



<b>Report to:</b>	Standards Committee	<b>Date:</b>	30 January 2018
<b>Report title:</b>	Member Development Update		
<b>Report from:</b>	Jessica Crowe, Monitoring Officer		
<b>Ward/Areas affected:</b>	Borough Wide		
<b>Chair of Committee/Lead Member:</b>	Tony Hazeldine, Independent Chair of the Standards Committee		
<b>Author(s)/Contact Number(s):</b>	Davena Palmer, Committee Services Team Leader (Interim), 020 8770 4454 Sharon Major, Committee Services Officer, 020 8770 4383		
<b>Corporate Plan Priorities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Open Council</li> <li>• A Fair Council</li> <li>• A Smart Council</li> </ul>		
<b>Open/Exempt:</b>	Open		
<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	18 January 2018

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the Council's member development programme, setting out how the Council is ensuring that all members are fully aware of their obligation to follow the Nolan Principles and to help them meet the standards of behaviour and conduct that the public have a right to expect from their elected members.
- 1.2 This report will update the committee on the 2017/18 member development programme, the 2018/19 member development strategy and the member information bulletin.

## 2. Recommendations

The Standards Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note and comment on the Member Development Programme and make any recommendations with regards to promoting members' obligations to uphold the Nolan Principles and wider standards of behaviour.
- 2.2 Note and comment on the 2018/19 Member Development Strategy in advance of the 2018 local elections.
- 2.3 Note and comment on additional initiatives to support members, including the weekly information bulletin and Councillor Connect.



**3. Background**

3.1 At the meeting of the committee held on December 2015, members considered an update report and requested that a similar report be considered at each meeting. The committee last considered an update at the meeting held on 21 June 2017.

**4. Issues**

4.1 It was reported at the Standards Committee on 21 June 2017 that work on the 2017/18 member development strategy and programme was in progress. Both the strategy and programme have since been completed and implementation has begun.

Member Development Programme 2017/18

4.2 With the upcoming local elections in mind, the core programme in 2017/18 was developed with a focus on skills-based training to support Members through purdah, the elections themselves, and then the induction of new members.

4.3 Implementation of the 2017/18 member development programme so far is outlined below and an overview of the current Member Development Programme for 2017/18 is attached as Appendix A. Information on member attendance for 2017/18 (to date), feedback and Key Performance Indicators are attached as Appendix B.

*Core Programme 2017/18*

Date	Session
19 October 2017	Mentoring
29 November 2017	Commissioning, Procurement & Contract Management
30 January 2018	Personal resilience for elected members [Postponed]
28 February 2018	The Media during Purdah

The session on ‘Personal resilience for elected members’ is postponed to be included in the 2018 Member Induction Programme

*Ad-Hoc Sessions*

Date	Session
19 July 2017	‘Critical’ Briefing
28 November 2017	National Funding Formula Briefing

- 4.4 In reference to Appendix B, there has been a downward trend in the number of Members attending sessions, yet those that do attend provide feedback that the sessions are useful to their role. This has specifically been the case with the officer-led 'Critical' and National Funding Formula Briefings. The feedback on relevance to the role for the Mentoring and Commissioning, Procurement & Contract Management sessions, was low.

#### Planning Member Development

- 4.5 As previously reported to the Standards Committee, a further area for focus is a specific member development programme for members of the Planning Committee. A survey of Members was recommended in order to better understand their needs and preferences for this specific training.
- 4.6 A survey conducted by the Committee Services team in November 2017 sought views on the upcoming induction process where members agreed with the need for training on this quasi-judicial role. At present, such sessions are arranged ad hoc (such as an upcoming evening on the London Plan and planning policy at Sutton), with a renewed focus to be incorporated into the induction plans. All members will be able to join the sessions, whether or not they currently sit on planning committee.

#### Member Development Strategy 2018/19

- 4.7 It was reported to the Standards Committee in June 2017 that work on the Member Development Strategy 2017/18 was in progress. The strategy has now been completed following consultation with the Lead Member for Member Development and the Monitoring Officer and is attached at Appendix C.
- 4.8 The Member Development Strategy seeks to address the concerns raised by the Corporate Peer Challenge, establish a new focus and direction for Member development at the Council and incorporate the skills needed for the the 21st Century Councillor.
- 4.9 The strategy has been implemented where possible over 2017/18 with outstanding aspects to become effective from Member Induction 2018 and further embedded over that municipal year. A key element already actioned has been the 'Councillor Connect', a Google site for Members.

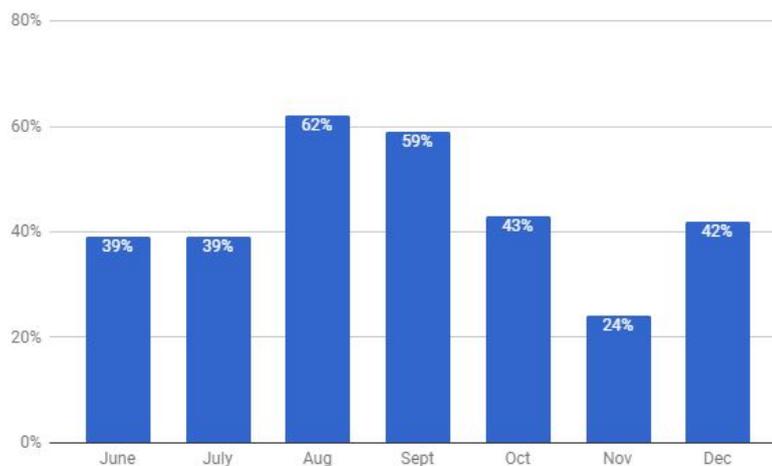




- 4.10 This website now acts as the main resource and platform for Member Development, incorporating a back-catalogue of all presentations, handout materials and details of sessions held in recent years as well as links to Councillor Workbooks produced by the Local Government Association. The Councillor Connect can be accessed at any time by Members and allows opportunity to access the materials of any sessions they were unable to attend or would like to revisit in future.
- 4.11 The platform provided by the Councillor Connect will be expanded and play an integral role in Member Induction 2018, hosting administrative forms, the constitution, an electronic members' handbook and councillor workbooks as well as other useful resources.

Members' Information Bulletin

- 4.12 The Members' Information Bulletin has been published in its new format on a weekly basis since January 2017. The purpose of the bulletin is to provide a single source of news to Members, reducing email traffic and collating all updates into a weekly e-mail. The bulletin also provides useful links to meeting agendas as well as licensing and planning applications.
- 4.13 In terms of performance indicators, the collective 'open rate' of the bulletin for Members has a target KPI of 75%. In the first six months of the year the average monthly open rate ranged from a monthly average of 39% - 73% of members opening the bulletin. Since June, open rates have been recorded on an individual basis in order to better assist members by obtaining personal feedback and advising on the usefulness of the bulletin contents. Analysis shows that only 18% (11) of Members open every edition and 31% (17) do not open any of the weekly editions at all across a one month period. Average monthly open rates since the last report to committee are as follows:



- 4.14 This raises a concern that officers may believe that Members have been provided with information and updates but in many cases, that content is not being accessed. In order to mitigate that risk, the Committee Services team has contacted Members if they have not opened a single edition within a one month period. By doing so, feedback on the bulletin has been actioned - for example, by adding a contents section as the first item and a link to the Mayor's engagement diary.

4.15 Feedback was further sought on the bulletin as part of a Member Survey at the end of 2017 and questions specifically addressed its frequency and content. Out of 24 responses to the survey, 21 (88%) wished to keep the frequency as weekly. With regards to content, 17 (70%) of respondents, advised they 'always' find the contents useful, with the remainder commenting that they 'sometimes' find the content useful. Specific individual comments confirmed that overall, changes made in 2017 to the weekly bulletin had been successful: "*Looks very professional - a big improvement*" and "*A very useful round up of the week.*"

## **5. Options Considered**

5.1 As this report is predominantly for information there are no options for consideration. Members of the Committee are invited to comment and make suggestions on the Member Development Programme and the approach outlined.

## **6. Impacts and Implications**

### Financial

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### Legal

6.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.



**7. Appendices and Background Documents**

<b>Appendix letter</b>	<b>Title</b>
A	Member Development Programme 2017/18
B	Member Development: Key Performance Indicators
C	Member Development Strategy 2018/19

<b>Background documents</b>
None

<b>Audit Trail</b>		
Version	Final	Date: 18 January 2018
<b>Consultation with other officers</b>		
Finance	No	N/A
Legal	No	N/A
Equality Impact Assessment required?	No	N/A