members to assist in developing and understanding that wider engagement. The Task Group will report its recommendations before the end of the Municipal Year, at which point it would be appropriate to consider their recommendations on Member training.

   v. Members Code of Conduct – primarily aimed at the newer Councillor or as a refresher for the more experienced Councillor this session will provide a standard refresher on the keys elements of the still comparatively new Code, including declarations of interest.

7. <u>Group Pot</u>

For the past 2 years, a 'pot' has been allocated to each of the main Groups for expenditure on external training activities, outside of the Core Programme, provided those were supported by the relevant Group. Spend by the Groups is itemised in the budget report elsewhere on this agenda. Members are asked to consider, in light of the reduced available budget for overall training to Members in 2014/15, whether these pots should be allocated. In 2013/14, the total allocated pot to Groups within the available budget was £5k. In 2014/15, that will be the total budget available to spend on Member training.

<u>Future Core Programmes</u>

8. At the last meeting of the Steering Group, Members received a report evaluating training offered to date during 2013/14 and demonstrating the comparatively low take up for the majority of even designated 'essential' training offered now that Council has removed the previously required target. Due to this comparatively low take up in this and recent municipal years, the lack of a dedicated Member Services Officer and the reduced training budget going forward, the Steering Group is asked to consider whether there should be a move away from offering anything at all other than the training on statutory responsibilities and updates to those.

Naturally, this approach would have to be varied in an election year. As it is suggested that there is a more significant need to train and induct newly elected Members in a wide range of key and essential areas.

Consultation

9. Consultation on the preparation of the Core Training Programme for Members is undertaken with this Steering Group. All Directors will be asked to identify any areas of statutory need additional to those already highlighted.

Options

10. Members can:

i. Approve the draft core programme set out in **Annex A** to this report

ii. Suggest revisions to the draft core programme at **Annex A** to this report

iii. Comment on member training provision going forward.

Analysis

11. The Council achieved Member Development Charter Status in September 2010 and the provision of a robust policy and training and development programme was developed as a result.

12. The core programme in recent years has been devised to provide a wide range of opportunities for Members. Some of these were identified through Councillor Surveys on training provision within the Council and others by senior officers, in particular those where there is new statutory or policy information to brief Members on.

13. Due to budget constraints and the Council not seeking to renew the Council's Charter status for Member Development, there has been a move away from such an intensive programme.

14. Wherever possible the cost of providing training is kept to a minimum by using in-house knowledge and expertise. This will continue to be the case going forward as budgets reduce.

Council Plan 2011-2015

15. Having well informed and trained Members will continue to help the Council deliver its key priorities set out within the Council Plan 2011-15.

Implications

16. **Financial** – Any financial costs associated with the core programme 2014/15 will be met from the existing budgets available for Member Development. The majority of sessions within the programme will be provided in-house and will therefore incur little or no cost. If there is a need to employ external trainers for specific elements of the programme as it develops, these will be costed.

17. There are no known Human Resources, Legal, Equalities or other implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

Risk Management

18. There is a risk that the Council may fail to respond to some of the needs of its Members, in delivering a pared down core programme largely suited to the more experienced Member. Equally so, there is a risk to resources and to reputation if the Council continues to try to provide a fuller programme not supported by the attendance levels. It is for this Steering Group to consider and balance those respective risks.

Recommendations

19. Members are asked to:

20. (i) approve the outline draft core programme for 2014/15 as set out in **Annex A** to this report, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 2 to 6;

    (ii) consider whether they wish to proceed with the allocation of 'pots' to Groups in 2014/15, bearing in mind the amount of total budget available

    Reason: To enable arrangements for the delivery of a core programme for the municipal year 2014/15.

Contact Details

Authors:	**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**
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Laura Bootland	**Report Approved** ✓ **Date** 20.01.14
Democracy Officer	
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Specialist Implications Officer(s) None

Wards Affected: None   **All** ✓

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None
Annexes

Annex A   Draft Proposed Core Programme 2014/15

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Draft Core Programme 2014/15

Session	Provisional Timing
Risk Management Training	May/ June 2014
Corporate Appeals Training (if required)	June 2014
Licensing Act Training/Refresher	June 2014
Policy Session	July 2014
Pre-Council Briefing (subject to be confirmed)	July 2014
Equalities Training	September 2014
Planning Updates	September 2014
Pre-Council briefing (Subject to be confirmed)	October 2014
Members Code of Conduct Training	November 2014 (or sooner?)
Pre-Council Briefing (Subject to be Confirmed)	December 2014
Policy Session	January/February 2015
Pre-Council Briefing (Subject to be Confirmed)	March 2015
Planning Updates (if required)	March/April 2015

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