

To the Chair and Members of the COUNCIL

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015/16

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report proposes a programme of Member training and development for 2015/16 and also provides a summary of the 2014/15 programme.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. Not exempt

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That Council:-
 - i. Approve the indicative programme of Member Development activities and seminars scheduled for 2015/16 (Appendix A) with a focus on delivering compulsory training early in the 2015 municipal year;
 - ii. Agree the list of training deemed to be compulsory including:
 - Adult Safeguarding which has been added to the list of compulsory for all Members and
 - Overview and Scrutiny and Performance training be deemed compulsory for all Overview and Scrutiny Members. (Members who have undertaken this training within the last three years will not be required to repeat this training.)
 - iii. Support the approach to Member development and training detailed at paragraphs 16 to 21.
 - iv. Receive and note the Member Development activities undertaken during 2014/15 (Appendix B).

BACKGROUND

4. The arrangements for Member Development are detailed within the Member Development Framework (MDF). The MDF sets out some best practice principles for Member Development e.g. identifying the types of training to be undertaken (e.g. compulsory or recommended) and how development will be

undertaken e.g. briefings, seminars, workshops, etc. During 2014/15 the Member Development Working Group (MDWG) (whose membership consists of Councillors: Bob Johnson (Chair), Dave Shaw, Fred Gee and Yvonne Woodcock) has met and monitored Member training and development. The MDWG review the effectiveness of Member Development and focus on progress against the schedule of events, attendance information and feedback and evaluation.

Issues to Consider

5. Council is asked to agree an indicative programme of Member training and development that can be implemented in the new 2015/16 municipal year.
6. **Appendix A** sets out the proposed development programme for 2015/16 that has been proposed by the MDWG. The MDWG requested that dates for compulsory training be established and agreed prior to the new municipal year so these could be diarised and made known to newly elected Councillors well in advance.
7. As Members will be aware Council has previously agreed that compulsory training should be undertaken by Members who sit on Licencing, Audit and Planning Committees. Any Member appointed to the position of Chair of Council, a Committee appointed by Council or a Scrutiny Panel should also undertake Chair's training before taking up their position. As with other training deemed compulsory, any Chairs training undertaken remains valid for a three year period. In addition Chairs training will be arranged shortly after Annual Council to ensure any Members appointed as Chairs who have not undertaken the training will have the opportunity to do so before any formal meetings take place.
8. The new electoral arrangements will mean that Councillors will take up their term of office for the period 2015-2017. This two year period provides an opportunity to improve the Member development offer by focusing on arranging and delivering compulsory training early in the first municipal year. The remainder of the two year term can be used to focus on developing skills and knowledge that will meet the needs of and assist Councillors in undertaking their leadership role effectively.
9. Further work will take place to develop a list of Members seminars for the forthcoming year by identifying key topics of interest that will help inform and engage Members. The aims, objectives and details of the seminars will be provided to members in advance of each event.
10. **Appendix B** sets out the schedule of training and development that has been undertaken during the 2014/15 Municipal year. This also includes attendance figures for compulsory training for all Members.

Evaluation of Member Development Activities 2014/2015

11. During the year the MDWG has reviewed progress against the schedule of

events agreed at Council in 2014 and has also reviewed the effectiveness of training and the processes in place to deliver training. A summary of some of the key issues identified by the Group are detailed below:

Achievements

12. Arrangements for member development have improved over recent years. There is now a more co-ordinated and consistent approach to delivering Member development – events are advertised in advance, training is targeted at the relevant groups and reminders are sent, evaluation of training is monitored and reviewed.
13. Evaluation forms are collated and summarised and have been used to feedback to those delivering training to ensure any necessary improvements can be made to future events or good practise can continue. Training is delivered mainly in house as skills training and seminars whilst some training is commissioned and delivered by external providers where this provides better value for money.

Areas for further consideration

14. **Attendance** - Whilst there has been a more determined effort to encourage Member Development and engagement there needs to be a greater commitment by some Members to attend member development sessions particularly compulsory training. All development sessions are run twice, once during the day and one in the evening to encourage participation and engagement. Members of the MDWG are raising awareness of training and development and feeding back to their respective groups where there is a concern over attendance. Attendance details are also sent to Group Leaders for information.
15. It is anticipated that some of the compulsory courses that were run this year for all Members will mainly be targeted at new Councillors in 2015 as they will not need to include those Members who have undertaken the training within a three year period e.g. Equalities and Information Governance, this should reduce the call on Members time and commitment.

Initiatives Moving Forward

16. To ensure there are further improvements in Member Development the MDWG has identified the following issues:
17. **Further activities will take place during the course of the year that focus on the Councillor as leader** (sometimes referred to as the Modern Councillor or 21st Century Councillor) and the skills and knowledge needed to deliver change in their communities. This concept is wider than just training and development as it will look at such issues as behaviours, equipment and technology, building up networks and contacts as well as understanding communities. The MDWG has identified this as a key area of work for 2015/16

and Council may wish to consider expanding the role and membership of the MDWG when it appoints Members to this working group at annual Council in May 2015.

18. To ensure there is a more timely approach to member development, the MDWG is keen to ensure that **compulsory and essential skills training takes place early in the municipal year**. e.g. Chairing skills undertaken during June can be applied during the course of the year, rather than undertaking this course towards the end of the Municipal year.
19. To agree a more disciplined approach to Member development the MDWG has recommended that **3 different dates and times be identified for each of the compulsory training courses between June and September** and Members will need to attend one of these sessions. It is not the intention to run further sessions after these three dates. Members who may have already attended compulsory training are not required to attend again within a three year period unless there are any essential updates or significant changes. Therefore only Councillors who are new or have not attended any of these courses since the municipal year 12/13 will be required to attend.
20. Further consideration will be given to **delivering development opportunities through e-learning**. It may be that options may exist for some compulsory courses such as Equalities or Information Governance (Data Protection) to be available as an e-learning module. This not only allows Members to undertake training in their own time but also enables Members to apply the use of basic ICT skills to undertake their training. This also supports the Council's ambition of being a Digital Council by 2016.
21. Consideration will also be given to identifying opportunities for **joint officer and Member training and development** where this is appropriate to provide wider opportunities for joint working, reduce costs and provide value for money.
22. Further work will take place to ensure any agreed training and development courses are scheduled in and can be made available to prior to the end of the current municipal year.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

23. Council could support an ad hoc programme of development for Councillors. This is likely to be un-focused, unco-ordinated and may not necessarily meet the needs of elected Members.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

24. Agreeing the draft programme of development activities for 2015/16 now will enable officers to make the necessary arrangements for the programme to be put in place ahead of the new municipal year. Newly elected Councillors will be made aware of training dates early to ensure they have a greater

opportunity of engaging in pre planned training. The programme is a planned approach aimed at meeting the development needs of Councillors.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY PRIORITIES

25. Ensuring Councillors receive the necessary training and development to undertake their duties effectively will impact on all of the priority outcomes.

	Priority	Implications
	<p>We will support a strong economy where businesses can locate, grow and employ local people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	
	<p>We will help people to live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	
	<p>We will make Doncaster a better place to live, with cleaner, more sustainable communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	
	<p>We will support all families to thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	
	<p>We will deliver modern value for money services.</p>	
	<p>We will provide strong leadership and governance, working in</p>	

	partnership.	
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RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

26. The Member Development Working Group will continue to monitor Member Development activities including attendance, feedback and evaluation from events. This will provide the opportunity to further encourage participation within political groups and review the effectiveness of courses.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

27. The Council has the legal power to arrange training for Members by virtue of both S111 Local Government Act 1972 and S1 Localism Act 2011 (the general power of competence).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

28. A budget of £10k exists to support Member Training and Development, which will mainly be used to support external provision. This budget has been sufficient during 2014/15, and is expected to be for the indicative 2015/16 programme.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

29. To ensure Councillors are aware of the Council's responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 compulsory training is provided to all Councillors.

CONSULTATION

30. The MDWG has been consulted in the development of the programme of training scheduled for 2015/16.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Council 25th July, 2013 Member Development Framework

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

Andrew Sercombe, Governance & Member Services Manager
01302 734354 andrew.sercombe@doncaster.gov.uk

Simon Wiles
Director of Finance & Corporate Services