**REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL MANAGER**

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**ELECTED MEMBERS LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT NEEDS ANALYSIS 2013**

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| **1.** | **Purpose of Report** |
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1.1 To seek the opinion of the Committee as to the content of the 2013 Elected Members Learning & Development Needs Analysis (LDNA) and how best to ensure a high level of response.

| **2.** | **Recommendation** |
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2.1 That the Employment Committee provides advice and direction on the above LDNA.

2.2 That the Committee considers the outcome of the survey at its next meeting to ensure that Member learning and development priorities are met.

2.3 That the Committee advises on how best to promote learning and development to Elected Members.

| **3.** | **Details of Report** |
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3.1 Elected Member Learning & Development is a key factor in Lichfield District Council's continuing performance as a good council.

3.2 To ensure that Learning & Development events are meeting the needs of Members, we would ask the Committee to provide us with guidance on the content of the attached document and how best this should be communicated given that unless the Members actively promote their own Learning and Development, we cannot ensure that Members will take up opportunities presented to them.

3.3 This Committee has been active in promoting and improving the numbers responding to the LDNA and the data insert below indicates and average of over 55% response rate over the last three years. Although this is an improvement over previous years there is still some way to go to ensure that Members are taking up the Learning and Development opportunities that this Committee has identified as important.

| Returns 2012 | % | Returns 2011 | % | Returns 2010 | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 37/56( 8 nil returns | 66.1 | 30/56 (1 nil return | 53.5 | 30/56 (1 nil return) | 46.4 |

3.4 The purpose of the survey is to identify any individual learning and development requirements to ensure that Members are able to fulfil their role as a Councillor most effectively. There are some areas identified as key requirements for Members to attend namely:

- Probity – All members

- Planning – Planning Committee and other members as they wish.

- Audit- Audit Committee Members

- Fraud Awareness- All Members

- Equality & Diversity – All Members

- Overview & Scrutiny – Relevant Members

- Regulatory & Licensing- Regulatory and Licensing Committee

- Understanding Local Government Finance

There was feedback last year that members would like the opportunity to attend training on subjects like planning and licensing. Whilst we particularly encourage relevant committee members to attend, invitations are open to all members in deed, it would be very prudent with Committee changes if all members took up such learning opportunities. Invitations will usually be sent to all Members but will also be detailed on the Calendar of Meetings.

3.5 Update on the 2013/14. Learning & Development Plan.

3.5.1 Members also identified other key development areas in addition to the above corporate priorities and the following sessions have been planned for 2013/14.

- Localism was identified as priority in 2012 and 2013. Training was given in May & October 2012 by the Planning Advisory Service. A training session on the Community Infrastructure Levy was held on 17 September 2013 and attended by 18 members. Further sessions are not planned at this time.

- There are 3 member training dates in the Calendar which are planned for Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and Scrutiny Skills. Any additional topics will require extra calendar dates.

- Responding to Emergencies was identified as high priority for this year however, we are currently restructuring this service area and no firm dates have been set; this information has been given to officers who will be responsible for this service from January 2014.

- A few councillors require some further development around using email accounts. We are introducing new computer software in the Spring 2014 and this topic will be addressed at that time. See section 3 of Appendix A.

- 4 members attended regional training on Community Budgeting in September 2012, and one member attended a regional event on public health.

- There has been no new member events offered regionally from West Midlands Employers for 2013. However, there are some Planning Advisory Service events coming up in Jan 2014 which will be publicised to all councillors.

- There are various development opportunities available through the Local Government Association (LGA), many of which are heavily subsidised, such as the Leadership Academy for new or aspiring Cabinet members. There are also events based on specialisms such as Planning, Sport and Culture.

- The LGA also deliver a development programme for younger councillors, to which our councillors have been invited. These programmes are usually run at weekends to accommodate work priorities; none of our councillors have taken up this opportunity.

3.5.2  The Committee are asked to give advice and guide to officers on how best to promote these learning opportunities to relevant councillors.

3.5.3  This Committee is asked to recommend that when there are Cabinet changes, senior Councillors are encouraged to attend relevant events as part of their development into the role.

Given our financial constraints we need to continue to be flexible and creative in supporting Member development through different means e.g. sending out briefing notes, attending regional courses where available and working with our neighbouring councils where appropriate.

3.6  **Appendix A** sets out the LDNA Questionnaire 2013 along with a Personal Development Tool for Members.

| 4. | Consultation |
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4.1  The views of the Committee are welcomed.

| 5. | Financial Implications |
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5.1  There is a budget allocated for Elected Member development.

5.2  When Members do not attend the events there is a cost to the Council in terms of poor value for money in relation to the cost of development for Members actually attending.

| 6. | Strategic Plan Implications |
|---|---|

6.1  Member development is fundamental to ensuring the Council's objectives are achieved.

| 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 events | Medium/Low | Tolerable | Introduce more flexible ways of learning and Development e.g. on line packages | Members, Employment Committee and officers allocated to support Member development |
| The risk of members failing to engage / attend planned events | 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 development |
| Waste of resources /costs effectiveness associated with none attendance. | Low/Low | Tolerable | Encouraging members to attend events or make the development compulsory | Members, Employment Committee and officers allocated to support Member development. |

# Elected Members Learning and Development Needs Analysis 2013

# Elected Members Learning and Development Needs Analysis 2013

Elected Member Training & Development is a key factor in Lichfield District Council's continuing performance as a good council.

Sufficient time and funds need to be allocated to make this Learning & Development effective.

- Provision will be made in your Calendar of 5 firm Learning & Development dates throughout the coming year, and there are specific training dates in the diary. This will ensure that elected Members have adequate notice of training events and can plan accordingly.

- Events will also be arranged to brief Elected Members in legislation and similar issues.

- A budget has been set that will provide sufficient funding for the 5 proposed Learning & Development dates.

To ensure that Learning & Development events are meeting the needs of Members, you are invited to express your Learning & Development requirements on the attached Members Learning & Development Needs questionnaire. To help you identify your own development needs, I have included a **self review tool** for you to work through. This will help you reflect on what are the core skills of an effective councillor, where you see your own strengths and where you might need to develop further. It then gives some ideas on what initiatives could be taken to meet those needs. This is for your own private use and does not need to be returned.

- The questionnaire will be issued at Full Council on 10th December 2013.

- After working through the development tool, transfer your Development needs on to the questionnaire.

- **Please** make full use of the section inviting your own ideas for topics not covered in the lists, so that your Development Programme can be tailored to your individual needs.  If numbers are small, alternative options to an on-site workshop will be sought e.g. Regional events, briefing notes.

- **There is no need** to list legislation issues because these will be covered as essential topics that will be directed at those Elected Members for whom it is relevant.

- **Please** return the completed form to the Learning & Development Officer, Mandy Linthwaite, as soon as possible but in any case by 16th January 2014.

- **NIL RETURN:**

This form should be returned even if you decide that **you do not require** any further development at this time. In this case, indicate in the Nil Return section at the end of the questionnaire. This gives an indication of the numbers who are unlikely to attend events.

# Members Learning & Development Needs 2013 (LDNA)

The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify any individual Learning & Development requirements to ensure that you are able to fulfil your role as a Councillor most effectively.

**1.** We regularly organise training around key areas:

- Code of conduct/ potential changes

- Planning

- Audit

- Finance

- Overview and Scrutiny

- Regulatory and Licensing training

- Fraud Awareness

- Understanding Local Government Finance

**All Members** are welcome to attend these events. Invitations will usually be sent to relevant Members but will also be detailed on the Calendar of meetings.

If there is anything within the above areas you would like us to cover please indicate below:

## 2. Current Learning Priorities

**Please tick in the relevant row, the main learning and development needs that you currently feel you require:**

| LEARNING OR DEVELOPMET REQUIRED | SUBJECT | DESCRIPTION OF LEARNING OR DEVELOPMENT |
|---|---|---|
| | **Chairing Meetings** | Manage meetings more effectively, questioning, listening and timing |
| | **Effective Ward member** | Being an effective community leader |
| | **Data Protection and Freedom of Information** | Understand current legislation, its impact on the Council and your responsibilities |
| | **Speed Reading** | Learn new strategies and techniques to enable you to read and assimilate information faster |
| | **Managing Time effectively** | How to get organised, manage your paperwork, prioritising |
| | **O&S Skills** | Personal skills to improve effectiveness for O&S, eg questioning skills, challenging others |

## 3. Information Technology

An Officer and Member Working Group are currently looking at options to update the Council's IT software from Microsoft Office 2003. Once a proposal has been agreed, training will be offered to all Members to understand the changes in presentation and functionality between the current version and the new version. The new version will improve your version of Outlook Web Access. It is likely that this training will take place in 2014.

Do you require training to use the Council's e-mail or Outlook Web Access?
Yes / No     (Please delete as appropriate)

Any particular areas that you would like covered?

 Is there any area of IT where you would like additional support /development?

|  |
|---|
|  |

**4.**

4. **Other topics**. We recognise there may be other learning and development needs that have not been covered, please give details below of any issues, subject areas or ideas for learning & development delivery below:

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5. **Preferred time to attend a training session (please tick appropriate box)**

Morning ☐        Afternoon ☐     Evening ☐

**NIL RETURN:**

In this case, please indicate below.

No further learning or development required at this time.   Yes/No   (Please delete as appropriate)

Signed: …………………………………………………….. Date: …………………………..

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.  The results will be used to develop the programme of learning for 2014/15. All individual responses will be treated as confidential.**

*Please return this form to Mandy Linthwaite, Learning & Development Officer by 16th January 2014.*

# Self Review Tool for Members

The toolkit below is intended to help you reflect on your own skills and identify areas you would like to develop. It is based on the Political Skills Framework recently revised by the Local Government Association (LGA). There are then some suggestions of how these training needs may be met.

**What is the Political Skills Framework?**

Whilst councillor's responsibilities may remain largely unaltered, the environment in which they work has evolved considerably. To be effective in any role you need to know what is required of you and the knowledge and skills to achieve it. The Framework sets out to identify the core skills required by councillors, which was developed by research with 350 councillors.

The result was that 6 core skill areas were identified that apply to all councillors:

- **Local leadership** – engages enthusiastically with the community in order to learn, understand and act upon issues of local concern. Mediates fairly and constructively.
- **Communication skills** – listens sensitively, uses appropriate language, checks for understanding. Speaks clearly and confidently in public and makes sure that people are informed.
- **Partnership working –** builds positive relationships by making others feel valued, trusted and included, working collaboratively, maintains calm and focus and is able to take a long term view.
- **Regulating and monitoring –** understands and executes judicial role by following protocol. Adhering to the code of conduct, making decisions that balance public needs and local policy. Ensures progress by monitoring and evaluating.
- **Scrutiny and challenge –** Acts as a critical friend, analyses information quickly and presents arguments in a concise, meaningful and easily accessible way. Seeking opportunities for scrutiny. (This would include understanding Local Government Finance).
- **Political understanding –** acts ethically, consistently and with integrity when communicating values or representing group views in decision-making. Works across group boundaries without compromising values or ethics.

**How can we use it?**

For each of these 6 core skills, there is a page that asks you to think about your strengths and where you might need to develop. There are some suggestions about training we might offer to help you in each area but this is not a definitive list. If you have any suggestions on training then please add them on section 5 of the Learning and Development Questionnaire.

This self review tool is to help you. You do not need to return these pages. Once you have worked through it, please complete the Members Learning and Development Needs questionnaire and return it to Mandy Linthwaite.

If you would like to discuss how you may develop in any of these skill areas or need any help, please contact Mandy Linthwaite a call on 01543 308106 or Cathy Pepper on 01543 308112.

## 1. How do I see myself as a ward member?

What do you see as your particular strengths?

| | Prompts: |
|---|---|
| | - What sections of my community have I engaged with and canvassed opinion?<br>- How have I looked for new ways of representing people?<br>- Who have I built partnerships with?<br>- How do I champion others' needs? |

Which areas would you like to improve?

**Suggested training:**
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information ( e-learning)
- Handling difficult constituents – Handling Casework (workbook)

- Equality and Diversity
- Community Leadership (see LGA website for workbook or Members Online section)

- Managing Time Effectively
- Influencing and negotiation skills (workbook)

Any other training in this area?

## 2. How good am I at regulating and monitoring?

What do you see as your particular strengths?

| | Prompts: |
|---|---|
| | - How effectively do I chair meetings and keep them on track<br>- Do I know enough about the legal process and the procedural aspects of meetings?<br>- Do I monitor others to ensure progress?<br>- Are my judgements based on evidence? |

Which areas would you like to improve?

**Suggested training:**
- Chairing and facilitating meetings ( workbook or training session)
- Understanding licensing issues
- Financial skills, finding and interpreting information
- Planning (any new issues)
- O&S skills
- Scrutiny of finance (workbook)

Any other training in this area?

## 3. How good am I at communicating with others?

What do you see as your particular strengths?

| | Prompts: |
|---|---|
| | <ul><li>How regularly do I use newsletters, emails or local media to communicate with different sections of the community?</li><li>How well do I listen to others and adapt my style to their needs?</li><li>Am I confident when speaking in public?</li><li>Would others say I speak and write well?</li><li>Do I feedback regularly to others to keep them informed?</li><li>Do I feel confident using technology to communicate with people?</li></ul> |

Which areas would you like to improve?

**Suggested training:**
- IT – using e-mail and Outlook
- Communication and Working with the media (workbook or training session)
- Influencing skills (workbook)
- Socail media (workbook)

Any other training in this area?


## 4. How good am I at working in partnership?

What do you see as your particular strengths?

| | Prompts: |
|---|---|
| | <ul><li>What networks and partnerships have I developed?</li><li>Do I stay focused and calm under pressure?</li><li>Do I have a good understanding of the partnerships the Council has and the agreements we work with?</li><li>Do I value and include people from different backgrounds?</li><li>Do I have good relationships with colleagues and officers?</li></ul> |

Which areas would you like to improve?

**Suggested training:**
- Equality and Diversity
- Localism
- Neighbourhood and community engagement (workbook)
- Working with town and parish councils (workbook)
- Engaging young people (workbook)

Any other training in this area?

## 5. How good am I at scrutiny and challenge?

What do you see as your particular strengths?

| | Prompts: |
|---|---|
| | • What new areas have I identified for scrutiny?<br>• How well do I deal with new information?<br>• Am I constructive in my criticism?<br>• Am I objective and rigorous when challenging processes or people?<br>• Do I ask for explanations and check that things have happened<br>• Are my arguments concise, meaningful and easily understood? |

Which areas would you like to improve?

**Suggested training:**
- Overview and Scrutiny skills
- Procedural Issues
- Chairing meetings (training session or workbook)
- Scrutiny of Finance (workbook)_

Any other training in this area?

## 6. How good am I at political understanding?

What do you see as your particular strengths?

| | Prompts: |
|---|---|
| | • Are my group' values reflected in what I do?<br>• How do I build cohesion within my group and improve communication?<br>• How have I developed my polical intelligence ( eg. Understanding of local and national policy and its implications for the Council)?<br>• How do I work with different views and values?<br>• When did I work across political boundaries?<br>• Are my judgements based on evidence? |

Which areas would you like to improve?

**Suggested training:**
- Updates on new issues in Planning, Environmental Health, Licensing, etc.
- Localism
- Community Leadership (workbook)
- The Road Not Taken – New Ways of Working for District Councils (booklet available on LGA website)

Any other training in this area?