

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Democratic Services Committee – 15 December 2015

COUNCILLOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT 2016-2017

Purpose:	To consider the responses of the Councillors / Co-opted Member Training Needs Analysis and to outline a Councillor Training and Development 2015-2016 programme.
Policy Framework:	None.
Reason for Decision:	To agree the principles set out in the report in relation to Councillor Training and Development 2015-2016.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that:
1)	The 14 training sessions for Councillors and Co-opted Members as listed in paragraph 2.2 of the report be deemed mandatory;
2)	Regular reports on attendance or non-attendance of Councillors at training / development events be passed to the relevant Political Group Leaders / Political Whips by the Head of Democratic Services in order to encourage increased attendance;
3)	All training sessions, where possible, be timetabled with both a daytime and an evening session in order to encourage better attendance;
4)	Training sessions be adapted into e-learning programmes wherever possible to compliment the Councillors / Co-opted Members Training Programme.
5)	Training be divided into 3 categories namely Mandatory, Recommended and Councillor / Co-opted Requested;
6)	There be greater use of e-learning;
7)	The Head of Democratic Services work closely with the Senior Organisational Development Officer / Corporate Training Lead in order to commence work on an e-learning programme targeting as many of the necessary courses as possible;
8)	Councillors / Co-opted Members should attend relevant / mandatory training or development sessions at least once per electoral term or more frequently should the content of the training change significantly due to legislation / guidance etc.

9)	The Democratic Services Committee prioritise which of the following courses should form the formal Training Programme and also which ones need to be initially added to the additional training programme.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Training and Personal Development is vital for Councillors and Co-opted Members. It helps them to progress, improve and to carry out their role as effectively as possible.
- 1.2 Training is the process of acquiring the essential skills required for a certain role. Personal Development puts emphasis on broader skills, which are applicable in a wide range of situations such as decision making and creative thinking.
- 1.3 Section 7 “Training and Development of Members of a Local Authority” of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 places a duty on Local Authorities to secure the provision of reasonable training and development opportunities for its Councillors and Co-opted Members.
- 1.4 During 2015, Councillors and Co-opted Members were asked to complete a Training Needs Analysis. The information obtained from this was to be used to produce a Councillor Training Programme 2016-2017.
- 1.5 The opportunity was also taken to review the needs of Councillors and Co-opted Members in ensuring that the appropriate areas of training and development was available to all and that it fitted with the Authority’s Corporate Objectives.

2. Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

- 2.1 The Democratic Services Committee at its meeting on 16 June 2015 agreed the Training Needs Analysis form to be circulated to all 72 Councillors and to the 7 Statutory Co-opted Members.
- 2.2 During the discussions on 16 June 2015, the Democratic Services Committee stated that some training / development events should be deemed mandatory for Councillors and Co-opted Members to attend. These events would need to be ratified by Council. The suggested events being:

Proposed Mandatory Training for Councillors and Co-opted Members	
1	Audit (for members of the Audit Committee prior to be allowed to sit on the Committee).
2	Corporate Parenting.
3	Data Protection.
4	Disciplinary and Disciplinary Investigation (for members of the Appeals and Awards Committee prior to be allowed to sit on the Committee).
5	Good Decision Making, Bias, Pre-determination and Rules of Natural Justice.
6	Interests, Gifts & Hospitality including Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) guidance.
7	Introduction to Code of Conduct & Standards.
8	Licensing (for members of the General / Statutory Licensing Committee and Sub Committee prior to be allowed to sit on the Committee).
9	Planning (for members of the Planning Committee prior to be allowed to sit on the Committee).
10	Recruitment and Selection (for members of the Appointments Committee prior to be allowed to sit on the Committee and for Councillors taking part in the appointment of a Chief Officer at Council).
11	Rules of Debate.
12	Safeguarding Adults.
13	Safeguarding and Protection of Children.
14	Scrutiny questioning skills (for members on Scrutiny Programme Committee / Scrutiny Panel).

- 2.3 The Democratic Services Committee on 16 June 2015 also held discussions with members of the Standards Committee in order to gauge their opinion on how to increase the attendance numbers of Councillors and Co-opted Members attending training sessions.
- 2.4 The general view was to ensure that regular reports on attendance or non-attendance at training / development events be passed to the relevant Political Group Leaders / Political Whips by the Head of Democratic Services in order to encourage increased attendance.
- 2.5 They also suggested that all training sessions, where possible, be timetabled with both a daytime and an evening session in order to encourage better attendance.
- 2.6 They also suggested that successful training sessions be adapted into e-learning programmes wherever possible to compliment the Councillors / Co-opted Members Training Programme.

- 2.7 The Training Needs Analysis form was circulated to all Councillors and Co-opted Members. They were asked to complete the form and return it within the given timescale. The responses to the TNA (14 from Councillors and 2 from Co-opted Members) are attached as **Appendix A**.
- 2.8 These responses shall be used to assist the Head of Democratic Services in creating a Councillor / Co-opted Member Training Programme 2016-2017.
- 2.9 Following further consideration, it is proposed to divide training into 3 categories: Mandatory, Recommended and Councillor / Co-opted Requested.

3. Conclusions based on the Responses to the TNA

- 3.1 Whilst it is disappointing to note that only 16 responses were received, it is important that the work continues and that a training / development programme is devised.
- 3.2 The day and time most convenient for attendance at training was Monday - Thursday commencing at 10.30am with the most preferable evening time being Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday commencing at 4.00pm or Wednesday / Thursday commencing at 6.00pm; however it is difficult with such a small return to put much weight on the result.
- 3.3 What is clear however is that Councillors / Co-opted Members would prefer to be trained on a time and day that suits them and equally on a matter that either attract their interest or has been identified as important to their personal development.
- 3.4 It is therefore proposed to make far greater use of e-learning. This allows the Authority to establish set training programmes for Councillors and Co-opted Members and even Staff. These can be reviewed as required to ensure that they remain up to date with all current guidance, legislation and thinking.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the Head of Democratic Services work closely with the Corporate Learning and Development Manager in order to commence work on an e-learning programme targeting as many of the necessary courses as possible. In order to achieve this each relevant Officer would need to take responsibility for the content and regular reviewing of the e-learning module.
- 3.6 In addition to the proposed e-learning programme, there will be a need to keep offering other training as required. However, wherever possible, consideration of creating an e-learning module following the traditional training should be considered so as to further develop the e-learning training suite.

4. Frequency of Training and Refresher Training

- 4.1 One of the issues often raised is how often a Councillor / Co-opted Member should attend a training / refresher training session. Clearly, this is mainly down to what the Councillor / Co-opted Member to believe that they require or perhaps the frequency would stem from the Councillors Personal Development Review.
- 4.2 It is difficult to give definitive guidance on this due to a myriad of external factors. However for ease, it is proposed that Councillors / Co-opted Members should attend relevant / mandatory training or development sessions at least once per electoral term or more frequently should the content of the training change significantly due to legislation / guidance etc.

5. Mandatory Training

- 5.1 A good Council will often need to identify some key areas of training as top priorities for learning. Such a move will assist the Council in being a top performing Council. By not being proactive and setting some of these training events as mandatory can easily lead to complacency. Councillors and Co-opted Members have an important role to play as the eyes and ears of their locality; training can assist them in that vital role.
- 5.2 The term 'Mandatory Training' is often mooted; however it is important to note that whilst the Council may resolve to make certain training courses mandatory for Councillors to attend, in reality there is no widely available sanction open to the Authority to enforce such a resolution.
- 5.3 The Council can and does require each Councillor to be trained in areas such as Recruitment and Selection, Licensing and Planning prior to allowing a Councillor to sit on the Appointments Committee, General and Statutory Licensing Committees and the Planning Committee.
- 5.4 Equally, legislation can mandate a Councillor / Co-opted Member to attend specific training.
- 5.5 As Council has little power in this area and many of the training topics are viewed as high priority and important topics for the Council, it is proposed to utilise the Political Group Leader and / or Political Whips to assist the Head of Democratic Services in this area.
- 5.6 The proposal being to instruct the Head of Democratic Services to email each Political Group Leader and / or Political Whips on a monthly basis outlining what training courses were scheduled for the previous month together with a list of who or who did not attend the training course. It is hoped that the Political Groups will take responsibility in ensuring that their Group Councillors have attended training marked as mandatory by the Council.

6. Training Programme 2016-2017

- 6.1 Historically, the formal Training Programme runs once a month for 11 or 12 months of the year. Given that there are already 14 proposed mandatory training courses, there is little or no time for additional training. This therefore reinforces the absolute requirement for e-learning to be extended. Learning Pool and the All Wales Academy are already working closely with the Welsh Local Government Association to roll out more e-learning opportunities.
- 6.2 The All Wales Academy is a Welsh Government initiative, aimed at providing e-learning across all aspects of Public Service. It supplements and compliments the Council's existing e-learning provision which is managed by the Corporate Learning and Development Manager. The Head of Democratic Services and Corporate Learning and Development Manager will tap into this resource.
- 6.3 In addition to this there are many other additional training sessions added following requests from Councillors, Officers and External Agencies. These additional training sessions are of equal importance however they allow some fluidity within the training programme; otherwise we would not allow training in certain topics until an excessively long waiting time.
- 6.4 It is also proposed that the Democratic Services Committee prioritise which of the following courses should form part of the formal Training Programme and also which ones need to be initially added to the additional training programme.

Training Area	Contact	Length of Session
Anti-Slavery	Lyn Minshall	One hour lunch & learn session
Council Budget / Financial Scrutiny	Scrutiny	-
Equalities & Welsh Language	Sherill Hopkins	-
Tackling Poverty	Karen Grunhut	Tackling Poverty Agenda
Understanding of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the Wales Specific Equality Duties and the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People (UNCRDP)	Disability Wales	Regional Training Session being arranged in Bridgend CBC – Date tbc

7. Equality and Engagement Implications

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening process took place prior to the consultation period. The outcome indicated that it was low priority and a full report was not required.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 Any costs that arise will be minimal and will be met from within existing budget.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix 1	Training Needs Analysis (TNA) Responses
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Appendix A

Training Needs Analysis (TNA) Responses

Responses Received from: 14 Councillors and 2 Co-Opted Members

**1. What day and time is convenient for you to participate in workshops?
(Mark 'X')**

Day	Early am (09.00)	Mid am (10.30)	Lunchtime (Noon)	Early pm (14.00)	Late pm (16.00)	Evening (18.00)
Monday		8	3	3	3	2
Tuesday	2	8	2	3	2	2
Wednesday	2	9	3	6	3	3
Thursday	2	10	4	5	4	3
Friday		5	3	3	3	2

2. Please indicate the workshop(s) which you are interested in. If you would like to make your own suggestions, then please list them at the end.

Title	Is Training Required? R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	Mark 'X' if interested
Media Skills	R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	1 6 2
Effective Chairing Skills	R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	1 5 1
Understanding the Council Budget & Departmental Budgets	R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	0 9 2
Corporate Parenting (Mandatory)	R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	4 4 0
Freedom of Information Act	R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	1 2 0
Getting the Most from your Tablet Computer / Smart Phone	R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	2 3 2
Cabinet Portfolio – Topics of Strategic Importance (As highlighted by Cabinet Member)		6
Tackling Slavery / Anti-Slavery	R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	1 3 0

The following Courses provided as part of the Induction Programme / on an ad-hoc basis. Please indicate whether you require refresher training on any of the below:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Code of Conduct & Standards - Mandatory • Interests, Gifts & Hospitality including Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Guidance - Mandatory • Good Decision Making Bias, Pre-determination and Rules of Natural Justice - Mandatory • Rules of Debate - Mandatory 	9
Council Constitution (General) & Council Procedure Rules, Etiquette and Behaviour etc including Committee and Scrutiny Procedure Rules	7
Equalities, Social Inclusion & Welsh Language (to include Disability Awareness) Also see staff course on Equalities	4
Introduction to Scrutiny	4
Smart phone / Tablet training (including the application of)	3 & 1 Adv

Committee Specific Courses (Councillors will only be required to attend training on the below subjects if they become a member of the relevant Committee)	Mark 'X' if interested
Audit (Mandatory for Audit Committee Members)	4
Disciplinary and Disciplinary Investigation (Mandatory for Appeals & Awards Committee Members)	4
Licensing Committee Training (Mandatory for Licensing Committee Members)	3
Planning Committee Training (Mandatory for Planning Committee Members)	4
Recruitment & Selection Training (Mandatory for Council and Appointments Committee Members)	3
Scrutiny questioning skills (Mandatory for Members on a Scrutiny Committee / Panel)	5

3. Please note that other courses are also available via the following formats:

The following courses can be accessed via the on-line Learning Pool resource (please contact Member Support if you require your log on details). The link to Learning Pool can be found here: http://swansea.learningpool.com/	Mark 'X' if interested
Bullying and Harassment	1
Capability Procedure	2
Data Protection Act (An introduction to) (Mandatory)	4
Display Screen Equipment (Health & Safety)	
Fire Safety Awareness (Health & Safety)	1
Information Security	
Introduction to Windows 7 & Office 2010	
Safeguarding Adults (Mandatory)	4
Safeguarding and Protection of Children (Mandatory)	4

Staff Information Technology Courses (Councillors are also able to attend the below courses which are advertised on Staffnet via the link below): http://staffnet/index.cfm?articleid=53853	Is Training Required? R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	Mark 'X' if interested
How to Create an Effective Presentation using PowerPoint	B	1
Spreadsheets – Excel		1
Introduction to Windows 7 & Office 2010 (E-mail / Outlook)		
Data Bases	B	1
Word	R	1

Staff Courses Councillors are also able to attend the below Officer courses which are advertised on Staffnet via this link: http://staffnet/index.cfm?articleid=53853	Is Training Required? R-Refresher B-Basic A-Advanced	Mark 'X' if interested
Corporate Induction		
Dealing with Aggressive Behaviour from the public (PAMOVA)	B	1
Understanding the Importance of Emotional Intelligence (<i>The ability to understand, manage and direct your own emotions and the emotions of your work colleagues to enhance performance</i>)	R B A	2 2 2
Equalities		1
Facilitation Skills	B A	1 1
How to Give an Effective Presentation	B	1
Sickness Absence Management		2

Councillors Own Suggestions		
Awareness Raising i.e.: Healthy Cities; Welfare Reform etc. Please list your choice of topics here below :		
Healthy Cities		1
Service Delivery Protocol / contracts		1
Please list below any other training you would like to receive:		
Twitter, blogs, Facebook	B A	1 1
Holistic implications of cuts to spending functions and personnel		1
Mediation		1
Conduction of Community / Town Council Meetings		1
Analytical training		1