Employment Committee

Date: 29th September 2009

Agenda Item: 7

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Report on Elected Members' Training Plan for 2009/10

1.	**Purpose of Report**

1.1 To provide information to the Committee on the results of the Elected Members' Training Needs Analysis which was carried out during August 2009.

1.2 For the Committee to consider the views of the Elected Members with regards to the identified training and development needs.

2.	**Recommendation**

2.1 That the Committee agrees the identified training priorities of Elected Members for the next twelve months.

3.	**Details of Report**

3.1 Elected Members' Training and Development is a key factor in Lichfield District Council's continuing performance as a good council.

3.2 To ensure the training and development events meet the needs of the Members, we asked the Committee to guide us on content of the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and how best to communicate it to Members and continue to improve completion rates by member.

3.3 A Training Needs Analysis was sent to all Members with the request that everyone complete the form and at very least send in a nil return. We have had a reduced return rate over last year. An overview of the approach on training and essential areas to be addressed following the return of feedback is contained in **Appendix 1.**

3.4 The Modern Councillor' online e-learning package is still available until the license expires in October should any Member wish to use it. An outline of module contents can be seen in **Appendix 2.**

4.	**Consultation**
4.1	This Committee has been kept fully informed.

5.	**Financial Implications**

5.1 A budget for Member training has been allocated and will be used to fund training in a way that meets the priority needs of the majority of Members.

6.	**Strategic Plan Implications**

6.1　Training will continue to specifically address corporate priorities and issues highlighted in the Strategic Plan.

7.	**Human Rights Issues**

7.1　There are no direct implications.

8.	**Risk Management Issues**

The risks are identified below.

Description of Risk	likelihood/ impact	Risk Status	Countermeasures	Responsibilities
Members availability to attend relevant training events	Medium/Low	Tolerable	Continue to explore flexible means of delivering training.	Members, Employment Committee and officers allocated to support Member training
The risk of members failing to engage / attend planned training.	Medium/Medium	Material	Need to find ways of ensuring members engage with their own personal Development	Members, Employment Committee and officers allocated to support Member training.
Waste of resources /costs effectiveness associated with none attendance.	Low/Low	Tolerable	Encouraging members to attend events or make the training compulsory	Members, Employment Committee and officers allocated to support Member training.

ELECTED MEMBER TRAINING PROPOSAL – SEPTEMBER 2009 ONWARDS

1. Background

1.1 A modern and effective Local Government organisation requires an Elected Member development programme that ensures Members can fulfil their responsibilities to the local community and provide clear leadership and effective scrutiny of local Council functions.

1.2 This requires a planned approach to Elected Member development and the analysis of the feedback from Members will support the formulation of a training plan.

2. Training Programme

2.1 Set out is a breakdown of the analysis of the feedback received from the Members' recent Training Needs Analysis.

2.2 The essential training along with the training selected by Members will form the basis of the Member Development Plan for the year ahead, and be supported by an individual training record for each Councillor that identifies both training undertaken and specific training that has been requested. The progress on delivering the Plan will be reported to Employment Committee on a regular basis, for monitoring and developing as appropriate.

<u>**Members' Training Needs Analysis 2009**</u>

Returns 2009	%	Returns 2008	%
27/56 (10 nil returns)	48.2	30/56 (9 nil returns)	53.5

Key Priorities of the Council	Comments	Actions/Delivery
Probity	All members	To be determined
Planning	Planning Committee Members	To be determined
Audit	Audit Committee Members	To be determined
Finance	Executive, Audit Committee and Members	To be determined
Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy	All members	To be determined

Key Priorities Identified by Members	Numbers expressing interest	Comments	Actions/Delivery
Dealing with Housing Issues	9		We will work with officers in housing to arrange sessions on these key issues over the next 6 months
Licensing and Regulation	9	Procedure and	We will work with officers in

		questioning skills	Licensing to arrange a session over next 12 months.
Understanding of Member's role in Overview and Scrutiny has been raised by a number of councillors,	7	That not enough Members understand how to challenge information. There was strong opinion that this should be a core skill area.	We will undertake training on this important area, and explore what resources may be available from the region.
Environmental Health – particularly environmental crime such as fly-tipping and litter	6	A session is being arranged in the next few months.	We will work with officers in environmental health services to arrange sessions on these key issues over the next 6 months
* Explanation of *LAA/ LSP's*	6		There is a *WMRIEP's* Learning to Deliver programme on this subject, although due to minimum of 20 required, we are likely to have to hold it in conjunction with another authority. There is a choice of modules available, one is working with partners.
Climate Change	6	Targets and how these will affect the Council	We will look at how this need may be met.
Risk Management	6	Sessions last held in 2006	We will ask Risk and Resilience to look at this training need.
e-democracy	6	Very little interest previously.	We will source training – an e-learning package may be of interest to some members.
Procedural Issues (How and when to call in a decision, getting your point across at committee,)	5		Bal Nahal is arranging a session including a refresher on Code of Conduct. over the next 6 months
Communication and the media	5	This was raised as very important by these members in the light of the incident in North Lichfield and its aftermath in the media. Handling the press, handling interviews	External training provider would need to be arranged, which would take a significant portion of the budget (£2k).
Other Training Needs		Representing the Community (3) Data Protection (4) Understanding reports (1) Could be included as part of scrutiny Corporate Manslaughter (4)	Much of this training can be done through e- learning/ relevant reading or places on generic courses with neighbouring councils will be sought. *WMLGA* Member Steering Group has developed a core skills programme for members. Some Councillors have already attended regional sessions on *CAA*, Scrutiny and

			Climate Change. Sessions will be communicated to all members as they are arranged.
A few requests for a tour of the building and an opportunity to meet key LDC officers.	3	Allow Members to know who to contact when issues arise and establish working relationships.	TBA – Open afternoon?
IT Skills have not been raised as a priority although there are still some needs.	7	Various needs, particularly around use of the internet and 3 still requiring help with e-mail	These will be passed to the *ICT Manager to determine how to meet needs re e-mail and using the internet

* Key

LAA/ LSP's	Local Area Agreement & Local Spatial Plans
WMRIEP	West Midlands Regional Improvement Partnership
e-democracy	expand participation and build stronger democracies and communities through the power of information and communication technologies and strategies.
WMLGA	West Midlands Local Government Association
CAA	Comprehensive Area Assessments
ICT	Information & Communications Technology

The Modern Councillor Courses

The courses are designed to be easy to use, short and engaging, enabling busy councillors to learn in their own time and at their own pace. The courses have all been produced with the help of experts from within the Local Government sector and include examples, case studies and scenarios specifically relevant for today's Elected Representative.

Introduction to Local Government
This module was commissioned by the IDeA for Learning Pool and is designed to give you an insight into the purpose of local government, how it operates, who it involves and how it came about.

Whether you are new to local government, and completing this module as part of your induction, or are already working in the sector, this module will provide you with interesting facts and information, and links to other resources. There are 5 sections which each take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Overview and Scrutiny
Overview and scrutiny is the way councils can achieve community leadership, good governance and by which councillors can become powerful and influential politicians. Overview and scrutiny is potentially the most exciting and powerful element of the entire local government modernisation process. It places members at the heart of policy making. This course will explore what overview and scrutiny is and why it is important. It is broken down into 3 sections and will normally take 30 minutes to complete in full.

Your role as a Councillor
Particularly useful for newly elected councillors, this course introduces you to your role and explores your motivations for becoming a councillor. We also look at the personal attributes needed for you to be successful for your community.

The key aspects of your role as community leaders and representatives of the citizens in your wards are examined, along with how decisions are made within different councils. You're also given the opportunity to assess your newly-gained understanding in a practical exercise.

Community Leadership
Focusing on Understanding Community Leadership, Achieving Effective Leadership and Community cohesion, this course aims to encourage councillors to think about what it means to lead their communities; explain where the new focus on leading communities has arisen from and it follows our very own Cllr Pete Bennett as he addresses issues in his local community.
In addition the course touches on how Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements contribute to community leadership and considers how Councillors can help make their communities more cohesive. Comprising four sections, this course will take just over 30 minutes to complete in one go or about 9 minutes per section.

Information Technology in Local Government
Information technology is at the heart of delivering better and more citizen-centred services. This course approaches Information Technology (IT) from two perspectives - IT and Transformation, and IT and Councillors.

This course explains the Transformational Government vision and how it is expected to shape the services that local authorities provide for the future. It also explores the many benefits that technology

can bring to your work as an elected member.

Risk Management
This 30 minute module uses scenarios and case studies to illustrate what risk is and how to manage it.

Using our fictional council of Wickstaffordshire, the module covers how to manage risk, why managing risk is so important (and how it affects your CPA score) plus what some sources of risk are.

Including practical models, such as the Risk Management Cycle, and links to information for those who want to study in more depth, this course is essential for those who need to know how to identify, analyse and mitigate risks.

Code of Conduct
This module provides an introduction to the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Elected Members and it explains what councillors need to do to comply with the new 2007 Code. It covers the need to register interests, the difference between personal and prejudicial interests and what action you need to take when one becomes apparent. It also identifies the consequences for Councillors and their authorities in breaching the Code.

Public Speaking
Public speaking skills don't come naturally to everybody; many people would rather do anything than stand up and speak in public. As a councillor it's a key part of your role. This course will show you how to give yourself the best chance of success.

Working with the Media
This course explores best practice around media interviews, guides you through the preparation and the interview itself, and helps you to understand the interviewer's motivation. It examines the process for dealing with crisis situations and equips you to approach interviews with broadcast or published media confidently. The course will normally take between 30 and 40 minutes to complete.

Chairing Meetings
This course examines the key skills involved in chairing meetings effectively, including pre-meeting preparation, how to ensure that everyone is heard and ensuring that the meeting's objectives are achieved. It also addresses the importance of political neutrality for the role of the chair.

Data protection
A subject that is important at any time, this module summarises the key data protection principles and explores scenarios in which the security of data can be compromised. It provides guidance to councillors on working securely with the data that they encounter.

Equality & Diversity
Our E & D course summarises the six strands of equalities legislation, and reminds councillors of the importance of respecting differences and providing services to everyone without discrimination. Various scenarios in the course help councillors to explore their obligations under the legislation.

Licensing and Regulation
This course considers the key aspects of the new Licensing Act as it applies to licensing decisions. You will find scenarios that explore the four main areas of licensing and regulation: licensing, gambling, hackney carriages and sex shops.   The course focuses on the way in which councillors should participate in meetings and arrive at decisions, as well as on the legislation itself.