

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
ANNUAL COUNCIL – 20 MAY 2024
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (FINANCE & TRANSFORMATION)

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Transformation) providing a brief overview of Member Development which had taken place during the previous municipal year, whilst looking ahead to the forthcoming year and the programme to be approved.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 To note the Member Development Annual Report.
- 2.2 To note the training sessions held.
- 2.3 To note the objective as being to assist elected Members in carrying out their responsibilities to the highest standard for the Local Authority and the communities they serve using efficient and cost effective training sessions.

3 EXPLANATION

- 3.1 Member Development is considered to be essential in providing support, knowledge and guidance to Members, both new and experienced.
- 3.2 A number of training sessions are mandatory for all Members, whilst others are mandatory for those Members joining certain technical committees (such as planning and licensing).
- 3.3 Member Development is overseen by the Member Development Steering Group. The Group is comprised of 4 Councillors, a chair and a member from each political group. It is envisaged that the Group will meet three times during the year 2024-2025.

4 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2023/24

- 4.1 Borough Council elections were held in May 2023. An induction programme was provided for all new Members. Mandatory training sessions including the Council Code of Conduct, and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)/ Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) were also provided to all members. Specific mandatory training for new Committee Members were also arranged covering Planning, and Licensing (including Hackney Carriages)
- 4.2 Further sessions were held throughout the year: these included Member Briefing sessions, which had been arranged in response to events as they occurred.

- 4.3 All sessions were recorded and made available to members via Microsoft Teams, ensuring that all councillors had access to training even if they were unable to attend the initial course.
- 4.4 A full list of dates and sessions are contained in the table below.

2023/24 Member Development Sessions and Briefings

Training session	Date(s)	Attendance
New Member Induction	Wednesday 10 May 2023 6.00pm Council Chambers	New Councillors and re-elected members
Licensing and Hackney Carriage	Thursday 11 May 2023 7:00pm Teams	19
Information Governance	Tuesday 16 May 2023 7.00pm Teams	18
Code of Conduct	Thursday 18 May 2023 7.00pm Teams	22
DMC Code of Conduct	Tuesday 30 May 2023 7:00pm Teams/Council Chambers	35
Estate Management Scheme	Tuesday 25 July 2023 7:00pm Teams	10
Chairs training	Tuesday 1 August 2023 7:00pm Teams	16
Risk Management	Tuesday 12 September 2023 7:00pm Teams	12
Housing allocations and options	Tuesday 2 November 2023 7:00pm Teams	19
Damp and Mould	Monday 20 November 2023 7:00pm Teams	9
Jadu training	Wednesday 10 January 2024 7:00pm Teams	18
Planning Enforcement	Monday 12 February 2024 7:00pm Teams	23

- 4.5 The Member Development Steering Group were pleased with the Member Development programme 2023/24.

- 4.6 There were 12 Member Development sessions held in 2023/24 with an average attendance of 18 Councillors a session. 5 were statutory training sessions. 3 sessions involved externally providers, and 9 were provided internally. Overall feedback was good for all sessions.
- 4.7 20 Local Government Association and East of England Local Government Association training opportunities were circulated to the members throughout the year. A majority of these opportunities were free, and the Member Development Steering Group noted these opportunities were useful for members. They further noted it may be worth to expand the amount of opportunities available.

5 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2024/25

- 5.1 Given current budgetary realities the objective will be to ensure Member Development is delivered in a cost effective manner. This includes fully utilising the Member Information Hubs to share relevant information, working collaboratively with neighbouring councils and public authorities and being proactive in sign posting Members to good, free to access and low cost development resources provided by groups such as the Local Government Association. The council will also look to utilise internal expertise to deliver training sessions where appropriate.
- 5.2 The initial Member Development Programme for 2024/25 is set out in the table below. This will be further developed by the Member Development Steering Group.
- 5.3 Should members have any particular needs or suggestions, these should be discussed with their group leaders and nominated representatives on the steering group.

2024/25 Proposed Member Development Sessions and Briefings

Session	Date(s)
Member Induction	Wednesday 8 th May 2024 18:00 – 21:00 Council Chamber
Information Governance	Tuesday 14 th May 2024 19:00 – 20:00 Teams
Licensing and Hackney Carriage	Thursday 16 th May 2024 19:00 – 20:30 Teams
Code of Conduct	Tuesday 21 st May 2024 19:00 – 20:30 Teams
Development Management (Planning)	Monday 10 th June 2024 19:00 – 21:00 Teams

- 5.4 Once the programme is agreed and individual sessions have been arranged, details will be shared with all Members.

6 Implications

6.1 Legal Implication(s):

This report is for information only and there are no legal implications arising.

6.2 Financial Implication(s):

This report is for information only and there are no financial implications arising. However, Members should note the objective to continue to utilise cost effective Member development tools given budget realities.

6.3 Risk Management Implication(s):

This report is for information only and there are no risk management implications arising. However, failure to deliver mandatory training would create a compliance risk and/or prevent Members carrying out their duties effectively

6.4 Security and Terrorism Implication(s):

There are no security and terrorism implications arising from this report.

6.5 Procurement Implication(s):

There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6.6 Climate Change Implication(s):

There are no climate change implications arising from this report. However Members should note the intention to continue with providing training sessions remotely in part to avoid the associated carbon impact of travel to and from in person training sessions.

6.7 Human Resources Implication(s):

There are no HR implications arising from this report.

6.8 Health and Wellbeing Implication(s):

There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

6.9 Communications and Engagement Implication(s):

This report is for information only and there are no wider communication implications.

6.10 Link to Corporate Priorities:

This report is linked to all of the council's corporate priorities, increasing the effectiveness of Members to affect change, scrutinise performances and ensure the Council fulfils its duties.

6.11 Equality and Diversity:

An EqIA was not completed because this report does not propose changes to existing service-related policies or the development of new service-related policies

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Date