

STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

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1.0 Summary

The Standards Committee recently considered the need for elected members to attend essential training sessions. This report identifies the core training requirements and also the options available to encourage attendance at such training sessions.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended:

A. That the options identified in paragraph 4.1(a) to (d) be adopted.

Report

3.0 Background

3.1 It is essential that Members of the Council are adequately trained in their role if they are to represent the people who elected them effectively.

3.2 The following core elements of the induction training programme are considered essential for all members:

- a. Code of Conduct
- b. Corporate Parenting
- c. Equality and Diversity
- d. Safeguarding

- 3.3 Decisions taken by members who are insufficiently prepared in these key areas could be successfully challenged and result in the Council and/or individual Councillors being publicly criticised, with reputational damage for the longer term. In addition, it could also result, amongst other things, in the Council incurring unnecessary expenditure defending the action or putting things right after the event.
- 3.4 Members appointed to certain Committees (eg Licensing, Planning etc) are required to undertake specialist training and it is generally accepted that this must be completed before they sit on that particular Committee. To date this specialist training has not been included in the essential training requirement for all members, but the Standards Committee consider that it now should be.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 The Standards Committee considers that to encourage Members to undertake all essential training, the following options are considered appropriate:
- a. That Group Leaders shall be expected to assist officers to ensure that all members of their respective groups have undertaken the essential training, together with any additional specific training, that is required for them to perform their specific and generic roles as a Councillor.
 - b. That members appointed to any Committee dealing with Planning or Licensing by their Group Leader do not participate in the work of that Committee until they have completed their specialist training.
 - c. That Group Leaders be requested to ensure that all members of their Groups, included those elected mid term, undertake the essential training as soon as practicable after their election and that appropriate sessions be scheduled after Full Council meetings to assist in the achievement of this requirement.
 - d. That the Council's Constitution be amended to reflect these changes.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

None

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The contents of this report are compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998

Environmental Appraisal

These proposals will have no significant impact on the environment

Risk Management Appraisal

Poor take up by members of training opportunities may reduce the capacity of members to carry out their roles effectively and out the Council at risk of legal challenge

Community / Consultations Appraisal

N/A

Cabinet Member

All

Local Member

All

Appendices

None