

SUBJECT:	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT UPDATE
REPORT BY:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
LEAD OFFICER:	CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The Council is committed to developing its councillors to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to carry out their roles in the most effective manner. The member development programme is a key part of this process, and this report provides a summary of the current position for members' consideration.

2. 2012/13 Summary

2.1 During 2012/13 the focus of member development was upon the new members elected to the Council following the elections on 3 May 2012. This training covered all member development areas previously described as being mandatory, as well as specific training organised to address individual member requests.

2.2 In addition to *ad hoc* workshops and seminars covering consultations with members and briefings on areas of Council business, training the following areas was delivered:

- Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Council Procedures Rules (new members only)
- Equality & Diversity
- Scrutiny (evening internal training)
- Local Government Finance
- Standards/Member Interests
- Community Engagement
- New Councillor Development Day (new members only)
- Effective Partnership Working
- Scrutiny (all-day external training)
- Anti-Extremism (PREVENT)
- Licensing Sub-Committee

2.3 As discussed at a previous meeting, 2013/14 member development attendance statistics have now been made available on the Council's website to allow residents to understand the skills and knowledge acquired by individual councillors as part of their duties.

3. 2013/14 Plans

- 3.1 As the Council elects its members in thirds over the course of a four-year period, 2013/14 did not see a significant change to its membership, with only one by-election taking place on 22 August 2013. As such, the usual events and training provided for new members have not been provided this year. As part of the previous report to the Committee regarding member development, members did not propose any areas of training for inclusion in the 2013/14 training programme.
- 3.2 Following a recent request from a councillor and subsequent consultation with members, training in speed reading will be arranged in the near future for members. This training is specifically aimed at councillors seeking to improve their ability to consume and comprehend the large volumes of paperwork sent out for committee meetings and other areas of business.
- 3.3 Members are also invited to put forward any further training suggestions for consideration during 2013/14 which is likely to benefit a group of councillors or members as a whole. Officers remain keen, as reported previously to the Committee, for members to take a lead in contributing towards the member development programme. It is hoped that this will ensure that the programme will be relevant to members and that any training will be useful and well-attended.
- 3.4 Officers have continued to take part in the Lincolnshire Member Development Group, although opportunities for effective joint working remain limited primarily by different working and geographical arrangements. In particular, the size of Lincolnshire makes travel between the districts difficult, while Lincolnshire County Council's differing responsibilities and meeting timings present a different set of challenges. However, the opportunity to compare good practice and share training opportunities will continue to be worked upon.
- 3.5 Development has also now begun on the 2014/15 member development programme. As 2014/15 falls in an election year, training at the beginning of the year will be focussed upon the 'mandatory' elements previously prescribed within the Constitution. In addition, consideration will again be given to providing a dedicated all-day training session for new councillors should the number elected justify it. This would be provided in addition to any training needs which emerge as part of new councillors completing personal development plans.
- 3.6 Training sufficient numbers of councillors to take part in Licensing Sub-Committee meetings presents a particular challenge at present, as the pool of councillors able to take part in the daytime hearings has fallen to a relatively low number. While the membership is sufficient to meet the current workload, officers remain keen that additional councillors be trained to take part in hearings to ensure both continuity in the event of changes in Council membership and greater resilience if meetings are required at short notice. As members of the sub-committee can only be drawn from the Licensing Committee, this area will continue to be considered and monitored at meetings of that committee.
- 3.7 In addition to considering the progress outlined above, members are encouraged to put forward any proposals which would seek to improve either individual member development sessions or to improve the process by which members are able to guide the development of the member development programme.

4. Organisational Impacts

4.1 Finance

Any suggested changes to the delivery of or support for member development must be funded from within its existing budget.

4.2 Legal Implications

None.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That members note the current status of member development.

5.2 That members provide feedback on the operation of member development, including any specific guidance on the training areas to be delivered during 2013/14 and for the new municipal year.