

Meeting:	Member Development Panel
Date:	8 November 2005
Subject:	Member Induction 2006
Responsible Officer:	Director of People, Performance and Policy
Contact Officer:	Maggie Rees, Organisational Development Group Manager
Portfolio Holder:	Communications, Partnership and Human Resources
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

To (1) approve and comment on the draft outline programme, as set out in Appendix A;

(2) comment on the proposal to produce a DVD as part of the Member Induction pack.

Reason for report

The draft outline programme would ensure that Members receive a structured and timely induction programme.

Benefits

The proposals incorporate the issues that both Members and officers feel are most important for inclusion into the induction programme. The approach detailed in this report would address some of the concerns raised during the last induction in 2002, where Members felt that more structured events would help to improve the experience. The more structured approach would help to avoid overloading Members with too much information too soon.

Cost of Proposals

Additional Officer time, production of materials, including the DVD and costs of events themselves are estimated at £37,000. These costs would be equally spread over two financial years. Costs incurred in 2005/06 can be contained within the estimates for the year. Costs for 2006/7 will be contained from within the Member induction budget.

Risks

Failure to deliver an effective induction process would hinder the ability of Members to fulfil their role.

Implications if recommendations rejected

Officer/Member time required devising an alternative programme.

Section 2: Report

Background

Following initial preparations, a working group of officers has been set-up to help formulate and guide the planning for Members induction in May 2006. After consultation with Directors and the Panel, the Group have proposed a draft induction programme, set out in Appendix A. There will be a further report submitted to the Panel in Spring 2006 providing more detailed plans of the induction programme.

The proposal consists of three initial events open for all Members. The first of these sessions would be the Members Welcome Evening, scheduled for Monday 8 May 2006. The Welcome Evening would be an opportunity for Members to be introduced, receive presentations from senior Council officers and complete several administrative duties. Members would also be provided with a Welcome Pack. The second event would include tours of the Borough, the Civic Centre buildings and a HITS tour. The third event would expand upon the Councillors

role both within the Council and the community at large. The second and third events would be focussed on new members but open to all.

After the initial sessions, Members would be introduced with a more detailed account of the services provided by each of the Council's Directorates. This could take the form of several evening sessions or open days dedicated to each Directorate. From July 2006 the programme would be rolled out to include the remaining areas identified in Appendix A.

Statutory training, including Development Control Committee and Licensing Panel training will have to be arranged after the Annual Council meeting but before their first meetings of the 2006/07 Municipal Year.

In addition to the series of events set out in Appendix A, it is also proposed that Members receive a DVD as part of their induction pack. The objective of the DVD would be to explain a Members role in Harrow, be it on Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny and the Council as a whole. Once completed the DVD could also be used for other purposes, including induction for new staff.

Options considered

N/A

Consultation

Directors have been asked to suggest subjects for briefings/seminars as part of the induction programme. At its last meeting the Panel were invited to make suggestions on the content of the induction programme. As part of the evaluation of the 2005/06 Member Development Programme, all Members will be contacted to suggest subjects that should be included in the induction programme.

Financial Implications

See 'Cost of Proposals' above.

Legal Implications

The "promotion of wellbeing" power is set out in the Local Government Act 2000, section 2. It is the power to do anything that is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social, or environmental wellbeing of an area. This includes financial expenditure to promote wellbeing.

The Member Development Panel is empowered to prepare and assist in the delivery of the induction of new Councilors following the Borough elections or any by-elections (3-5 Constitution).

A structured induction programme for Members will ensure that they are better equipped to understand the decision making processes, the constitution and procedures of the Council, as well as the standards expected of them in particular the code of conduct. This will ensure that Members are able to deliver high quality services through democratic processes and therefore more able to promote the wellbeing of Harrow.

Equalities Impact

An impact assessment will be conducted by the working group as part of the planning for the induction programme.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

N/A

Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents

Appendices

Appendix A Draft Outline Member Induction Programme