

Committee: Governance Committee

Date: 13 November 2024

Title: Member Training and Development Update

By: Deputy Chief Executive

Purpose of report: To provide an update on the training and development activities offered to Members.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Governance Committee is recommended to consider the programme of training and development activities offered to Members.

1. Background

1.1. Helping to ensure that Members have the skills and information needed to undertake their roles is a key element of corporate governance. Member Services is responsible for devising and maintaining a programme of Member training and development activities in response to Member needs and requests.

1.2. As part of this programme a comprehensive induction programme was delivered for newly elected and returning Members following the County Council elections in May 2021. After the completion of the initial induction phase, an ongoing programme of training and information sessions commenced with new events being added regularly. The Governance Committee received a report at their meeting of 7 November 2023 meeting which set out the training which had been provided to Members following the induction. Alongside this the service signposts to Members, via the intranet and the Members Room, the comprehensive programme run by external organisations such as the Local Government Association and South-East Employers. The programme has provided Members with access to both internal and external training to support the development of key skills as well as the provision of further topic-specific sessions.

1.3. The programme is developed having regard to current and forthcoming policy issues and with input from Members. Members' views are gathered via surveys circulated to all Members, feedback from the Member Reference Group who regularly review the training programme and requests made by Members on an individual basis or through their Committees.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 Courses and information sessions delivered to Members cover a wide range of topics. For example, courses have been delivered on support with practical matters such as getting the most out of Microsoft Outlook, topic specific briefings (such as Economic Development), and committee focused courses (such as Town and Village Green Panels). A summary of the training sessions delivered as part of the ongoing induction along with the current version of the training programme is provided at Appendix 1. The training for this period includes sessions on an Introduction to Asset Based Community Development and Public Health and Housing.

2.2 The majority of training courses continue to be delivered remotely via Microsoft Teams. A recording of the session together with the slides used in the session are made available on the Councillors' Area of the intranet. This enables Members who were not able to attend the session

to still benefit from the course and also other Members who did attend, to refresh their memory and review the slides when convenient.

2.5 The most recent survey of Member training needs was conducted in June 2024. This resulted in five responses which asked for training on a number of topics. This included, for example adapting to climate change in East Sussex, and the role of the 3rd sector in East Sussex. At its meeting in October 2024 the Member Reference Group discussed the survey outcomes and provided feedback on the survey process itself and recommended that training should now focus on the induction period. This feedback will be used by the Member Services team to inform how the election induction survey is conducted. The feedback from this survey will be shared with the Member Reference Group and will help inform the development of the induction for Members after the election in May to further enhance the training opportunities available to Members.

3. Conclusion and recommendations

3.1 The Council has a comprehensive programme of training and information activities offered to Members. The Governance Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the training opportunities offered to Members including where the Committee considers there are any gaps or unmet needs.

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Background Documents

None