

Member Support Steering Group

29 November 2012

Report of the Assistant Director, Governance & ICT

Member Training & Development Budget

Summary

1. This report details the current level of spend against the Member Training & Development Budget for 2012/13.

Background

2. The budget for training and developing Members this year has remained at £13k.
3. The Steering Group guides and oversees the provision of training to Members and, as part of its remit, receives regular monitoring updates on spend against the allocated budget. The Groups approval is sought every year to the Core Annual Training Programme to be provided. In March this year, the then Members of the Steering Group approved the full core programme and provision for 2012/13.

What Does the Budget Cover

4. The budget covers agreed costs for the following:
 - Personal development reviews (PDRs)(currently under review)
 - Activities/events organised as part of the Core Annual Programme
 - Any venues hired in connection with the programme
 - Activities authorised by Groups from their allocated 'pots'
 - Travel/subsistence costs per Member associated with any authorised training provision
5. It should be noted that there has been no spend this year on PDRs for Members because this Steering Group has commissioned a review of the Member PDR process, to ensure

not only value for money but that the process this Council uses is best suited to the requirements of its Members.

- 6 This Steering Group has set a practice of keeping external trainers to an absolute minimum, both to better manage the budget and in recognition of the skills and knowledge available within the Council. The Steering Group also promotes, where appropriate, the use of on-line learning tools, because these can be both more convenient individually and of course, reduce travel costs. This year there have been 2 external trainers used to provide specialist training in the Core Programme (e.g. licensing) and one external guest key note speaker. This latter being Sir Stuart Etherington, Chief Executive of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations.
7. Annex A shows detailed expenditure to date against the budget. In total, so far approximately £2k has been spent and includes the majority of the items mentioned in paragraphs 4-6 above. There is a further anticipated approximate cost to add of around £1,800. At the time of producing this report, no further major areas of training are planned for Members under the Core Training & Development Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year.
8. One fundamental difference this year has been the allocation of the following provisional 'pots' from the overall budget to the Groups to support Member attendance at external training activities (outside of the Core Programme), where considered appropriate by each Group:

Group	Allocation	Unspent
Labour	£2,650	£1,155
Conservative	£1,060	£890
Liberal Democrat	£848	£806
Greens	£212	£212
Independent (Cllr Warters)	£106	£106 – returned
Independent (Cllr Jefferies)	£106	£106

9. Annex A also includes the above costs, where these have already been processed and the projected additional amount of spend in paragraph 7 above, includes known commitments by the Groups. However, if all the Groups and Councillor Jefferies, as an Independent Member, decide to spend their remaining allocation

on external activities (outside of the Core Programme provided), then a further amount of £3,169 could potentially be added to the budget costs for 12/13. This could bring the approximate total spend on the overall Member Training & Development budget to £6,969 by the end of the current financial year. It is, however, unlikely, that this level of spend will occur.

10. In any event, spend will remain at a significant level under budget, due to the consistent approaches adopted by the Steering Group in minimising the use of external trainers, sharing training with other regional authorities and offering on-line learning.
11. The decision, this year, to allocate 'pots' to the Groups for external, non Core Programme, activities, may also have had an interesting impact on current levels of spend. It is possible that giving Groups the responsibility for collectively managing their contribution to budget spend has contributed to a more strategic approach emerging. The Steering Group is asked to consider whether allocating 'pots' to Groups in this way is an approach it wishes to adopt for the next Municipal Year 13/14. Although, the Group may equally prefer to leave this consideration until Council has set its overall budget for 13/14 and beyond.
12. It is becoming clear that the Council can provide a managed Core Training Programme for Members well within current budget allocation and the Steering Group will learn, at a future meeting early in the New Year, about a collaboration between the Council and the University of York which has the potential to further hone and shape the way we provide learning and development to Members.

Consultation

13. This Steering Group is the Member consultative body on Member training and development related issues. No specific consultation is required on this report which is for the Steering Group's monitoring requirements.

Options

14. This is a monitoring report, largely for information only, although the Steering Group's comments are sought on whether the Group pot allocation set out above in paragraph 8 should continue for the financial year 13/14

Council Plan 2011-15

15. Providing training and development to its Members demonstrates the Council's commitment to well trained and knowledgeable Members, in turn, making informed decisions relating to the new key priorities set out in the Council Plan.

Implications

16. There are no direct implications associated with this report, other than simply reporting the current costs of the provision of Member training and development during 2012/13, which are contained within budget .

Risk Management

17. Regular monitoring against spend on the Member training and development budget by the Steering Group and Officers, ensures and eliminates any risk of any overspends in relation to the budget.

Recommendation:

18. Members are asked to:
 - (i) note the budgetary position is on target to be well within budget at the end of the financial year; and
 - (ii) consider whether 'Group pots' should be provided in 13/14 from within the overall budget for Member Training and Development.

Reason:

19. To enable the budget to be appropriately monitored during year.

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**



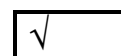
Date 21 Nov 2012

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None.

Annexes:

Annex A – Current budget spend (to follow).