

Member Support Steering Group

14th March 2013

Report of the Assistant Director: Governance & ICT

Evaluation Report on the Core Training Programme (1st September 2012 to 28th February 2013)

Summary

1. This report informs Members of:
 - The take up at events offered to date
 - A summary of the feedback received
 - Analysis of the take-up

Background

2. The Council has put in place effective systems for recording the data it holds in respect of development activities offered to Members. Under the Council's current Training & Development Policy, this Steering Group is empowered to monitor both take-up and feedback in relation to both the induction and core programmes.

Consultation

3. Evaluation forms are available at the end of the majority of events and Members are encouraged to complete these. These are analysed and the results presented to this Steering Group on a regular basis.
4. In relation to developing the Core Programme, Council Management Team and training providers are thoroughly consulted in advance of any proposals being reported to the Steering Group.

Monitoring of Take Up of Training & Development Opportunities

5. In January 2009 Council introduced an annual minimum requirement relating to the number of development activities

Cabinet and non-Cabinet Members should attend over the course of a year, these being:

- Cabinet Members 12 development sessions
- Non-Cabinet Members 8 development sessions

6. Details of Members' attendance levels at all events offered between 29th May 2012 and 28th February 2013 are set out in **Annex A** to this report.

Analysing Take Up

7. The take up figures shown in **Annex A** to this report reflect Members engagement with a wide spectrum of development opportunities including events offered in the core programme, new additions to the core programme and topical briefings. In addition to this training offered by partner organisations such as the Police and Fire Authorities is included.
8. Members are encouraged to notify Democratic Services of any qualifying events they have attended through the year, which could be added to their personal targets.
9. To date 17 of 47 Members have achieved or exceeded their training targets; this includes two Cabinet Members. There are only three more training and development sessions scheduled for this municipal year so there may not be a significant change in this number. However, as can be seen from **Annex A**, there are a few Members who only need to attend one or two more sessions so the number of those achieving their target does have the potential to increase. However these figures are only based on the information shared by Councillors with Democratic Services.
10. Attendance at the 29 events detailed in **Annex B** to this report has been variable – with only the following 9 sessions having 10 or more attendees:
 - (i). Members Guide to Welfare and Benefits (12)
 - (ii). Summer Planning Update (25 over 3 sessions)
 - (iii). Gambling Act and Taxi Licensing (15 over 2 sessions) (the Gambling Act part of this training was compulsory for all 15 Members of the Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee)
 - (iv). Key Note Speaker – Sir Stuart Etherington (13)
 - (v). Pre-Council Briefing – The Coroner (11)

- (vi). Understanding the Voluntary Sector (10)
 - (vii). Themed Planning Training – Renewable Energy installations & Highway Considerations (11)
 - (viii). Pre-Council Briefing – Ward Engagement (15)
 - (ix). The New Code of Conduct (23 over 2 sessions)
11. There were four instances of sessions having only 5 attendees or less (one of which was an addition to the core programme); two drop in sessions did not attract any Members at all, although these had been offered earlier in the year as well. There were 5 of the 29 sessions available during the specified period that were cancelled for varying reasons.
 12. There was also still an issue with Councillors registering for sessions but ultimately not coming along. This sometimes made it difficult to know when to cancel a session and hence is why some sessions only had 3 or 4 attendees.

Evaluating the Core Programme (including in year additions)

13. In addition to the monitoring of take-up at development events another key aspect to measuring the success and effectiveness of the development sessions on offer is measured through feedback received from attendees.
14. Details of feedback received between 1st September 2012 and 28th February 2013 is summarised at **Annex B** to this report.

Summary of Feedback

15. Since last reporting Members have been offered an extensive programme with several in year additions. Feedback on events (**Annex B refers**) has, on the whole been mixed.
16. A few new formats have been tried this year such as Policy Cafés, Themed Planning Sessions and Key Note Speakers and these have had a mixed response.
17. There were two Key Note Speakers scheduled into the offered Core Training and Development Programme; however unfortunately one of the Key Speakers had to cancel which left only one of the Key Note Speaker events going ahead. This was attended by 13 Councillors, 1 officer and 2 representatives from the voluntary sector. Most attendees felt that the session had been informative.

Comments and evaluation of this session are included in more detail within **Annex B** to this report.

18. The Policy Cafés have been generally well received however initially there were a few teething problems with this format but they have since generally gone well with many comments indicating that they feel these are a good format; again **Annex B** gives more detail about how these have been received.
19. Probably the most well received sessions have been the Members Guide to Welfare and Benefits, with many positive comments including *'well pitched to the audience'*, *'an excellent presentation of an area of which I had limited knowledge'* and the Councillor visit to the Danesgate Centre in January 2013 with very positive feedback including *'excellent visit, very informative, it gave me a better insight into an area I don't know much about'*, *'I would hope that all Members are encouraged to visit as I am sure many are unaware of this good facility'*.
20. In addition to the above a series of free sessions offered by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA), focussed around planning for climate change, was offered outside of the Core Programme. Four Councillors attended and praised these sessions very highly with comments such as *'Lively presentation that engaged the participants'* and *'all speakers were high quality and they gave us first class information and good group exercises to do'*.

Options

21. Members are asked to note and comment on the report

Analysis

22. Analysis of feedback received is contained within the body of this report.

Council Plan 2011-2015

23. The Core Training & Development Programme allows Members to develop their knowledge and skills and to understand key issues that may affect their residents and the city as a whole. This leads to improved decision making and service design.

Implications

24. **Financial** – There are no known financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.
25. There are no known HR, legal or other implications associated with the contents of this report.

Risk Management

26. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the contents of this report.

Recommendations

27. The Steering Group are requested to note and comment on this report

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

Contact Details

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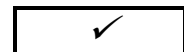
Report
Approved



Date 07.03.2013

Specialist Implications Officer(s) None

Wards Affected: All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Annex A Attendance Levels

Annex B Evaluation of Core Programme of Events