

Member Development Monitoring Report

Cabinet Member Cllr Clive Eginton
Responsible Officer Member Services Manager

Reason for Report: The action plan for the South West Charter for Member Development states that Member development opportunities should be monitored.

Recommendation: That the contents of report be noted.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: This relates to the corporate governance of the Council and therefore is supporting all priorities of the Corporate Plan.

Financial Implications: Specific training for Members is funded from the Members Training Budget.

Legal Implications: None.

Risk Assessment: Poor Member development may result in lack of engagement by Members.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The South West Charter for Member Development was originally awarded to the Council in November 2010 following a lengthy evidence gathering exercise which also included Members and senior officers attending interviews with the examining body. Reassessment to secure the Charter for a further three years took place on 3 March 2014.

1.2 As a commitment to the Charter, Member Services officers working alongside the Member Development Group will continue to address Members' development issues through briefings on key issues, one to one Personal Development Plan interviews which help to identify a Member's specific training/development requirements and specialist presentations at Committee meetings.

1.3 This report informs the Committee of training events that have taken place between May and September this year and includes the induction sessions for new Members following the elections in May.

2.0 Training Delivered

2.1 The information set out below covers details of the events that have taken place since the new Council was formed in May 2015

12 May	Meeting with Member Services
14 May	ICT and the Role of the Ward Member
19 May	Corporate Governance, Ethical Standards and Legal
20 May	The role of the Committee Members, Cabinet and Committees
26 May	Council Finance, Corporate Governance, Performance and Risk.
28/29 May	Planning Training
1 June	PDG Training
4 June	Information Security
8 June	Licensing Training
9 June	Waste
10 June	Audit Committee Training
16 June	Planning Training for Non-Members of the Planning Committee
19 June	Essential Skills – SW Councils
25 June	Housing Issues
30 June	Council Tax
7 July	Procedure Rules
8 July	Media Training
16 July	Overview of the Community Safety Partnership
21 July	Emergency Planning
6 August	Domestic Violence
25 August	Estates
3 September	Broadband Issues
8 September	Economic and Community Development
15 September	Digital Transformation
16 September	2 Members additional Licensing training session
22 September	Waste – Phase II of the Project
24 September	Q&A Session with Chief Executive
8 October	Universal Credit
13 October	Affordable Housing

- 2.2 A wide range of learning opportunities have been delivered and training sessions have taken place to provide additional skills and knowledge linked to specific committees. The records show that 39 Members have attended at least one recorded training session and that 355 places have been taken up on the various learning events. The majority of the opportunities are provided at low cost due to being delivered in house by appropriate officers.
- 2.3 Records show that attendance at the initial induction process for new Members was outstanding compared to previous years. This may be due to improved advertising of the sessions prior to the election taking place.
- 2.4 As part of our commitment to Member Development, evaluation of every training session does take place, an email is sent to those who have attended asking a variety of questions specific to the event and always with an invitation to suggest any improvements that could be made; feedback is generally encouraging with any issues that arise being fed back to officers facilitating the sessions.

3.0 Member Development Group

3.1 The Member Development Group is a group of Members who work alongside Member Services Officers to promote the Members learning programme, this group is made up of 6 Members and includes Group Leaders. This joint working approach was highlighted in the feedback from the Charter reassessment in March 2014...."During the assessment visit, the assessment team found many indicators of good practice, there was clearly a cross-party political commitment to Member Development and a strong commitment from all the Councillors the team interviewed to development.....it was also clear that Members were in the lead on their development".

3.2 The new Member Development Group met Tuesday 6 October and discussions took place regarding the work of the group, feedback from the induction programme and future activities. The following suggestions were recorded:

- Pilot holding some briefings prior to Full Council
- Briefings to be web-linked to the Meadow Suite at Lords Meadow Leisure Centre from Phoenix House to save Crediton Members travelling to Phoenix House to attend briefings
- Consider holding an afternoon of briefings

4.0 Attendance

4.1 It was suggested earlier in the report that attendance for sessions organised to date has been outstanding. Member Services started a process of reminders following reduced attendance in the previous council, electronic appointments are circulated to Members a few weeks prior to the event to book a place in their diaries and encourage attendance; also same day reminders have been introduced which seem to have been well received, this process continues.

5.0 Future Planning

5.1 All Members are encouraged to take part in personal development planning (PDP) in which they identify the type of training they would like to take part in. This process will start in the next few weeks; however as speed reading and chairing skills are usually high on the request list we are in the process of making arrangements with South West Councils to deliver these training sessions in house by the end of the year. The Member Development Group also suggested that venues be booked in Crediton and Cullompton to host PDP sessions for local Members on a specific day.

5.2 The current timetable of evening training sessions is attached at appendix 1. This includes a visit from the local Police Inspector in November to address issues raised by Members. The Scrutiny Committee may like to suggest further additions to the timetable.

5.3 Members of the Planning Committee require on-going training as there is a need for them to consider new legislation and guidance when determining planning applications.

- 5.4 All Members use electronic communication to some degree and the number of Members now using iPads is encouraging; Member Services continue to support Members with regard to ICT training and iPad use.
- 5.5 The Council also shares development opportunities with other Devon Councils, with Members being advised of sessions that are taking place via the Weekly Information Sheet.

Contact for more Information: Sally Gabriel 01884 234229
(sgabriel@middevon.gov.uk)

Background Papers: Training records, individual evaluation forms and Member Development Group minutes.

Circulation of the Report: Cllrs: C J Eginton, Management Team and the Member Development Group.

Appendix 1 - Member Briefings for the remainder of 2015

21 October	Audit Committee Training – specific
22 October	Understanding Financial Monitoring
3 November	Sickness Absence
10 November	Policing in Mid Devon – Inspector J Alford-Mole
19 November	Budget Meeting – Crediton
24 November	Budget meeting – Phoenix House