

Member Learning and Development

Final Decision-Maker	Democracy Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Sam Bailey – Democratic and Administration Services Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report sets out a review of Learning and Development activities undertaken by Councillors in 2017/18, and recommendations to improve the provision of Learning and Development for Councillors in 2018/19.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Learning and Development activities undertaken in 2017/18 are noted.
2. That the Training Plan for 2018/19 is agreed.
3. That the Local Government Association's Member Development Charter is adopted as the Council's approach to Member Learning and Development.
4. That Group Leaders report back to Democracy Committee at the year end on member learning and development.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Democracy Committee	2 July 2018

Member Learning and Development

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Democracy Committee has responsibility for Member Learning and Development. In accordance with the Constitution, one of the Committee's functions is to 'advise Councillors and the Head of Human Resources Shared Service on Councillor development priorities where appropriate'.
- 1.2 This report outlines the development activities carried out over the previous year (2017/18) and proposes the creation of a Member Development Working Group to identify learning and development priorities for members and draw up a training plan.

Learning and Development Carried out in 2017/18

- 1.3 A wide range of Learning and Development activities were carried out in 2017/18. These ranged from formal training sessions, to attendance at Conferences and member briefings on important topics. Overall, 24 different Learning and Development Activities were formally arranged by Officers. However it is important to note that sometimes these events were repeated to ensure as many Councillors could attend as possible.
- 1.4 Attendance at these events varied. The event with the lowest attendance had six members (Planning Induction) and the event with the highest attendance had 26 members (Planning Annual Refresher) – although this event took place on five separate dates due to member availability.
- 1.5 A small budget of £10,600 is available to pay for member learning and development activities. In 2017/18 £5,924.93 was spent of the budget. The table below sets out the spend compared to previous years.

Year	Spend
2017-18	£5,924.93
2016-17	£3,937.59
2015-16	£5,642.19
2014-15	£6,752.15
2013-14	£7,795.16
2012-13	£6,281.39

- 1.6 Appendix 1 sets out the different learning and development activities that were undertaken in 2017/18, along with the number of members that attended each session.

Training Plan for 2018/19

- 1.7 The Training Plan for 2018/19 is attached to this report as Appendix 3. The plan outlines briefings, training sessions and site visits planned for the

2018/19 municipal year. The plan includes sessions that have already taken place for information.

Member Learning and Development Needs

- 1.8 Whilst a wide variety of Learning and Development activities had been carried out in 2017/18, these had not all been well attended.
- 1.9 The Local Government Association has produced a Member Development Charter that sets out best practice for member development. Authorities are able to self assess against the framework and choose to adopt the measures set out within the framework that they see appropriate. The Member Development Framework is attached to this report as Appendix 2. It is recommended that the Democracy Committee adopts this charter as the Council's approach to member learning and development.
- 1.10 It is proposed that Member learning and development be considered regularly by the Group Leaders at their Leaders' Forum meetings. This will ensure strategic ownership of Councillor Learning and Development. If changes are required to the programme these will be recommended to the Democracy Committee for decision. This is a key initial requirement of the Local Government Association's Member Development Charter.
- 1.11 The Democratic Services Team keep a record of all Councillors' attendance at Learning and Development events. This record of attendance should be reviewed regularly by the Group Leaders so they can work to improve attendance at learning events.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Committee could choose not to adopt the Training Plan for 2018/19. However a lack of training would make it difficult for Councillors to carry out their roles effectively.
 - 2.2 The Committee could choose not to adopt the Local Government Association's Member Development Charter as the Council's approach to member learning and development. However if the Committee chooses not to adopt this charter then there is a risk that member learning and development is not given the priority it deserves.
 - 2.3 The Committee could choose not to have the Leaders report back to them at the end of the year. However this would mean the Committee would not have an opportunity to hold the group leaders to account and would not ensure appropriate Member leadership of learning and development.
 - 2.4 The Committee could choose not to involve Political Group Leaders in member learning and development, or choose to involve a different group of members to help identify learning and development needs. However this risks not giving member learning and development the strategic prominence it requires.
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3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Committee is recommended to approve the training plan for 2018-19 to ensure members have the appropriate training and development for the municipal year to support effective decision making and the development of Councillors.
- 3.2 The Committee is recommended to adopt the Local Government Association's Member Development Charter in order to ensure the council complies with best practice in relation to member learning and development.
- 3.3 The Committee is recommended to approve Group leaders reporting back to the Committee at year end on Member development to assess the political leadership's commitment to Member development.
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4. RISK

- 4.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.
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5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The training plan and review of training needs is brought to Committee on a regular basis. It was last considered by the Committee in July 2017.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Training and developments sessions are advertised to all Councillors regularly.
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7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Accepting the recommendations will materially improve the Council's ability to achieve all of its priorities by ensuring the members have the skills to fulfil their roles to the best of	Democratic and Administration Services Manager

	their ability	
Risk Management	See paragraph 4.1	Democratic and Administration Services Manager
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Democratic and Administration Services Manager
Legal		
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no implications for privacy and data protection.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Crime and Disorder	No impact.	Democratic and Administration Services Manager
Procurement	No impact.	Democratic and Administration Services Manager

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Member Learning and Development Events held in 2017/18
- Appendix 2: LGA Member Development Charter and Charter Plus
- Appendix 3: Member Training Plan 2018/19

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None