

Report of the Head of Legal Services

9. Member Development Plan 2016

Purpose of report

1. To provide Members with the draft Member Development Plan 2016 for approval.
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Recommendations

It is recommended that the Member Development Plan 2016 attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

Introduction and Background

2. The Code of Corporate Governance requires that arrangements are put in place to support Members to enable them to carry out their roles on the Authority effectively. To facilitate this requirement, the Authority has adopted a Member Development Strategy from which a three year rolling programme (2013 to 2016) was established.
3. The rolling programme aims to be fire authority specific and complimentary to the programmes provided by constituent authorities. The key objective is to provide opportunities for Members to improve their knowledge and awareness, thereby strengthening their roles in decision making and in providing challenge.
4. The rolling programme comprises a plan for each year which provides a range of information on core issues. The sessions link in with key foundations and objectives as set out in Our Strategy and have been influenced by the feedback received from Members on previous sessions. The regular Members' Bulletin also provides information on issues such as community safety campaigns, capital projects and keeps Members updated on new regulations and Code of Conduct issues.

Member Development Themes

5. In 2013/14, the plan linked in with the Our Strategy theme of 'People and Resources', focussing on the Role of the Authority Member, Ethical Framework and Equality & Diversity, Firefighter Training and Community Engagement.

6. The theme for 2014/15 was 'Our Services, Buildings, Fleet & Equipment' and included the Members' Tour of Facilities and further provision of information in the Members' Bulletin on capital projects, fleet and equipment.
7. The theme for 2015/16 was "Resourcing for the Future" which included sessions on financial issues such as pensions and strategic projects running until 2020 together with the Members' Tour of Facilities. Members also had an opportunity to attend the Service exercise at the Fire Service College to observe how resources are deployed at a major complex incident involving other first responders.
8. The Member Development Programme incorporates a detailed Members' Induction during those years where local elections for Worcestershire County and Herefordshire Councils (the constituent authorities) take place as this tends to result in a higher change in Fire Authority membership than at any other time. All Members are invited to the Members' Induction as it can provide a useful refresher session. There has also been an element of repetition in the annual plans to accommodate the difference in timing of elections and subsequent new Members.
9. During years where there are no elections there tends to be very few changes in Authority membership. Any such changes are catered for by an informal session with lead Officers.

Member Development 2016

10. This year is the final year of the current Member Development Strategy. It is proposed that the programme will focus upon the key objectives of "Ensuring Firefighter Safety" and "Ensuring Community Safety", as set out in Our Strategy. Both these objectives are built on the foundations covered in the Member Development Programme since 2013. Further details are attached at Appendix 1.
11. The 2017-2020 Member Development Strategy will be drafted over the coming months and will be influenced by factors such as national issues, the strategic requirements of the Authority, Member feedback on previous sessions, the Fire Authority Member role description and the Member Development Programmes of the constituent authorities. The 2017-2020 Strategy will be brought to the Authority for consideration in December 2016.

Conclusion/Summary

12. In order to assist Members to carry out their role in decision making and in providing challenge, the Authority has adopted a Member Development Strategy from which a three year rolling programme was established. The rolling programme comprises an annual plan that includes a range of information on key issues, linked to the themes set out in Our Strategy.
13. The plan for 2016 follows the theme "Ensuring Firefighter and Community Safety" and is attached at Appendix 1 for the consideration of the Committee.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Sessions will be facilitated in house and will require the input of key members of staff.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	The Programme links with Our Strategy.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	N/A
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	The feedback from Members has been incorporated in the development of the Programme.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Draft Member Development Plan 2016

Background papers – Member Development Strategy 2013-2016, Member Role Description

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