

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
22 MAY 2017

Member Development Monitoring Report

Cabinet Member Cllr Clive Eginton
Responsible Officer Sally Gabriel - 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 board. Reassessment to secure the Charter took place in 2014 and again in April of this year by the Chief Executive and Head of Learning at South West Councils, alongside a Councillor from Bristol City Council. We are pleased to be able to inform the meeting that the Charter has been secured for a further three years.

1.2 As a commitment to the Charter, this report will outline the work that continues to take place to address Members development requirements. It will report on the sessions that have taken place since the last report and provide a timetable for development available in the near future.

2.0 South West Charter for Member Development

2.1 The Member Development Group at its meeting in 26 September 2016 requested that work towards the reaccreditation of the Member Development Charter take place in line with the reassessment criteria set out in line with the Local Government Association "The Member Development Charter and Charter Plus – supporting continuing professional development for Councillors" document (available at Appendix 1).

The criteria requirements included:

- Commitment to Councillor Development

- Strategic approach to Councillor Development
- Learning and development being effective in building capacity
- Good Practice and continued improvement since the previous assessment.

2.2 All the required evidence was supplied to South West Councils at the beginning of March this year. The reassessment took place on Monday 4 April where the panel interviewed the Leader and Chief Executive, the Lead Member for Member Development, the Member Services Manager and 3 other Members from a range of backgrounds.

2.3 The assessment report received on 11 April 2017 is attached at Appendix 2.

2.4 The report also highlighted where further improvement could take place and these suggestions will be considered by the Member Development Group.

3.0 Following Reassessment

3.1 Following reaccreditation, Member Services 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.

4.0 Training Delivered

4.1 The information set out below covers details of the events that have taken place since the last report:

- Alzheimer's Society
- Refugees
- Personal Safety
- Leisure
- Mental Health Masterclass
- Review of Planning Cases Seminar at Sandy Park
- Budget
- Local Plan
- iPad Workshop
- Planning Productivity
- Information Security
- Special Purpose Vehicle for development

4.2 A wide range of learning opportunities have been delivered to provide additional skills and knowledge linked to specific committees. The records show that 33 out of 42 Members attended at least one recorded training session and that 119 places have been taken up on various learning events.

4.3 The Council continues to share development opportunities with other Devon authorities and last year we welcomed Members from East Devon who joined us for some training. The iPad workshop in February attracted several Parish Councillors which was very good news and highlighted areas where we can encourage closer working.

4.4 Evaluation of every development session remains important to both organisers and providers as this can only seek to improve future training events.

5.0 Personal Development Plans

5.1 All Members are encouraged to take part in personal development planning (PDP) in which they identify the type of development they would like to take part in. This was highlighted within the Charter Assessment feedback report as it was seen as a “real strength of the Council” with 71% of Members revisiting their PDP’s last year. The next round of PDP’s will take place in the summer.

6.0 Future Planning

6.1 The following briefings have been suggested and we are in the process of putting these in place:

- Equalities
- Garden Villages – Lord Matthew Taylor will attend on 24 May
- Organised Crime/Bribery Act – Procurement
- Apprenticeship Levy
- Well-Being Charter
- Workplace Coaching
- National Minimum Wage
- Standards/Code of Conduct
- Private Sector Housing
- IT Security
- Budget

The Scrutiny Committee may like to suggest further additions to the timetable.

We are also in the process of discussing some mid-term training for the Policy Development Groups and the Scrutiny Committee.

6.2 Holding sessions simultaneously via the link to Lords Meadow has proved successful and this is something that we are hoping to continue with (subject to staff availability).

6.3 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. Recently specific training has also been requested by the Committee itself with regard to development and school places following discussions in relation to some recent applications

6.4 All Members use electronic communication to some degree and we now have 31 users of the iPad, this is something that again was highlighted by the assessment team. Member Services continue to support Members with regard to ICT training and iPad use.

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.