

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Democratic Services Committee: 18th January 2017

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Member Induction 2017

Purpose of the Report

1. To outline the proposed induction programme for newly elected and returning Councillors following the local government elections in May 2017 for the consideration and approval of the Democratic Services Committee. It should be noted that the draft programme, by its very nature and timescale, contains some dates/times and draft content which are indicative and subject to change.

Recommendations

1. That the draft Member Induction Programme, attached as [Appendix A](#) to the report, be endorsed and referred to Cabinet for consideration.
2. That Cabinet be recommended to approve the designation of the "Mandatory Induction" elements of the programme, together with the requirement on relevant Members as identified to attend.

Reason for the Recommendations

- 1&2 To facilitate the approval and subsequent delivery of a Member Induction and ongoing Member Development Programme.

Background

2. The work of a Councillor is complex and challenging and the political, legislative and local landscape in which they work is changing constantly. Communities have high expectations of their elected representatives from the day of their election and throughout their period of office. It is essential, therefore, that elected Members are given every assistance in preparing to be able to quickly and successfully navigate the numerous different aspects of local government. This report outlines the importance of Member Induction and presents ([Appendix A](#)) an outline draft Induction Programme for consideration by the Committee.

Relevant Issues and Options

3. Member training and development is required by the Local Government Act 2000, Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 and the Council's Member Development Strategy. Both the initial Induction Programme and the ongoing Member Development Programme, in addition to their obvious importance for Members generally, will need to be delivered against the background of the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales):
 - A prosperous Wales
 - A resilient Wales
 - A healthier Wales
 - A more equal Wales
 - A Wales of cohesive communities
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
 - A globally responsible Wales.
4. The Programmes, in turn, will assist in preparing Members for their decision-making roles and responsibilities, where they will be called upon to consider issues, make recommendations and decisions that will impact on both present, and future, generations.
5. An induction programme is an important development opportunity as it enables Members to quickly become familiar with how the Council works, the rules and procedures under which it operates and the complexities of the elected member role.
6. The proposed Induction Programme ([Appendix A](#)) will be delivered over the first few months of the new Council term and will provide Members with an opportunity to clearly establish their roles and responsibilities and to build positive working relationships with Officers from the outset. The Programme has been designed to highlight key Council information, its main corporate policies and priorities as well as delivering both "mandatory" and "recommended" development sessions. All of this is designed to enable Members to actively and rapidly participate in the business of council, increasing their confidence in their ability to make informed and effective decisions from the start of their term of office.
7. To support the Induction Programme, an information pack will also be produced and will include a timetable of meetings, printed copies of core policies and procedures, frequently asked questions and useful contact numbers and will be distributed to Members when they sign the Acceptance of Office register. Links to some of that information will also have been contained in the information provided to all candidates who stand in the Council election in May 2017.
8. The Programme will include a 'Market Place' event, which will provide Members with the opportunity to find out more about the Council's services and meet Officers as well as other new, and returning, Members.
9. "Stalls" will be set up and will include officer presence and contributions from areas such as Democratic Services, ICT, Transact and Corporate Training. It is envisaged that the issuing of security passes (and/or taking of individual photographs for such) could be incorporated in the event. It will also incorporate a formal welcome/presentation by the Managing Director.

10. The "Mandatory Induction" sessions are considered to be essential and encompass Members' statutory responsibilities and regulatory Committee membership. These will include sessions (for all Members) on subjects such as Members' Code of Conduct, Equalities, Information Governance and Data Protection and Introduction to Finance. The "Introduction to Finance" session, for example, will explain how, and from where, the Council gets its funding and help Members to understand financial terminology, budget setting and Medium Term Financial Planning. In addition, they will include sessions on Planning, Licensing, Standard Committee and Audit Committee, to be delivered prior to the first meeting of the respective Committee. Subject to any views the Democratic Services Committee may have, Cabinet will be recommended to approve the designation of the "Mandatory Induction" elements of the Programme, together with the requirement on relevant Members as identified to attend (if they are to take up their place on the relevant Committee).
11. The "Recommended Induction" seminars presented are considered to be important, but not essential, and will include "Smart and Safe Working Practices", which will look at Social Media and managing an on-line presence and hints and tips on working safely in the community.
12. The "Recommended Induction" programme also includes a series of 'Introduction To...' training sessions. Members of each Scrutiny Committee, as well as any other Committees, will be provided with a briefing prior to its first meeting (possibly on the same day as the meeting). All new Members, along with the actual Committee Members, will be encouraged to attend.
13. In addition to the ongoing Member Development Programme, during December 2017 - January 2018 a Training Needs Analysis Questionnaire will be compiled and distributed. In addition, all Members will be afforded the opportunity of an individual Personal Development Interview (with the Head of Democratic Services), as provided for within the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. All Members' responses will be analysed and, from this, the Council's ongoing Member Development Programme will be developed and presented to the Democratic Services Committee and Cabinet for consideration.
14. The Programme will largely be delivered in-house and will comprise a mix of delivery methods, which will include access to e-learning (for example, utilising All-Wales Academy training material (now hosted on the National Health Service portal).
15. In addition to any reports to the Democratic Services Committee and Cabinet as appropriate, the Council's (Officer) Insight Board has approved, and will be kept updated on, a related Action Plan. A small Officer Working Group will be responsible for progressing the work.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

16. The majority of the Programme will be delivered on an in-house basis. Any expenditure incurred on external facilitators (e.g. the Welsh Local Government in respect of Chairing Skills) will also be met from within the existing budget.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

17. There are no direct implications arising from this report. However, this comprehensive package of Training and Development will contribute to the sustainable running of the Council. It is also a reflection of the pace of change within the Authority, the significant legislative changes and how Local Government generally has evolved over the 5 years since the last Council elections in 2012.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

18. Member training and development is required by the Local Government Act 2000, Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011.

Crime and Disorder Implications

19. There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

20. Members will note that a number of sessions will be delivered twice (i.e. on different days and times of day). This is designed to allow maximum opportunity for Members to attend.

Corporate/Service Objectives

21. This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that an Induction Programme will help prepare Members for their decision-making responsibilities in which they will need to consider the positive and negative impacts on future generations, long term community resilience, economic, environmental and social capital.

Policy Framework and Budget

22. The Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020 states that the Values set out in the Corporate Plan will be built in to our Personal Development Review processes and Member Development Programme. This will ensure that everyone understands their role and the importance of taking pride in our work, being open and working together to achieve our ambitions.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

23. This is an internal matter, and, therefore, no consultation has been necessary.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

24. Corporate Performance and Resources.

Background Papers

Member Development Strategy
Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Contact Officer

Jeff Wyatt, Tel: 01446 709408

Officers Consulted

Corporate Management Team

Responsible Officer:

Jeff Wyatt, Head of Democratic Services