

Report To:	STANDARDS AND PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE
Date:	7 DECEMBER 2022
Heading:	MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME
Executive Lead Member:	N/A
Ward/s:	ALL
Key Decision:	NO
Subject to Call-In:	NO

Purpose of Report

This report provides an introduction to the Member Induction Programme for Members to consider arrangements for newly elected and returning Councillors following the May 2023 local elections.

As part of the Member Induction Programme development, it will be appropriate to consult with CLT and Service Managers in addition to the Council's Talent and Skills Manager prior to agreeing the programme of events for 2023.

Appendix A provides the 2019 Member Induction Programme Schedule.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Consider the timings, topics and methods for the development of the initial Induction Programme.
- Consider the longer term training requirements post induction.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

Member induction, training and development is an integral part of ensuring that the strategic aims and objectives of the Council are met in carrying out their duties of making local decisions and delivering better outcomes for the district.

Alternative Options Considered

(with reasons why not adopted)

All options will be considered in the development of a Members Induction Programme

Detailed Information

Ashfield District Council elections will be held in May 2023 with 35 Councillors to be elected to represent the wards of the district. As part of the preparations for the Elections the Scrutiny and Democratic Services Team will be preparing an Induction for new and returning Councillors, as it has for past Council elections.

The intention of the programme is to help newly-elected and returning Councillors prepare for their role and to outline the support and facilities available to them, whilst also fulfilling specific legal requirements relating to their acceptance of their new post.

All new and returning Councillors will be obliged to attend the Induction training as set out in the Council's Constitution. This also details all mandatory training (Part 5, Appendix D). This includes;

- Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee and its sub committees
- Chief Officers Employment Committee
- Standards and Personnel Appeals Committee
- Code of Conduct / Ethical Governance
- Equalities and Diversity
- Safeguarding
- Lone Working
- Fraud Awareness
- Chairing

Initial Induction and Training

In preparing for the 2019 induction following the district elections, Members concluded that the previous induction (2015) had been too long and time consuming. As a result the 2019 induction training was condensed into 3 days 1 drop-in welcome and introduction day for All Councillors (Stall Based) and 2 intensive training days.

Drop in Day

- Sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- Have individual photos taken / access cards;
- DBS Checks
- Receive Members' Handbook
- Sign IT policy and collect IPad
- Have a tour of the building
- Meet key support staff
- Sign up for training sessions.

Training Days

2 intensive training days were provided for all Members this included all mandatory training, meet and greets and an introduction from the Chief Executive. The Full training programme for days 1 & 2 is attached as **Appendix A**.

As part of the considerations for the Induction Programme, Members should consider the effectiveness of the intensive training days in 2019, reviewing whether it provided Members with the initial knowledge necessary to carry out their role. As part of a Members longer term development, additional training will also be provided throughout their appointment as detailed in the Member Development Strategy.

Member Development Strategy

The refreshed Member Development Strategy was approved at a meeting of the Standards and Personnel Committee on the 8 December 2021 and subsequently recommended and approved by Council.

Ashfield District Council recognises that continuous member development is key to Councillors carrying out their role both within the district and as community representatives at meetings of the Council and its partners. All Councillors have a responsibility to learn new skills in line with the ongoing changes in local government.

The overarching aim of the strategy is, therefore, to ensure that there is support for all members to enable them to acquire sufficient knowledge and a full range of skills to maximise their ability and capacity. All members need to understand the scope and scale of the role in order to be able to identify the personal development needs that will enable them to fulfil the ever increasing individual and political demands over the course of their appointment.

Members Handbook

A Members Handbook was developed as a guide for all Councillors on their role, requirements, policies and protocols and support provision as part of the induction in 2019. This document also served as an overview to understanding the role of the Council, its committees and decision making.

Induction Training Methods

Training can be delivered in a variety of forms, including intensive induction (as in 2019), training set out over a longer period up to 2 months (as in 2015), in-house Member Seminars, briefings, training at Committee / Panel meetings, E Learning and by sharing experiences with each other (buddy system).

Bespoke training can also be provided by a mixture of internal Officers and external providers as and when necessary. Additionally, Members can identify themselves external training that may enhance their knowledge and improve their skills in carrying out their role.

Considerations

In considering an appropriate, fit for purpose Induction Programme, Members of the Committee should consider the following;

- Effectiveness of the previous Induction Programme (Appendix A).

- Subjects included.
- Methods of training.
- Appropriate consultees.
- Time and length of initial induction training.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

The Council will strive to ensure effective community leadership through training, good governance, transparency and accountability.

Legal:

All legal implications relating to mandatory training are detailed within this report. **(RD – 4/10/2022)**

Finance:

The cost of training and future Member development is to be met from the existing Training & Development budget for Members.

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	As above
General Fund – Capital Programme	N/A
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	N/A
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	N/A

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
Insufficient Member training and development carries risks regarding decision making, debate and representation.	An effective Member Induction Programme and longer term Development Strategy will ensure Members have the necessary skills to carry out their role both within the district and representing their constituents at Council and other partner meetings.

Human Resources:

In recognition of the varying development needs and preferred learning styles, the Member Induction Programme will include a range of delivery methods including workshops, presentations, written resources, and e-learning. Ongoing work will be undertaken with Human Resources

regarding the effective implementation of the longer term Member development to ensure that the needs of all Members are met in carrying out their role.

Environmental/Sustainability

Environmental / Sustainability considerations will be considered on a case by case basis with regards to methods of training.

Equalities:

Member learning and development activities are open and accessible to all Councillors. it is intended that all development activities should be equally accessible and meet the Council's equal opportunities policy and practice.

Other Implications:

None

Reason(s) for Urgency

N/A

Reason(s) for Exemption

N/A

Background Papers

None

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