


Non-Executive Report of the: General Purposes Committee 8th February 2018	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Asmat Hussain, Corporate Director, Governance	Classification: Unrestricted
Members' Induction	

Originating Officer(s)	Beverley McKenzie, Head of Members' Support
Wards affected	(All Wards);

Summary

This report outlines the proposed Member Induction Programme for new and returning Members following the May 2018 Council elections. This is an indicative programme and additional work is being undertaken to consult directorate leadership teams.

Recommendations:

The General Purposes Committee is asked to:

1. Agree the proposed indicative Member Induction Programme for 2018 as set out in Appendix A.
2. Nominate a link Member from each political group to liaise as necessary regarding member input to the induction programme.
3. Note the work under way in relation to developing the broader package of support services and the Learning and Development Programme for Members.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 Member learning and development is provided to enhance knowledge of the Council and ensure that Members receive up to date information on services and are equipped with the training required to undertake their role as a Member.
- 1.2 Based on previous experience it is highly likely that a number of new Members will be elected at the Council elections in May 2018. It is important to consider how new and returning Members can be best supported through effective induction, learning and development activities and ongoing support services, to prepare for and undertake their role and responsibilities.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Members could choose not to develop an induction programme or seek a third party to provide development activities.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

Learning and Development

- 3.1 The proposed programme has been developed considering the core activities that the Member will undertake, with a focus on developing the skills to enable their self-sufficiency to fulfil their responsibilities. It comprises a series of Learning and Development sessions together with administrative support. See Appendix A for complete indicative framework.
- 3.2 Feedback from Members on the 2014 induction process suggests that the initial sessions should not be overcomplicated but should focus on practical issues – i.e. key headline information about Member roles, how the authority is organised, key contact numbers that Members will require for immediate use and skills training around casework, members' enquiries etc. to equip Members to face the immediate demands of constituents.
- 3.3 To ensure that the Member Induction Programme is effectively focussed, the work will be led and co-ordinated by the Head of Members' Support and the Council Leadership Team, or representative to inform and deliver the programme.
- 3.4 The existing role description for a Member has been refreshed and is attached in Appendix B. The core activities include:
 - Representing residents
 - Community leadership
 - Developing Council policy – Executive/Overview & Scrutiny
 - Planning and Regulation – Committee membership
 - Adhering to the Code of Conduct
- 3.5 The Local Government Association (LGA) have a range of workbooks and e-learning modules that will be made available to support the induction process

and continuous development of Members. Workbooks will be made available to new members via the Members' Hub (see 3.11 below).

- 3.6 Where appropriate, experienced Members may be asked to participate in parts of the induction programme and/or a 'buddy' system with a new Member in their political group, led by their own parties.
- 3.7 To assess the effectiveness of the induction programme Members will be asked to provide feedback and evaluate each session individually. On completion of the programme an overall evaluation of the learning and development framework and administration and housekeeping arrangements will be carried out.
- 3.8 For ongoing training, all e-learning modules rolled out to Council officers will be made available to members.
- 3.9 A dedicated budget of £15K has been established to support the Member learning and development for 2017/18. All induction costs will be met through this budget.

Members' Support

- 3.10 General administrative support will be delivered as part of the open afternoon and overall induction.
- 3.11 Members will be provided with a welcome letter from the Chief Executive following the declaration of appointment. This will contain relevant information regarding the induction programme and include a link to the "Members' Hub". The Members' hub is a web page that is being developed to replace the traditional Members' Handbook. This will provide relevant information to Members about the Council and its' services.

DBS Checks

- 3.12 Following executive and committee appointments, DBS checks will be undertaken for all Members as they are likely to be engaged in specific activities relating to work with children and vulnerable adults.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 4.1 The cost of developing and delivering the induction programme will be met from the existing £15k budget referred to in 3.9 above. There are no other financial commitments arising from agreeing the recommendations within this report.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1 Section 27(1) of the Localism Act 2011 Act provides that the Council must promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members of the authority. In discharging this duty the Council is required by section 27(2) of the 2011 Act to adopt a Code of Conduct which applies to all

Members and Co-opted Members when acting in an official capacity. The indicative Member Induction Programme will assist the authority in discharging this statutory responsibility.

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Support for elected Members through the learning and development opportunities takes full account of the needs of Members, including diversity and inclusion.
- 6.2 The programme ensures that Members are equipped to address One Tower Hamlets considerations in their role as Community Leaders.

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Member learning and development programme builds on the feedback from the Best Value Improvement Board and ensures that essential elements such as ethics and probity training are included as required sessions.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 There are no specific SAGE implications arising from this report.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Effective training and development provides a foundation for Members in the fulfilment of their role. Development is particularly important to mitigate risk following elections as newly elected Members are likely to have a steeper learning curve.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no specific implications for crime and disorder arising from this report.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- none

Appendices

- Appendix A – Member Induction Framework
- Appendix B – Member Role Description

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended) List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

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