

**REPORT FOR: MEMBER DEVELOPMENT
PANEL**

Date: 1 October 2013

Subject: Planning for Members' Welcome Evening,
Members' Handbook and Member Induction
Programme 2014

Responsible Officer: Elaine McEachron, Democratic and
Electoral Services Manager
Jon Turner, Divisional Director of Human
Resources & Development and Shared
Services

Exempt: No

Enclosures: None

Section 1 – Summary

This report sets out the proposals in the lead up to the May 2014 local elections and proposals for a Members' Welcome Evening, Members' Handbook and 2014 Induction Programme.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Member Development Panel comment on the proposals set out in the report and make any suggestions;
- (3) an update report be submitted to the Member Development Panel Meeting scheduled for 4 February 2014.

Reason (for recommendation): To keep Members informed of the proposals for Member development in the lead up to the 2014 Local Elections and thereafter.

Section 2 – Report

2.1 Background/Introduction

The Local Election Day in England, in 2014, is expected to be moved to the date of the European Parliamentary election. It is likely that both the Local and European Elections will take place on Thursday, 22 May 2014 but confirmation is awaited.

In relation to the lead up to the Local Elections, officers are in the process of putting in place proposals to assist new and returning Members with a view to getting them started in their new roles, which would include a wide range of learning and professional development opportunities along the lines implemented following the 2010 Local Elections with some nuances. Through the Member Development Programme, it is intended to develop leadership skills for those Members who have served the Council before and to provide all Members with specialist training on specific Committee or function responsibilities, as well as capacity to deliver the best for the community and performed to the highest professional and ethical standards.

A series of events are being planned by officers, the details of which are set out below.

2.2 Information Evening for Prospective Candidates

To commence the Member Development process, it is proposed that an ‘Information Evening for Prospective Candidates’, be held in January 2014, the exact date of which will be agreed with Group Leaders and senior Officers.

The Information Evening will be advertised in the Local Press and the Council’s website. Additionally, all existing Councillors and interested colleagues will be invited to attend the Information Evening.

The Event which is expected to last no more than 2 hours is intended to involve presentations on the following:

- § An Overview of the borough by the Chief Executive
- § Election process – timetable, qualifications, disqualifications, nominations, agents, polling day, count and expenses
- § How the Council makes decisions – functions, Committee Structure
- § Support arrangements – induction, training and allowances.
- § Councillors speaking of their experiences when they were first elected
- § Show Mock Council Meeting Video
- § Question & Answer Session + Feedback.

2.3 Members’ Welcome Evening

Following the Local Election in Harrow, it is proposed that elected Councillors come together in a forum, a ‘Members’ Welcome Evening’, on Thursday 29 May 2014. The ‘Welcome Evening’ would commence at 5.00pm and end by 9.00pm. In order to ensure that the Event is focussed, the following programme is being proposed:

- § Arrival, Registration, Refreshments and Robe Fitting
- § A Welcome from the Chief Executive
- § Directorate Stories and Partnership Working
- § **BREAK [Networking & Refreshments]**
- § Breaking into groups for briefings on the following:
 - Code of Conduct and the Council's Constitution, including the Signing of the Declaration of Office Register
 - Photos
 - Overview of Security & IT
 - The Office of H W The Mayor and The Harrow Mural (A Description).

A 'Virtual Borough Tour' to showcase a number of key sites in the borough, particularly to new Councillors, is also proposed. Initially, the Council intends to approach Media Studies students or the Harrow Youth Parliament with a view to promoting and showcasing Harrow from a young person's perspective. This will either form part of the 'Members' Welcome Evening' or included in the 'Members' Handbook and Induction Programme 2014'.

As part of the 2014 Members' Welcome Evening, Members will also be invited to register for key training courses which will be run in early June 2014.

2.4 **Member Induction Training Programme for 2014/15**

It is intended that both new and returning Members will have completed all Mandatory and relevant IT training within the first 6 months. The training proposed falls into the following categories, as previously requested and agreed by the Member Development Panel:

- Councillor role – How decisions are made, working with Officers
- Councillor skills – Chairing skills, Confident Public Speaking, How to use and get the best out of social media
- Understanding public finance
- Safeguarding
- Video recording of a Council meeting for new Councillors
- Video recording of a Cabinet meeting for new Councillors
- Personal Development Plans (PDPs)
- Get to Know your iPad/Electronic Media
- other topics to be agreed.

2.5 **Members' Handbook & Induction Programme 2014**

A single booklet that is user friendly and easier to reference will be produced for 2014. The Members' Handbook will be designed to brief Members on some of the key issues affecting Harrow Council, including the background behind some of the key initiatives. It will also contain practical information about Council services, including contact points and organisational chart(s).

The booklet will also be available electronically and any updates will be included in the electronic only version placed on the intranet with regular updates sent to Members

electronically. The importance of electronic media will be a key aspect of Member engagement.

As part of the production of the booklet, officers from Democratic and Electoral Services intend to interview a number of Councillors about the helpfulness of the 'Members' Handbook & Induction Programme 2010' and what they would like included in the 2014 version.

Section 3 – Financial Implications

Funding for the Member Induction activities and events in this report will be contained within existing budget provision.

Section 4 - Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

If no, state why an EqIA was not carried out below:

The panel is invited to comment on how to ensure that the Member Development process is inclusive for all new and existing members. These comments will be used to ensure that the process addresses any equality implications

Section 5 – Corporate Priorities

To help promote an Efficient and Effective Organisation - a modern and efficient Council that is able to meet the challenges ahead.

Section 6 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Steve Tingle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 18 September 2013		
Name: Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 27 September 2013		

Section 7 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Daksha Ghelani, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Tel: 020 8424 1881

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Background Papers: 2010 Members' Handbook & Induction Programme,
2010 Members' Essentials Pack.