

SELECTION & CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

6TH DECEMBER 2012

MEMBER TRAINING PANEL

1. In May 2003 the Council agreed to set up a Member Training Panel to oversee training and development for elected Councillors. The stated purpose of the Panel at the time was to monitor training and induction arrangements generally and consider ad-hoc training and development requests.
2. The Member Training Panel began meeting in October 2003, but the Panel and Terms of Reference for the Panel were never formally added to the Council's Constitution. Although the initial suggestion for a Panel came from Management Team and the activities were to be relatively informal, Members have been appointed to the Panel each year by the Selection & Constitutional Review Committee and the Panel's focus has evolved somewhat. It has taken on various roles including the development and review of the initial Members induction process, reviewing the Council's Member Training budget, and making suggestions regarding ongoing training needs.
3. In terms of ad-hoc training requests the Head of Legal and Democratic Services has delegated authority, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Panel to agree those which would result in expenditure from the Member Training budget of over £100. (*Minute No 264/11/03 refers*). Those under £100 can be approved by Officers.
4. The Panel has met somewhat irregularly throughout the years, although it took an active role in the development of both the 2007 and 2011 Induction and Training Programme for the new Councils. The Panel saw the peak of its activity immediately prior to and following those elections.
5. The Strategic Risk Register, prepared by the Head of Internal Audit Partnership following detailed workshops involving Management Team and approved by Cabinet on 8th November 2012, has highlighted Members skills, capacity and experience as a risk area. Amongst the required management actions/controls, it has been recommended that the profile of the Member Training Panel should be raised by formally constituting it within the Council's Constitution and by introducing an agreed programme of regular meetings and annual reports to review training issues. It is therefore recommended that going forward the Panel should meet at least once a year (preferably in the spring) to review the past municipal year and look ahead to the forthcoming year. This meeting could also consider and approve an annual report which would be produced on behalf of the Panel. Meeting at this time of year would work particularly well in an election year as part of devising the induction programme for the new Council. In those years it is

anticipated that the Panel would probably need to meet more than once. These points on potential frequency of meetings and an annual report are reflected in the draft Terms of Reference appended to this report.

6. Officers believe the Panel does have a key role to play, especially at a time when Members are being asked to make decisions against a backdrop of an increasingly complex local government agenda e.g. new legislation, new ways of working, commercial opportunities etc. This is also particularly important following local elections when a significant number of new Members always join the Council.
7. The following recommendations are therefore put before the Selection & Constitutional Review Committee for approval and, if agreed, the Terms of Reference will be added to the Council's Constitution.

Recommended:

That: -

- (i) the Terms of Reference of the Member Training Panel attached as Appendix 1 to this report be approved and added to the Council's Constitution.**
- (ii) the Panel meet AT LEAST once a year (preferably in the spring) to review the past municipal year and look ahead to the forthcoming year.**
- (iii) that the Panel produce an annual report at the end of each Municipal Year presented to the Cabinet.**

Member Training Panel

Membership:

8 Members *

Terms of Reference

1. To receive reports from Council Officers on, and provide input to, the development and review of the initial Members induction process.
2. To receive reports from Council Officers and make suggestions on ongoing Member training needs.
3. To monitor expenditure on the Council's Member Training Budget.
4. To produce an Annual Report to the Cabinet at the end of each Municipal Year summarising activity on all of the above issues.

Delegations

1. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services has a delegation to consider ad-hoc requests which would result in expenditure from the Member Training budget of over £100. This is in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Panel (*Minute No 264/11/03 refers*). Requests under £100 can be determined by Officers.

Notes

1. * Membership loosely based on 2 Members from each of the (main) Groups on the Council. (If more than 4 Groups then alternative arrangements may be applied).
2. Public attendance pursuant to the Access to Information Procedure Rules as contained in Part 4 of this Constitution will only be permitted if agreed in advance of the meeting with the Chairman of the Panel.
3. The views of the Panel are to be reported via a Chairman's report, which will be prepared by the Proper Officer, to the next available meeting of the Cabinet.
4. The Panel will meet AT LEAST once in each Municipal Year (preferably in the spring).

Quorum

One quarter of the Members of the Panel.