

<b>Committee:</b> Standards (Advisory) Committee	<b>Date:</b> 21 October 2014	<b>Classification:</b> <b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>Agenda Item:</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Service Head, Democratic Services  <b>Originating officer(s)</b> Beverley McKenzie, Members Support Manager		<b>Title:</b>  Members' Induction 2014  <b>Wards Affected:</b> All Wards		

## 1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1. At the Standards Advisory Committee meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014, there was some discussion in respect of the Member's Induction process and concerns were expressed regarding new Members and the Members Enquiry process and engaging with the Council and its processes generally.
- 1.2. This report is the response to that discussion. As well as looking at the Members Induction programme, it will consider the responses to that and the further action that is being undertaken with regards to Members Learning and Development.
- 1.3. The Standards (Advisory) Committee's Terms of Reference provide for the Committee to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the Mayor, Members of the Council and where the Committee considers that there may be issues of concern that these be reported on.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Standards (Advisory) Committee is recommended:-

- 2.1. To note the report
- 2.2. To feedback any comments on the future learning and development programme

## 3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. Councillors are elected to represent the borough as a whole with a special duty to their own ward. They may be required to act in a variety of roles, such as:
- 3.1.1. Ward Role – represent their ward and respond to individual enquiries and representations
- 3.1.2. Community Role – represent the borough as a whole and bring the views of the community to the Council's decision making process
- 3.1.3. Executive role – to serve as a member of the cabinet

- 3.1.4. Decision Making – to take decisions in relation to council services at Full Council and on Council Committees
  - 3.1.5. Scrutiny and Review – to scrutinize decisions and support the development of new The policies as part of the council’s scrutiny function
  - 3.1.6. Representative role – to represent the council on other bodies such as outside bodies.
- 3.2. The Members Induction Programme was developed to ensure that all members were equipped to fulfil the functions required of them in the various roles. Consideration was giving to achieving a balance of induction activities, to achieve the delivery of essential activities as early as possible, but yet not overwhelm the Members with too many events scheduled night after night.
- 3.3. The Members’ Induction Programme was developed with consideration of previous feedback and divided into two phases. The first phase included all the necessary induction events to enable the Member to be equipped to respond to requests from their community and have a broad understanding of the functions of the Council and their own role within this. Specific training was also to be provided to members of certain Committees, to ensure that they would be able to immediately function in their appointed role. It was agreed that the first phase of the Induction programme would be conducted over the six week period following the election (i.e. prior to Ramadan and the Summer Recess, where possible).
- 3.4. The second phase would include overview training to equip the Members with a better understanding of the Council, and their roles. This phase would comprise of mostly topical seminars and would be conducted starting in the autumn.
- 3.5. The Member’s Induction Programme, including the Member’s ICT provision, was reviewed by the Corporate Management Team in February 2014. An update to this was provided in April 2014 and the plan was agreed for implementation.
- 3.6. In relation to Ethics and Standards, a dedicated seminar was held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014 for all members as part of the Induction process.

#### **4. MEMBERS’ INDUCTION – THE IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1. The Induction programme was implemented according to the schedule. Appendix A details the various induction activities, including the dates of events and topics covered.
- 4.2. Responsibility for various sessions were delegated to the responsible Officers for the subject matter.
- 4.3. A record was kept of the Members attendance at the various induction events/members’ seminars and this has been included in Appendix B.

## **5. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- 5.1. All Councillors were invited to attend an open afternoon with the staff of the Councillor Support Team. At that session, they were provided with 1:1 support to assist in completing the necessary paperwork, discuss surgery arrangements, complete parking applications, discuss timesheets, obtain an Identification Card, and have their photo taken for the Website and East End Life.
- 5.2. All Members were provided with the Guide for Elected Members either at the Getting (re-) Started Session with the Head of Paid Service or personally distributed following that session. This guide provides the Members with reference material in response to many of their questions.
- 5.3. Members were provided with VDI tokens to enable the remote access to the Council servers. At the Information Governance/ICT session, members were able to see the various laptops that could be made available to them, and make their selections. Unfortunately, due to ICT constraints, we were not able to deliver these laptops to the members until early September. However, with the VDI tokens, most members were able to use other internet facilities to access their accounts. Members were also provided the opportunity to enrol for DME – the council’s provision of e-mail and diary, from iPhone and android devices.
- 5.4. At the Information Governance/ICT session – a portion of the session was dedicated to Members’ enquiries. This provided the members with an overview of the Members’ enquiries system, as well as discussion on ‘how to’ raise Members’ enquiries. Members’ were also provided with forms that they could take with them to assist them in recording the required information regarding their Constituent’s concerns.
- 5.5. Members were shown the Members’ Intranet at the ICT session. This provides a resource to the Members regarding the various activities. Additionally, the presentations from the various Members’ Seminars have been made available to all Members on the Members’ intranet.

## **6. EVALUATION OF MEMBERS’ INDUCTION PROGRAMME**

- 6.1. In order to ensure that evaluation of the induction programme was complete, a decision was made to obtain the formal evaluation of the Members’ induction in the autumn. This evaluation would also provide the opportunity for Members to identify further areas that they would assist them in their roles.
- 6.2. In light of the delay of formal evaluation of the Induction programme, informal discussions were held with various members following the various events, to validate the immediate effectiveness of the approach. The informal

discussions reflected complete satisfaction by all Members with the induction sessions.

6.3. Formal evaluation forms were sent to all Members on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014. At the time of writing, only five of the 45 Members have responded to the evaluation request. It is recognised that the response is too low to measure the effectiveness of the programme, however, it is noted that the Members that responded expressed complete satisfaction with the training that was provided. The evaluation questionnaire requested information on every session that was made available and asked about the information provided, as well as the quality of presentation. The responses were to be on a scale of 1-7 (1=poor, 7=excellent). The scores given were mostly sixes, however the lowest score given was a four – and that was noted on two items, namely the effectiveness of the Members' Bulletin and the issuance of the VDI token and/or laptop.

6.4. A further update will be provided at the Standards Advisory Committee meeting on any additional evaluation forms returned.

## **7. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

7.1. Members' seminars continue to be arranged for all Members to ensure that they are aware of the various services within the Council.

7.2. The further seminar topic schedule will be established based upon the requests of the Members (in response to the Induction Evaluation). Additionally Service Heads will continue to be encouraged to promote significant changes to Members via Members' Seminars.

## **8. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

8.1. When possible, Council Officers have been used to deliver the Members' Induction programme. However, in some cases, external providers were used, with costs being met through the Members' Support budget.

8.2. Any further expenditure proposed as a result of the further activities or as a result of this report would have to be met within the existing resources.

## **9. LEGAL COMMENTS**

9.1 This report informs the Committee about current arrangements for the Members' Induction process. The Induction includes mandatory training in areas such as licensing and planning where Councillors are discharging quasi-judicial functions and are required to complete the training before taking part in any decision making.

## **10. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 10.1. The Members Induction programme was developed to enable the Members to be equipped to fulfil their representative role to the whole of the borough.

## **11. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT**

- 11.1. No significant impacts are related to this specific report.

## **12. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1. The Members Induction programme was developed to reduce the risk to the Council and ensure that every Member was fully equipped to function in their various roles. Knowledge and references were provided to the Members to mitigate against any potential issues that might arise as a result of a newly elected Member not being familiar with the Council and its practices.

## **13. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1. None related to this report.

## **14. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT**

- 14.1. In developing the Members Induction programme consideration was given to ensuring efficient use of Members' and Officers' time, and where practical topics were combined. The 1:1 sessions were developed to be an efficient manner of processing the vast amount of information that was required to be shared/exchanged with the newly elected Member.

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

Brief description of "background papers"	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
CMT Members' Induction (Feb. 2014)	Beverley McKenzie, x 4872
CMT Members' ICT (Feb. 2014)	Beverley McKenzie, x 4872

## **15. APPENDICES**

- 15.1. Appendix A – Member Induction Programme, approved by CMT  
15.2. Appendix B – Members attendance at Induction Events