

# **Standards Committee – 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

## **Elected Member Training and Development Programme**

### **Summary of report:**

The report is to provide an update to Elected Members in respect of progress in the Elected Member Development Programme. This is a joint project between Legal and Democratic Services and HRD to improve the offering to Elected Members in terms of training and development.

### **Background papers:**

#### **Appendix 1 – Elected Member Learning and Development Programme 2017/18**

### **Recommendation:**

To note the content of the report and Appendices

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 A working group was established in March 2017 to refresh the way in which member development is managed by the Council. This review has looked at the structure and content of the Member Development programme, and has carried out extensive consultation with Elected Members through focus groups and feedback obtained from other Member training events. This also reflects the important role all Elected Members play in establishing and delivering the ambitions of the Council's Corporate Plan. It also recognises the importance of offering appropriate training to maintain high standards of conduct required of Elected Members.
- 1.2 The group has benchmarked approaches with other councils, considering any best practice; has reflected on what has worked well and not so well in the past; and has run a number of member focus groups/engagement sessions to conduct an interactive Learning Needs Analysis. There will be one further engagement event on 11 July 2017 for Members facilitated by the council's transformation team and the outputs of this will have to be factored into any final programme.
- 1.3 The Programme attached at Appendix 1 contains an introduction setting out why learning and development for Members is important; the role of Democratic Services and the corporate Learning and Development Team; how learning opportunities will be promoted; how to book courses; and how they will be evaluated.
- 1.4 The learning programme will be professionally produced and a Learning Champion will be identified from each Political Group, subject to agreement with

the Group Leaders. It is also planned that there will be a formal launch event to publicise the start of the programme.

- 1.5 The programme will comprise of three different levels, Induction, Core Skills, and additional learning opportunities for Personal Growth.

### **Induction**

- 1.6 There will be a comprehensive induction programme for all Members, whether newly elected or returning. In addition to the New Member Training facilitated by the Chief Executive, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, and the Chief Finance Officer, there will be the opportunity to meet with other Members and Senior Officers to learn more about corporate and constitutional processes. Each member will receive an Induction Pack setting out the support and guidance available together with other useful information about the council. Members will also be allocated a buddy/mentor from within their own group. To complement the Member Induction there will be a number of e-learning packages made available so that members can undertake learning at a time and in a location to suit them.

### **Core Skills**

- 1.7 An annual core programme will be developed each year in consultation with Group Leaders and Elected Members. It will include the requirements of any new legislation and emerging corporate themes; ethical and governance requirements; changing standards and the impact of any scrutiny recommendations in terms of changing corporate practices. It will also include emerging themes and developments from partners.

Examples of such core skills topics include:

Your Role as a Corporate Parent  
Protecting Information  
Prevents  
Safeguarding Children and Adults Awareness  
Chairing Meetings  
Managing the Media/Public Speaking  
Social Media- dos and don'ts  
Equalities

- 1.8 It will also include training relating to specific roles e.g.: planning committee; licensing committee; employment appeals/interview panels. Guidance will be sought from Group Leaders as to whether or not there should be more mandatory attendance on certain courses over and above planning and employment law.

### **Learning for Personal Growth and Development**

- 1.9 As Members will see from the Programme at Appendix 1 there is a large variety of additional learning modules that are available to all Members. These

modules are aimed at enhancing knowledge and understanding and providing useful information about a wide range of topics which can only help members in fulfilling their roles.

## **Delivery of the programme**

1.10 The Programme will largely be delivered by in-house subject experts and via e-learning with potential for follow-up action learning sets. The specialist skills training such as public speaking/managing the media it will be necessary to engage external speakers. It may also be possible to sponsor specific members on external conferences/learning events subject to relevant and budget availability. The council also look for opportunities to work collaboratively with its neighbouring authorities and via West Midlands Council.

### **2.0 Resource and legal considerations:**

2.1 Improving the training offered to Elected Members will assist the council in maintaining high standards of conduct for Elected Members as required by the Localism Act 2011. In addition to existing resources the training budget available for elected member training will need to be reviewed.

### **3.0 Performance and Risk Management issues:**

3.1 Performance and risk management is a feature of all council functions. It is important that this system is in place to maintain public confidence in standards applied to elected members in their public office. Standards Committee will monitor and evaluate Elected Member training on an annual basis.

### **4.0 Equality Implications:**

4.1 In maintaining up to date policies and procedures and through the provision of appropriate training the council will ensure that services are delivered fairly in an open and transparent manner. There are specific requirements in both codes that elected members and officers observe equalities.

### **5.0 Consultation:**

5.1 Further consultation will be carried out with Group leaders

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Draft

Elected Member Learning and Development  
Programme 2017/18

***'Making a positive Difference'***



**Walsall Council**

Summer, 2017

# Learning and Development

*'Making a positive difference'*

**This Programme has been compiled by Democratic Services with support from the corporate Learning and Development Team within Human Resources. It includes development opportunities that aim to support our Elected Members to carry out their roles, making a positive difference to the lives of Walsall citizens.**

## Our commitment to Elected Member development

'We recognise the important role our Elected Members play in establishing and delivering the ambitions of our corporate plan. We recognise their professionalism and commitment to delivering quality services in increasingly challenging financial circumstances. In order to support the Council's core purpose of serving the people and communities of Walsall by representing and working with them to protect and improve the quality of life for all, particularly the most vulnerable, we need to ensure that our Elected Members like our workforce are effectively supported and appropriately skilled and trained to fulfil their increasingly challenging roles.

This learning and development Programme has been designed with this in mind. We know there is a direct link between an organisation's investment in its people and how well the organisation performs. Our elected members will be the key to leading the Council's overarching priorities and to its overall success'.

*Lifelong health, wealth and happiness*

*Safe, resilient and prospering communities*

*Sustainable change and improvement to all*

Tony Cox, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

# Introduction

The development of this Programme has been overseen by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services with support from officers in Democratic Services and the Learning and Development Team within HR. It is aimed at promoting learning and development opportunities for Walsall Council's Elected Members.

Here in Walsall we are committed to:

- Identifying the individual and collective learning needs of our Elected Members and prioritising them accordingly
- Ensuring that any learning programmes reflect Council and national objectives
- Promoting learning and development opportunities through traditional and electronic communication methods
- Disseminating learning and development to Members within each political group in a timely fashion
- Monitoring the implementation of the Annual Learning and Development Plan for Elected Members and reporting take up to Standards Board/individual Groups
- Evaluating learning and development programmes and reviewing the outcomes
- Practising accessibility, promoting equality and valuing diversity

We believe Member development is essential if local government is to thrive and prosper. This programme is designed to build Elected Member capacity and is therefore based upon the principles of:

- Developing Electing Members as effective community leaders
- Adopting a strategic approach to Member development which has the backing of all parties
- Having a Development programme in place that clearly identifies the difference development can make
- Ensuring that learning and development is effective in building capacity
- Addressing wider development matters to promote work-life balance and citizenship

## The role of Democratic Services

The Team will work with you to identify your learning needs. They will administer the Programme and be your key point of contact in respect of booking onto face to face learning opportunities and initial resolution of any difficulties you may have with accessing your e-learning account.

Members will be encouraged to share their knowledge and expertise with fellow Members where appropriate by:

- Supporting newly elected Members (mentoring)
- Sharing knowledge from attendance at external conferences and seminars
- Engaging in peer mentoring

#### **Officer support**

- Provide support through Democratic Services for all member learning and development, ensuring all Members are aware of learning and development opportunities in good time
- Provide 1-2-1 support to newly elected members as part of their planned induction programme
- Devise and deliver a programme of induction training for new Members
- Devise and deliver a comprehensive annual learning and development programme for all Members based on the needs identified
- Provide administrative support for all learning and development events including communication with Members and the provision of evaluation and feedback on providers

#### **Your key contacts are:**

Tony Cox, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, telephone 654822

Sarah Read, Legal Secretary, telephone 654824

Neil Picken, Senior Democratic Services Officer, telephone 654369

Craig Goodall, Senior Democratic Services Officer, telephone 654765

## **The role of the corporate Learning and Development Team**

The team is led by Lisa Koc, Learning and Development Manager. Lisa and the team are committed to providing high quality learning and development solutions that are pragmatic and innovative and offer value for money. Our aim is to provide a responsive service that reflects the needs of the organisation as articulated in the Corporate Workforce Plan, the various Directorate workforce plans; supporting staff and our Elected Members to achieve our goals in challenging times. Lisa also manages the Workforce Development Team supporting Adult Social Care, this means our customers are able to draw upon a wider skills and knowledge base than was previously the case. As a result new topics will be introduced into the corporate employee and Elected Members programmes which may benefit a wider audience, examples include: mental health awareness, healthy hearts and minds, managing personal resilience, dementia and deaf awareness plus much more. To contact Lisa or the wider Learning and Development Team, telephone 650350 or email:

## What you will find in this brochure

The learning opportunities in this Programme have been developed or commissioned to meet the changing needs of the organisation and increasingly demanding roles of our elected members. They will be continually reviewed and evaluated to assess their relevance and value for money, and unless stated under 'target audience' are open to all elected members.

Some of the events are designed as development workshops aimed at equipping Members with the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil their roles, while others might take the form of briefings, 1-2-1s or facilitated sessions whereby Members can share their knowledge and experience. Alongside this is the opportunity to access our catalogue of e-learning topics for personal growth. Our e-learning platform may be accessed outside of normal office hours thereby offering maximum flexibility to you the learner. For Members who would benefit from some 1-2-1 support in order to access our e-learning platform we can offer the opportunity to use a computer within HR on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor where someone will be on hand to provide support.

## Elected Member Induction

There is a comprehensive induction programme for all members whether newly elected or returning Members. In addition to the New Member Training facilitated by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, there will also be the opportunity to meet with other Members and key senior officers and learn more about corporate and constitutional processes. Each Member will be provided with an Induction Pack setting out the support and guidance available together with other useful information about the Council. Members will also be allocated a buddy/mentor from within their own Group. To complement Member Induction, the e-learning package – 'Your role as Councillor' should also be completed. The Induction Process will also identify any gaps in skills or knowledge which need to be developed and this will form the basis of a development plan to accompany the recommended and mandatory learning set out in this brochure.

## Core Annual Learning and Development Programme

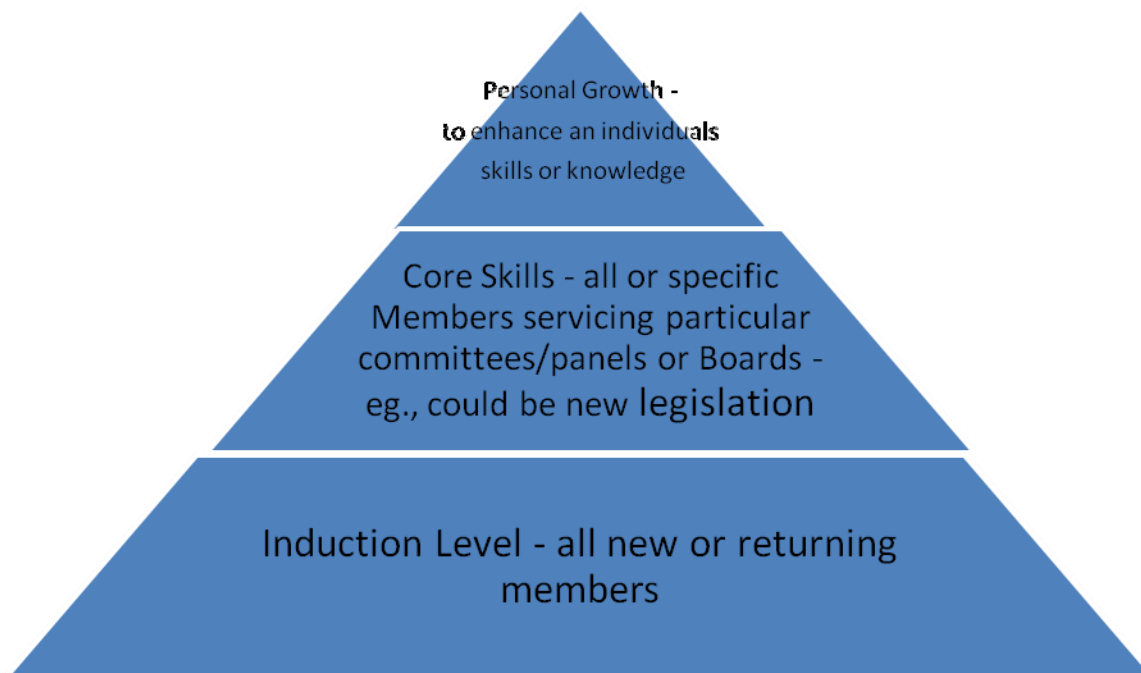
An annual core programme will be developed in consultation with Elected Members. It will include the requirements of new legislation and emerging corporate themes, ethical and governance requirements and changing standards and the impact of any scrutiny recommendations in terms of changing corporate practices. It will also include emerging



themes and developments from partners. Examples may include: your role as a corporate parent, disclosable pecuniary interests, chairing meetings, protecting information training, Prevent training, safeguarding children and adults awareness and training related to specific roles you may have with regards to servicing planning, licensing or employment appeals/interview panels. Some topics have been designated as mandatory learning.

## Learning for Personal Growth and Development

There are a vast amount of additional learning modules that are available to all Members. These modules are aimed at enhancing knowledge and providing useful information about a wide range of topics to help Members learn more about their role, the Council directorates, the borough of Walsall and developing core skills. In the light of the tragic events which saw the murder of MP Jo Cox we have also included within the programme 'Personal Safety and Lone Working' alongside other health and safety related topics.



## External Opportunities

Democratic Services often receive notification of events being held regionally or by other Councils that may be of interest to Members here at Walsall. These will be circulated to:

- All Members if appropriate
- Members who have identified the topic as an area for development
- Members who would directly benefit from attending due to their specific role

Those wishing to take advantage of these events should notify Democratic Services who will in turn evaluate the request in line with business need and available budget. Decisions will be shared in an open and transparent way.

## Promoting the Dissemination of Learning

Promoting the dissemination of learning is something we strongly encourage. Attendance at external events is a valuable way of acquiring information about a wide range of issues including new and innovative practice, new legislation and other regional and national developments.

Members who attend external events should make any course material available to others by placing a copy in the Members/Group Rooms. Members may also be required to pass on this learning in other ways such as producing a short written report or briefing to their peers.

## How to book onto a face to face course

Democratic Services Officers will advise you of the dates of the face to face learning opportunities which will be scheduled at key points during the Municipal Year and not less than quarterly. You are asked to contact them in order to indicate your interest in attending. They will then send you the necessary joining instructions eg the date, the venue, timings, any pre-course reading etc. In advance of the training you may also wish to consider the following questions:

- What do I want to be able to do or do better?
- How will I recognise success?
- How will I review and measure my improvement?
- What methods will I use to achieve my learning objectives?
- How will I practice and apply what I learn?

## Learning and Development for all

Democratic services and the corporate learning and development team are committed to the active promotion and support of equality of opportunity in the way their respective services are managed and delivered. We aim to ensure that:

- The marketing and booking process for development activities ensures fair access to all
- All learners have equal access to the development activities offered
- Where Members have identified a support need in relation to their attendance at a learning event i.e., large print hand outs, interpreters – then all such reasonable adjustments will be provided

- Individuals wishing to undertake any accredited programmes are selected on the basis of business need, merit and ability

## Cancellation policy

In order to run a cost effective service and maximise the opportunities for all to attend the training they have identified, we ask that you provide us with as much notice as possible of any cancellations.

On the rare occasion when we might have to cancel a course, delegates will be notified at the earliest opportunity. Wherever possible delegates will be offered replacement course dates at their convenience.

## Evaluation

To be of real benefit, effective learning and development has to try to match the needs of Members, the objectives of the Council and its partners in achieving a shared vision for Walsall.

It is essential therefore that all provision is reviewed for relevance and effectiveness with all Members attending any event being required to complete an Evaluation Form post event. Monitoring and evaluation processes and outcomes will:

- Be open and constructive, enabling any necessary enhancements to be made to future delivery
- Be regularly monitored by the Democratic Services and Learning and Development Teams and Standards Board to ensure delivery of objectives and continuous improvement
- Be clearly communicated to Members through the various group Leaders
- Ensure Member achievements are recognised and acknowledged both individually and within political groups
- Encourage Members to be self-aware in recognising their strengths and weaknesses

## Recording Learning

Your learning, whether face to face or via e-learning, will be captured on your individual learning profile held on the Councils HR database iTrent.

# Feedback and Complaints

We aim to provide an excellent service that is responsive to the needs of the organisation and individual learners. All our programmes are demand led and continually monitored for quality, suitability and value for money.

In order to help us deliver the service you want please let us have your feedback, good or bad, as often as possible. We review all course evaluation forms and follow up any issues raised.

If you are dissatisfied in any way please feel free to contact any member of the Democratic Services or Learning and Development Teams directly.

We will treat your concerns seriously, deal with them promptly, and use your feedback to inform and improve our service.

Equally if you have received an excellent service/support/benefitted greatly from one of our learning opportunities we would also like to hear from you.

# Index

## Induction

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Face to Face</b>	<b>e-learning</b>	<b>Status</b>
New Councillor Training			<b>Mandatory</b>
Your role as Councillor			<b>Mandatory</b>
Introduction to Local Government			<b>Mandatory</b>
Our Council - induction			<b>Mandatory</b>
Code of Conduct for Councillors			<b>Mandatory</b>

# Core Skills

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Face to Face</b>	<b>e-learning</b>	<b>Status</b>
Declarations of Interest			<b>Mandatory</b>
Chairing Meetings			<b>Highly recommended</b>
Protecting Information Level 1			<b>Highly recommended</b>
Protecting Information Level 2			<b>Optional</b>
Prevent			<b>Highly recommended</b>
Planning Committee			<b>Mandatory for some</b>
Licensing Committee			<b>Mandatory for some</b>
Dismissing Officer			<b>Mandatory for some</b>
Interview Skills Training for Appointments Board			<b>Mandatory for some</b>
Safeguarding children and adults awareness			<b>Mandatory</b>
The Council's finances/budget setting/medium term financial planning			<b>Highly recommended</b>
Effective partnerships working			<b>Optional</b>
Briefing to include protocol and use of Council Chamber			<b>Highly recommended</b>
Social Media – do's and dont's			<b>Highly recommended</b>
Unconscious Bias			<b>Highly recommended</b>
Public Speaking/Managing the Media			<b>Highly recommended</b>
Effective Case Work			<b>Optional</b>
Strategic Thinking			<b>Optional</b>
The role of the corporate parent			<b>Mandatory</b>
Equality and Diversity Foundation Course			<b>Mandatory</b>

# Personal Growth

Subject	Face to Face	e-learning	Status
Meeting skills			Optional
Presentation Skills			Optional
Spelling and Grammar			Optional
Introduction to coaching			Optional
Introduction to finance within Walsall			Optional
Introduction to Walsall Council's Contract Rules			Optional
Mental Health First Aid			Optional
Display Screen Equipment (DSE)			Optional
Fire Safety Awareness (all other buildings)			Optional
Fire Safety Awareness and annual briefing (Civic Centre)			Optional
Fire Safety Awareness and annual briefing (Council House)			Optional
Fire Safety Overview			Optional
Personal Safety and lone working			Highly recommended
Blackberry basics* to be deleted and replaced in relation to new technology			Optional
Computers Don't Bite			Optional
Email for Beginners			Optional
Excel			Optional
Word processing for beginners			Optional

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Face to Face</b>	<b>e-learning</b>	<b>Status</b>
Introduction to e-learning			<b>Optional</b>
Introduction to changes in Office 2010			<b>Optional</b>
Information Technology for beginners			<b>Optional</b>
Outlook Basics			<b>Optional</b>
Assertive communication			<b>Optional</b>
Confidence and Assertiveness			<b>Optional</b>
Effective Time Management			<b>Optional</b>
Facilitation Skills			<b>Optional</b>
Managing your priorities			<b>Optional</b>
Stress awareness			<b>Optional</b>
Resilience through Change			<b>Optional</b>
Learning to Learn			<b>Optional</b>
Self Development			<b>Optional</b>
Carer aware (guided e-learning)			<b>Optional</b>
Equality and Diversity Induction			<b>Optional</b>
Equality and Diversity Legislation			<b>Optional</b>
Code of Conduct for Employees			<b>Optional</b>
Debt Management and Collection			<b>Optional</b>
Falls Prevention			<b>Optional</b>
Health Information Awareness			<b>Optional</b>
Introduction to Agile Working – generic			<b>Optional</b>
Introduction to sustainability and carbon management			<b>Optional</b>
Passport to procurement			<b>Optional</b>



<b>Subject</b>	<b>Face to Face</b>	<b>e-learning</b>	<b>Status</b>
Making Every Contact Count			<b>Optional</b>
Our Partners			<b>Optional</b>
Dementia Awareness			<b>Optional</b>

