

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

Meeting:	Member Development Panel
Date:	8 th February 2005
Subject:	Progress of programme development 2005/6
Key decision:	No
Responsible Chief Officer:	Executive Director (Organisational Development)
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder For Finance, Human Resources & Performance Management
Status:	Part 1
Ward:	N/A
Enclosures:	

1. Summary/ Reason for urgency (if applicable)

This report provides a review of member development from May – November 2004, summarises the proposed topics to the end of the Municipal year and the evaluation and needs analysis programme to be undertaken in January 2005.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the attached evaluation and needs analysis be undertaken in January in preparation for the 2005 Municipal year.

2.2 That a revised framework for member development is implemented which moves from an annual to a four yearly cycle.

REASONS:

To ensure the programme meets statutory requirements and individual members needs.

3. Consultation with Ward Councillors

3.1 N/A.

4. Policy Context (including Relevant Previous Decisions)

4.1 The annual cycle for member development and the content of the 2004-05 programme was agreed by Member Development Panel at its meeting on 21st April 2004.

5. Relevance to Corporate Priorities

5.1 The Council agreed the Improvement Plan for IDeA Review and Comprehensive Performance Assessment in March 2003. Effective Member Development is an integral part of the plan.

6. May – November 2004

6.1.1 A new logo for member development was developed and used.

6.1.2 A programme for 2004/05 was agreed at the Member Development Panel on 21st April, following consultation with members and Senior Officers. At that meeting, training for Members in Planning and Licensing was also acknowledged as essential, however time-scales for those were not known at that time.

6.1.3 The programme has required significant amendment as a result of these statutory and other requirements, and other priorities which have emerged during the year. Changes are to be expected during periods of rapid change for the Council.

6.1.4 The experiment to run seminars late in July in order to avoid clashes with other meetings was not successful. Sessions had few nominations and were cancelled.

6.1.5 Seminars have been run on: Participatory Budgeting, Community Cohesion, The future role of Local Government, Performance management, the Freedom of Information Act, The Licencing Act 2003, Introduction to the Planning System and Guidance on Ethical Standards, and The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act. These seminars have been well attended and will be evaluated as part of the planning process for 2005 -06.

6.1.6 Several courses have been cancelled to make space for the seminars listed above. These general courses had been requested by members, however, following advertisements, nominations had not been high. By this stage in the four year cycle, Members commitments are substantial, and it proves difficult for members to attend anything other than that which is essential for their role. A four year cycle for Member Development would take this into account

6.1.7 In order to provide training to members on the topics from cancelled seminars, a media training pack has been prepared and distributed and up-dates on contacts and services in the directorates are currently being prepared. The Code of Conduct and Special Needs training will be re-scheduled.

6.1.8 After some improvement in the later part of 2003-04, there have been a number of clashes of dates during the autumn of 2004. This is to some degree due to the number of unscheduled seminars which needed to be run during this period. It has proved impossible to avoid dates on which members have other council commitments. However, there were two occasions when member development sessions were scheduled on the same night. Action is being taken to ensure that co-ordination is improved to prevent this from recurring.

7. November 2004 – April 2005

7.1 The proposals for December 2004 – March 2005 will complete the programme identified in April 2004, and include additional seminars requested e.g. on the Freedom of Information Act. Up-dates on the work and contacts for the Directorates will also be included.

7.2 The formal evaluation of and planning process for 2005 – 2006 will be conducted during January. The proposed form for members to complete is attached.

8. Finance Observations

8.1 There are no additional financial implications as it is intended that any costs will be met from existing resources

9. Legal Observations

9.1 There are no legal implications.

10. Background Papers

Member Development Panel minutes 15th January 2004.

Member Development Panel minutes 21st April 2004

Member Development Programme 2004/05

Member Development Revised Programme October – December 2004.

12. Author

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