



# Doncaster Council

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Date: 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019

To the Chair and Members of the Council

## MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2019/20

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Jane Nightingale	All	None

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report provides feedback on the 2018/19 Member training and development programme and proposes the 2019/20 programme (attached at Appendix A).

## EXEMPT REPORT

2. This report is not exempt.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That Council
  - Receive and note the update on Member training and development activities undertaken during 2018/19; and
  - Endorse the programme of Member Development activities and seminars scheduled for 2019/20 at Appendix A.

## BACKGROUND

4. A planned and co-ordinated approach to Member Development assists Councillors in undertaking their roles effectively. This also supports good governance by ensuring Councillors understand how they can support the delivery of Council and Borough's priorities. At its meeting on 19th May 2017, Council endorsed an approach to Member Development and Training that would support them through their current four-year term 2017/18 – 2020/21.

## Review of Training and Development Programme 2018/19

5. The following provides a brief overview of progress during 2018/19.
6. **Mandatory training for all Members.** Once undertaken this is valid for the current four-year term of office unless significant policy or legislative changes would require a refresh. All sessions have been held on at least 5 occasions since 2017, except for Child Criminal Exploitation, which was introduced as a new module in 2018, a further session will be held during 2019/20. As well as targeted reminders to individual Councillors, attendance details are forwarded to political Groups and published on the Council website to encourage attendance. Completion of Mandatory Training by Councillors is as follows:
  - Induction 100%
  - Understanding Equalities 98%
  - Corporate Parenting & Children's Safeguarding 98%,
  - Health & Safety 96%
  - Adult Safeguarding 100%
  - General Data Protection Regulations 100%
  - Spam & Phishing 100%
  - Child Criminal Exploitation 85%
7. A further session will be scheduled for those who have yet to complete the mandatory training. Members will be aware that as data controllers and data processors they are required to undertake General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) on an annual basis. This is in accordance with the requirements of the Information Commissioners Office and is consistent with the requirement for officers to undertake this training.
8. **Mandatory training for specific Roles –** Council agreed that mandatory training will be required before Members can undertake specific roles on regulatory committees e.g. Licensing and Planning Committee. This is also mandatory for members of the Audit Committee and for Members appointed as Chairs or Vice-Chair of a Committee. This will ensure a consistent standard of training and awareness for those Members who are involved in regulatory decision making and Charing. Once undertaken, this training lasts for the current term (up to 2021). This training takes place annually to take account of any changes to Committee membership following Annual Council.
9. **Developing Councillors as Community Leaders –** This encompasses a range of skills, knowledge and experiences that will ensure Members have the skills and support necessary to undertake their roles effectively by being responsive to the needs of communities, developing a vision for their area and supporting the delivery of the Borough's priorities. During 2018/19, the Local Government Association ran a number of sessions on Neighbourhood Engagement and Community Leadership and Influencing skills and Personal Resilience. There have also been further skills development for Councillors such as public speaking and presentation skills and use of social media.
10. The Digital Training Team have supported Councillors in effectively using digital devices including the My Doncaster app to assist in reporting service issues and the Modern Gov App which is used for accessing, reading and annotating agendas. Officers in the Digital Training Team and Members Support are available to assist Members with any queries or issues they may

have in respect of using their devices. Greater understanding and use of ICT can assist Members in engaging efficiently and effectively with their communities.

11. **Members Seminars and Briefings** – Throughout the year, a number of seminars and briefings were held to ensure Members are kept up to date on important topics such as Town Centre Issues, Major Projects, Every Conversation Counts and Emergency Planning.
12. **Reviewing and Monitoring** – The Member Development Working Group (MDWG) reviews and monitors the effectiveness of the programme, identifies further opportunities for development and reviews attendance. Membership consists of Councillors: Jane Nightingale (Chair), Sue Wilkinson, Jane Cox and Andy Pickering. Following each training event Members are asked to complete an evaluation form and these are reviewed and monitored by the MDWG. Feedback is provided to facilitators to ensure the sessions remain relevant and appropriate for Councillors.

### **Training and Development Programme 2019/20**

13. The draft 2019/20 Training and Development Programme is attached at Appendix A. This has been developed in consultation with the MDWG and has been informed by feedback from a questionnaire issued to all Members. The questionnaire identified the Political Skills Framework developed by the Local Government Association and provided an opportunity for Members to identify any gaps in the positive skills and behaviours required to effectively fulfil their role. A total of 23 forms were returned (40%).
14. The Key areas for development identified through the questionnaire were:
15. **Communication skills and ICT** – including use of social media to engage with communities and better understand ward issues, requests for access to more e-learning courses and continued ICT support. There were a range of suggestions with some respondents wanting more advanced ICT training and others requiring more basic support to assist them in using digital devices effectively. During the course of the year, further work will be undertaken by the MDWG to identify any additional support that may be required and how this could be undertaken.
16. **Scrutiny & Challenge** – a number of references were made to improving Scrutiny skills, particularly around advanced questioning skills and reviewing evidence. This has been incorporated in to the training programme.
17. **Regulating & Monitoring** – A number of issues linked with Scrutiny and Challenge in terms of reviewing evidence, evaluating and monitoring and effective questioning were also identified in this section. Reference was also made to the recent Peer Review undertaken by the Planning Advisory Service and the need for training to assist Members in undertaking this role. Training has been arranged to assist Members in their Planning role including understanding the application of the Code of Conduct whilst sitting as a member of the Planning Committee.

18. **Timing of Training** – Training and development sessions are usually held during the day and repeated as an evening session to allow working Councillors to attend. This approach was supported by the feedback.
19. **Quality of Training** – Evaluation forms received following training sessions are fed back to the trainers and are monitored by the MDWG. Feedback from the questionnaire identified that Members preferred more interactive sessions and clear aims and objectives of the sessions to be set out prior to attending the session. This information will be fed back to trainers and provided to Members in advance of any future training sessions.
20. **Review and Monitoring** – Outstanding dates for training and development sessions detailed at Appendix A, will be completed once the draft programme has been agreed and Members' interest and availability has been established. Once agreed, the programme will be regularly reviewed by the MDWG and where necessary, amended to ensure it remains up to date and relevant to the needs of Councillors. The training programme is a living document and is updated and amended as required by officers in the Governance Team in consultation with the MDWG. Training is mainly delivered in-house although some training is commissioned and delivered externally where this provides better value for money or requires specific expertise.

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

21. Option 1- To develop a planned and co-ordinated Member Development Programme. Training to undertake a specific role e.g. Planning, Licensing Member or Committee Chair has already been scheduled to ensure Members can take up these roles quickly. Other training will be arranged over the next month subject to Council approval and identified dates will take account of Members' availability.

Option 2 - To develop a training plan this is ad hoc programme of development and reactive to Members needs as they arise.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

22. Option 1 - this option is a planned approach aimed at meeting the development needs of Members now and in the future. Identifying mandatory training serves to support Members in their role ensuring clarity and identifying any risks or corporate/personal liabilities. The MDWG will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the training programme.

## **IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES**

23. Ensuring Members receive the necessary training and development to undertake their duties effectively will impact on all of the priority outcomes, in particular it will support Councillors in providing effective leadership and Governance.

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

24. Mandatory training for all Members on areas such as Data Protection, Equalities and Health and Safety will ensure Members have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are aware of any significant risks including any corporate or personal liabilities. There is a risk to the Council if Members do not engage with this training and do not fully understand their responsibilities. The MDWG and officers will work with Members and Groups to ensure attendance at these sessions.
25. The MDWG will continue to monitor 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 [Officer Initials: HMP 3.5.19]**

26. The Council has the legal power to arrange training for Members by virtue of both S111 Local Government Act 1972 (which gives Local Authorities the power to do anything “which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions” and S1 Localism Act 2011 (the general power of competence:) “a local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally may do unless restricted by law).

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: AT Date: 07/05/19]**

27. A budget of £7k exists to support Member Training and Development, which will mainly be used to support external provision. This budget has been sufficient during 2018/19, and is expected to be for the indicative 2019/20 programme.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: PW Date: 3/5/19]**

28. There are no specific technology implications associated with this report. The Digital Training Team will continue to promote and facilitate access to technology for Members and provide the necessary support and guidance to assist them in utilising technology in undertaking their roles and duties. Consideration should be given to how technology can be utilised to support the development and delivery of the Member Development Programme.

## **HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials RH Date 08.05.19.]**

29. There are no specific HR implications associated with this report, however where the need for external training is identified, due regard must be given to the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules for the procurement of works, supplies and services.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: CEH. Date 02.05.19.]**

30. The completion of training by Members (in particular the health related sessions) will provide a greater understanding around the complexity of addressing Doncaster's health challenges. Improving knowledge and awareness will support Members to deliver their role effectively to address the wider health and wellbeing for Doncaster residents.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: AS Date 30.04.19.]**

31. To ensure Members are aware of the Council's responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, mandatory training is provided to all Members. Officers in the Governance Services team are available to support and make suitable arrangements for Members who may not be able to access training because they have a protected characteristic e.g. due to disability.

## **CONSULTATION**

32. The MDWG has been consulted in the development of the programme of training scheduled. The programme of training has been informed by the results of a questionnaire issued to all Councillors. Training dates and minor changes to the programme will continue to be made as appropriate in consultation with the MDWG.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

33. There are no specific background papers associated with this report.

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