

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

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide members with an update on the delivery of member development within the Council. 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. 2013/14 Summary

2.1 As no elections were scheduled for 2013/14 the member development events provided this year have been aimed at consolidating existing knowledge or assisting councillors already in post.

2.2 In addition to *ad hoc* workshops and seminars covering consultations with members and briefings on areas of Council business, training in the following areas was or will be delivered during 2013/14:

- Planning Committee. All Planning Committee members are required to attend this annual refresher course reminding councillors of the key principles and factors to bear in mind when making planning decisions.
- Licensing Sub-Committee. In common with the Planning Committee, all councillors who sit on the sub-committees of the Licensing Committee must attend training to ensure decisions are made fairly and in keeping with the law.
- Urban Design. As part of the Planning Committee's role in shaping the development of Lincoln, a series of all-day briefing were held for Planning Committee members to develop their understanding of the fundamentals of urban design.
- Charing Meetings. Intended for current and aspiring chairs and provided in response to member feedback, this training was attended by nine councillors.
- Risk Management. Following the revision of the Risk Management Strategy, this training was delivered in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council and attended by 16 members.
- Contributing towards Effective Meetings. A counterpart to the charing meetings training, this session was attended by nine members, and offered guidance on the best ways for members to participate in meetings and to facilitate the contributions of others.
- Emergency Planning. Attended by 15 members, this event provided by

Lincolnshire County Council's seconded emergency planner, delivered guidance on how the city prepares for and deals with large-scale emergencies.

- Personnel Appeals Panel briefing. This briefing was provided for all members of the Personnel Appeals Panel to provide guidance on best practice in handling appeals.
- Speed Reading. Provided in response to member requests, this extended training was attended by seven councillors, who were given advice on quickly scanning through and absorbing information provided in written form.
- A Councillor's Guide to Social Media. Scheduled to take place on 12 March 2014, this session will give members guidance and practical advice on making the most of online platforms such as Twitter and Facebook for engaging with individuals and communities.

2.3 The Council has also provided opportunities for councillors to attend relevant training and briefing events with Local Government East Midlands, as well as offering the opportunity to attend training events organised collaboratively with other local authorities in Lincolnshire. However, locally-hosted events continue to form the focus of the member development programme, as is likely to be the case in 2014/15.

### **3. 2014/15 Plans**

- 3.1 Elections for 11 Council seats are scheduled to take place on 22 May 2014. A number of incumbent councillors have indicated that they are unlikely to stand for re-election, which increases the likelihood of needing to provide inductions for new members.
- 3.2 As the Council elects by thirds, the frequency of induction events is three times higher than in local authorities which elect using all-out elections. This means that induction events tend to be provided in-house in order to protect the member development budget for broader training throughout the year.
- 3.3 With this limitation in mind, officers are seeking to ensure that the induction process does the most effective job possible in providing councillors with the knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. In particular, this year's process has a greater focus on providing practical working knowledge specific to Lincoln. Previous years' inductions have been carried out over a number of weeks with evening training sessions covering relevant areas in significant detail.
- 3.4 Following feedback from recently-elected councillors, officers from across the Council will have much more considerable involvement with new members than in the past. The 'meet the officers' sessions will give members the chance to directly question representatives from the areas which councillors use most frequently, allowing a valuable opportunity to understand the responsibilities of a service and how to address a variety of concerns which residents may raise with them.
- 3.5 The 2014/15 member induction is scheduled to take place over two days at the end of May using the following provisional schedule:

## **Tuesday, 27 May 2014**

- 10:00 Formalities, including:
- Issuing of City Hall access cards
  - Taking photographs for Council material
- 12:30 Lunch break
- 13:30 Meet the Officers I
- 15:00 Member Code of Conduct and Meeting Procedure Rules Briefing
- 15:45 Close

## **Wednesday, 28 May 2014**

- 10:00 An introduction to scrutiny
- 11:00 Meet the Officers II
- 12:20 Lunch break
- 13:20 Introduction to Equality and Diversity
- 14:20 Meet the Officers III
- 15:45 Close

- 3.6 As in previous years, new members will be requested to complete a Personal Development Profile with a member of the Democratic Services team to shape any more detailed training which may need to be provided either for individual councillors or for newly-elected members as a group. Wherever possible, training opportunities will also be made available to existing members.
- 3.7 The Member Induction Pack provided to new members on entering the Council is also being significantly re-worked to remove extraneous content and provide additional practical tips for councillors seeking to understand how best to navigate the Council's various services.
- 3.8 In addition to the member development events put forward for any new members, suggestions and requests for any further development areas are invited from members. Following consideration by the Ethics and Engagement Committee other elected members will also be invited to put forward any requests for member development in 2014/15.

## **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.