

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Standards Committee – 16 March 2023

Subject: Member Development and Training

Report of: City Solicitor

Summary

To update Standards Committee on the operation and efficacy of the Member Development Strategy and training delivered since February 2022.

Recommendations

That the committee

i) note the report on training delivered since February 2022.

ii) Approve the proposed changes to the Member Development Strategy.

Wards Affected All

Financial Consequences – Revenue None

Financial Consequences – Capital None

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

Standards Committee – 17 March 2022 – Member Development Strategy

1. Background

1.1 Standards Committee last received a report on Member training and development in March 2022. The purpose of this report is to present a detailed report on all training delivered since the last report and note some minor changes to the Member Development Strategy.

1.2 Member Development Strategy

1.3 The Member Development Strategy 2022 – 24 was approved by Standards Committee at its meeting of 17 March 2022.

1.4 The strategy set out a clear direction for delivering on Member development - focusing on the following key objectives:

- Ensure all Members are well equipped with the skills, knowledge and behaviours to enable them to fulfil their various roles effectively and to the best of their ability.
- Ensure that all members have equal access to training and development opportunities, providing extra resources to accommodate those with special requirements.
- Support a consistent approach to learning and development for Members
- Ensure that new Members are fully supported during induction and beyond to allow them to carry out their duties effectively, as quickly as possible.
- Broaden knowledge around Council business and areas of changing priorities.
- Encourage a supportive environment where Members help to develop their colleagues.
- Ensure that the learning and development of Members is recognised as crucial to the Council's success and to the success of the Our Manchester Strategy.
- Facilitate regular assessment of training needs and the learning and development programme by members.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the training programme and the Member Development strategy.
- Facilitate a planned and strategic approach to member development
- Establish an effective Member Development Group
- Develop and deliver (with Member involvement and engagement) an effective Member Learning and Development Programme.

1.5 The Member Development Strategy was fully reviewed in 2022 and subsequently approved by Standards Committee in March 2022. The Strategy is proposed to be updated in 2023 to reflect the fact that responsibility for Member Development has moved from the Statutory Deputy Leader's portfolio to the Deputy Leader's portfolio. The Monitoring Officer considers that no other changes are required this year. A copy of the updated Strategy 2022-24 can be found at Appendix A with changes highlighted in bold italics.

2. New Member Induction 2022

- 2.1 The New Member Induction programme 2022 was split into 3 sessions. The first session focused on legal and constitutional matters, including code of conduct for members, gifts and hospitality guidance, data protection, member / officer relations, access to information/need to know, use of Council resources guidance, Social Media guidance and governance and decision making. There was also an interactive session where members worked through a case study. The afternoon focused on an introduction to Members Services, a tour of members' facilities, an introduction to member Development, general housekeeping and the allocation of devices by ICT.
- 2.2 Session 2 was an afternoon session, later that same week. This session covered Member Safety and the role of Neighbourhood teams/Member casework. The casework session was delivered by the 2 Deputy Leaders with the Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources (ICT and Digital) presenting on the Caseworker case management system.
- 2.3 Session 3 (the following week) was an afternoon session following full Council and covered Key Strategies and Budget.
- 2.4 There was 100% attendance at all 3 sessions. Following the final session an electronic feedback form was sent out to all.
- 2.5 New members were provided with a Members Handbook. This guide covers basic information on how the Council is organised, decision making, the role of officers and directorate responsibilities as well as more practical matters such as claiming allowances and health and safety. Each section signposts members to the appropriate contact in the Council, where further information can be obtained. The handbook is a digital document which allows it to be regularly refreshed and updated. Also provided was a key contacts list of officers across the Council broken down by service area, structure charts and electronic links to the 'Our Manchester Strategy', The Council's budget 22/23, The Constitution and Social media guidance.
- 2.6 All slides from the 3 sessions were shared with the new members.
- 2.7 There was also a focused induction for a Councillor elected in February 2022. This Councillor was also invited to attend the induction following the May 2022 elections.

3. Induction Feedback from May 2022

- 3.1 A feedback evaluation form was sent out to all Members who attended the 3 sessions. 6 out of 8 completed a response.
- 3.2 The overall satisfaction rating for the programme averaged 4.7 out of 5 (up from 3.9 in 2021). It is worth noting that 4 of the 6 Councillors rated it 5 out of 5. When asked about the relevance of the programme to their role the average rating was 4.8 out of 5 (up from 4.3 in 2021).

- 3.3 Session1 (morning) - Average Rating 4.3 out of 5 (no change from 2021), with 3 of the Councillors rating it as 5 out of 5. Comments – one felt there was too much information, another would have liked more on ‘legal matters’
- 3.4 Session 1 (afternoon) - Average Rating 4.5 out of 5(up from 3.9 in 2021). 4 Councillors rated it 5 out of 5. Comments – ‘everyone was lovely and helpful’, ‘working with one IT technician was helpful’
- 3.5 Session 2 – Average Rating 4.3 out 5 (up from 4.1 in 2021). 3 Councillors rated it 5 out of 5. Comments - ‘structured well in particular surgery safety’, ‘would have liked more on neighbourhood teams/casework’, ‘shame the caseworker demo didn’t work’
- 3.6 Session 3 – Average Rating 4.5 out of 5 (up from 3.6 in 2021). 3 Councillors rated it 5 out of 5. Comments – ‘Very detailed but informative’, Budget presenter was brilliant’, ‘information overload’, ‘found this the hardest session’
- 3.7 The feedback above suggests that the 2 areas of concern raised in 2021, the distribution of ICT equipment and the timing of the casework session have both been addressed. However, there was a technical problem which prevented the live demonstration of the Caseworker case management system. This is the first year that a live demonstration has been attempted. A full training session on Caseworker, delivered by the service provider, was offered at the earliest opportunity following the induction.
- 3.8 For the first time, Members who were newly elected in May 2022 were contacted 6 months later to see if they had any outstanding training requirements which had not been met by the induction or the general member training offer. No such needs were identified.

4. Proposals for New Member Induction 2023

- 4.1 The feedback from 2022 has been considered in detail. As the feedback was overwhelmingly positive it is proposed to repeat the scheduling and format of the 2022 programme in 2023
- 4.2 In relation to the Caseworker session it is proposed to conduct further testing of the system, in advance of the session, to ensure that connectivity and a full demonstration is possible
- 4.3 New members will also be invited to attend the Our Manchester experience and Listening in Action events.
- 4.4 Equality and Inclusion and Carbon Literacy training will be delivered as stand alone, in-depth training modules outside of the induction sessions and form part of the new members on-going development. New members will also be expected to complete Cyber Security e-learning.

5. Member training February 2022 – January 2023

5.1 The Member Development Strategy determined that training and development would be classified as follows

- Mandatory.
- General - suitable for all, to ensure members are able to fulfil their roles.
- Specific - promoted to further develop skills/knowledge in a particular area.

The mix of training provided against these categories can be found in Appendix B.

5.2 In addition to the training highlighted in Appendix B, 5 members have attended Listening in Action events and 3 the 'Our Manchester' experience. E-learning continues to be available on Information Governance, Health and Safety and a wide variety of courses on softer skills such as effective communication, handling difficult situations etc. As the committee will be aware Ethical Guidance Newsletters are also circulated to members.

5.3 In relation to Carbon Literacy , 93 members have now attended the training. This figure has been achieved with significant input from the Executive and Deputy Executive Members for the Environment and Transport.

5.4 In relation to Equalities training, 69 members have now attended relevant training with further sessions being offered out late February for those who have not yet been able to attend.

5.5 63 members have now completed the Cyber Security e-learning module which has been designed specifically for members. The City Solicitor is closely monitoring completion rates and continues to highlight the importance of this training to those members who are yet to complete it. Where requested, individual support has been provided to members to enable them to access this training.

5.6 A bespoke 'induction' session for Executive members was also held, for the first time. The focus was on newer Executive members but all were invited to attend. The topics covered were Governance and Decision Making, Code of Conduct inc. Gifts & Hospitality with an interactive exercise, Member / Officer Relations Protocol, Executive Member Support / Use of Resources Guidance, Social Media Guidance and Freedom of Information/ Subject Access requests.

6. Attendance

6.1 Attendance levels at non-mandatory training events compared to the number who booked on, remained relatively high at 83%. A small increase on the 77% previously reported for 21/22. Attendance levels at mandatory training events is 100%.

6.2 In line with the Member Development Strategy, email reminders were sent to

members 7 days prior to training events. Where possible training is provided in afternoon/early evening sessions to suit member preferences and encourage attendance.

- 6.3 Where there has been non-appearance by members to training which they were expected to attend, they have been contacted in order to understand the reasons for non-attendance. Reasons given were varied and included 'Sickness', 'family bereavement', 'care issue' and 'work commitments'. To support members in virtual training sessions staff from Members Services attend where possible to troubleshoot issues members have when joining the training.
- 6.4 Use of sanctions for non-attendance at training was considered in the March 2019 report to Standards Committee on member training. It was agreed at that meeting not to impose sanctions but to keep the situation under review. As attendance levels remained generally good, the Monitoring Officer did not feel that further consideration of sanctions was necessary at the time of this report. It would appear that the measures being utilised are encouraging regular attendance. However, attendance levels will continue to be closely monitored. Should levels deteriorate then further consideration will be given to asking the committee to reconsider this option.

7. Evaluation of training

- 7.1 Feedback from members is a crucial element in evaluating the quality of training being provided. For in-house training we used the evaluation form adopted as part of the Member Development strategy. Generally external trainers use their own evaluation methods and we encourage them to share this information with us. In some instances, our internal form has also been used to gather feedback from external training. Analysis of feedback received from both internal and external training shows 98% felt that the training had met the aims and objectives and would recommend the training to others.

8. Scheduled training for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year

- 8.1 As highlighted in 5.4 above, Equalities training has been scheduled for February 2023 for those who have not yet been able to attend. Further sessions on Safeguarding are also being offered in February. Awareness training in Adverse Childhood Experiences(ACEs) and Trauma Informed Approaches is scheduled for March 2023.

9. Training Programme - May 2023- April 2024

- 9.1 Work is now taking place to produce a training programme for the 2023/24 municipal year. The programme will be considered by the Monitoring Officer and lead member for Training and Development before being circulated to members and chief officers.
- 9.2 The mix of training will reflect the mandatory, general and specific categories as referred to in paragraph 5.1 above. The programme is likely to include

topics such as Corporate Parenting, Revenues and Benefits, Public Speaking and speech writing and Three Ways to Save a Life. Following a recommendation from the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee in January a session on Advice Services is being organised. Discussions have also taken place about a Wellbeing session for members.

10. Budget

The annual budget for Member Training is set at £28,567. The spend against the budget 01/02/22 – 31/01/23 was £16,033.22. It is anticipated that the budget for 2023/24 will remain at £28,567.

11. Recommendation

The Recommendations are set out at the front of the report .