



**Governance & Audit  
Committee**

**19 June 2018**

**Subject: Member Development**

Report by:	Executive Director of Resources
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Purpose / Summary:	To demonstrate progress to date and to set out proposed amendments to the Member Development Plan, including the suggestion for a Member Development Group

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

1. That Members accept this report as an accurate reflection of Member Development over the past Civic Year;
2. That Members agree for the Member Development Plan to be reviewed and re-written where appropriate, with a draft version to be presented to the Governance & Audit Committee by November 2018 and the final version to be presented by January 2019;
3. That Members agree to the commencement of a Member Development Group, comprising around 4 Members across all parties, in order to have Member involvement with the updated Member Development Plan;
4. That, subject to the agreement of the final Member Development Plan in January 2019, the Governance & Audit Committee agree to review the progress and implementation of the Plan on an annual basis.

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:** Members must receive training to sit on certain previously agreed Committees. If this training is not provided, the Council could be open to judicial review.

**Financial:** FIN/43/19 - Any amendments to the Member Development Plan would be subject to the limitations of existing budgets and therefore no new financial implications have been identified.

**Staffing:** Any staffing requirements for training events or development opportunities would be met within existing staff numbers and there are no additional duties identified outside of existing job roles.

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:** Consideration has been given to how training expectations may impact Members' travel requirements and how these can be limiting according to location or disability. Alternative methods of delivery are being considered and will be prioritised where appropriate.

**Risk Assessment:** N/A

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:** N/A

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Report to G&A Committee 20 June 2017 – Member Development (Item 12)

<https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=155&MId=1696&Ver=4>

Existing Member Development Plan 2016

<https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/my-council/my-councillors/member-development-plan/>

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

**x**

**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

**x**

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Governance and Audit Committee is responsible for the monitoring of Member Development and has committed to receiving an annual report in order to maintain oversight.
- 1.2 This report seeks to demonstrate what has been achieved throughout 2017/18 and what is anticipated for the coming year and beyond.
- 1.3 In addition, Committee Members are requested to consider options for the Member Development Plan, including the establishment of a Member Development Group to aid the review of the Plan.

## **2 Summary of Development 2017/18**

- 2.1 Throughout 2017/18, there have been over 20 development sessions and workshops for Members, with an average attendance of 11 Members per session (31.7% of all Councillors). The highest attendance reached in a single session was 20 Members (55.6%) for the Leisure Contract Workshop, whilst the lowest attended session was Media training with only 5 attendees (13.9%). The total attendance across all three GDPR sessions was 21 Members (58.3%), making it the most attended topic of training. For all attendance data, please see Appendix 1.
- 2.2 All feedback gathered at the end of each session, via self-evaluation forms, has shown a positive reaction to the subjects covered. Several areas have been requested to be repeated and / or included in the rolling programme of development. For further feedback information, please see Appendix 2.
- 2.3 There are already several sessions arranged for the beginning of 2018/19, including workshops with the Executive Directors regarding 'Refreshing the Council's Vision, Mission and Values' and a presentation from the Police Crime Commissioner in July.

## **3 Member Development Plan**

- 3.1 Following the meeting of Governance & Audit committee in June 2017, it was agreed that Member Development would be reviewed with the aim of improving attendance, providing relevant and engaging sessions and demonstrating the benefit of such development sessions for all Members. There had been positive feedback following the induction sessions in 2015 and the intention was to build on this for the 2019 induction and beyond.
- 3.2 Over recent months, Officers have been taking initial steps to review the Member Development Plan and to assess how best to build upon the foundations of good practice, as proven by the success of the 2015 Induction.

- 3.3 Through this initial assessment, the review of Member Development has been separated into three themed areas:
- Ongoing Development
  - Induction Programme
  - Member Engagement [*& Interactions with Officers*]
- 3.4 The primary focus is the 2019 Induction Programme, with which ongoing development is closely linked. This focus will form the basis of the updated Member Development Plan (MDP). Following the remodel of the MDP, subject to it being agreed by Committee, the final themed area of Member Engagement, with a sub-section around interactions with Officers, will be at the fore.
- 3.5 The main aim for the Plan is to provide a structured timetable for the 2019 induction and the following four years. In addition to this, it is anticipated that there would be an annual 'wish list' of development sessions identified by Members, that may or may not be realistic to provide, but would be taken into consideration.
- 3.6 The final themed area of 'Member Engagement' would be addressed through a Member Development Group (if agreed) with a view to increasing attendance at development sessions and ending the four year term in 2023 with improved rates of Member satisfaction, attendance and engagement.

#### **4 Member Development Group**

- 4.1 All Members have been contacted regarding the review of Member Development to encourage the involvement of a cross-section all Councillors. General feedback was received from 15 Councillors, a response rate of 41.7%.
- 4.2 One of the questions asked of Members was whether they would be interested in forming a Member Development Group in order to steer the refresh of the MDP. There has been sufficient interest in this for it to be a feasible option. If this was to be agreed by Committee, it is proposed that the group meet for the first time in July 2018.
- 4.3 It is suggested that the group would comprise approximately four Councillors from across all parties and would work, with Officer involvement, on the remodel of the MDP. The group would be expected to meet an estimated 4 – 6 times a year initially.
- 4.4 Following the implementation of the updated Plan, the group's main role would be to assist with the annual review of Member Development as well as to guide the aforementioned 'wish list' of development sessions. The group may also be required to play a continuing role in regards to 'Member Engagement', i.e., encouraging peers to attend provided sessions.

- 4.5 The continuation of the Member Development Group would be reviewed alongside the scheduled reviews of Member Development. That is to say, with the annual review in June 2019.

## **5 Delivery Options**

- 5.1 There has been feedback that suggests the timing and location of existing sessions can be a hindrance for Members. One area to be further explored within this theme is the opportunity to provide 'remote' training for Members via specialist online services (learningpool.com) or through modern.gov. It is hoped that by offering online sessions, this could mitigate some of those concerns.
- 5.2 Online options have been previously explored, however, for a variety of reasons it was not feasible to complete the launch of such services. It is acknowledged that, with the introduction of modern.gov and increased Officer support available, there are more opportunities for adopting online facilities than previously realised.
- 5.2 It is suggested that those Members involved with the Development Group could assist Officers to explore alternative training opportunities and support or encourage peers as to the benefits of any online options.

## **6 Timeline**

- 6.1 Should the Committee agree to the establishment of a Member Development Group, the first meeting would be held in July 2018.
- 6.2 The first draft version of the Member Development Plan would be presented for comment to Committee by November 2018.
- 6.3 The final version of the Member Development Plan would be presented for agreement by Committee by January 2019.
- 6.4 In addition to this there will be ongoing work in terms of arranging the main induction sessions in order to confirm the availability of relevant presenters – ie Licensing & Regulatory, Planning and Management Team sessions.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 Members are asked to:
- 7.1.1 Accept this report as an accurate reflection of Member Development over the past Civic Year;
- 7.1.2 Agree for the Member Development Plan to be reviewed and re-written where appropriate, with a draft version to be presented to the

Governance & Audit Committee by November 2018 and the final version to be presented by January 2019;

- 7.1.3 Agree to the commencement of a Member Development Group, comprising around 4 Members across all parties, in order to have Member involvement with the updated Member Development Plan;
- 7.1.4 Agree to review the progress and implementation of the Plan on an annual basis, subject to the agreement of the final Member Development Plan in January 2019.