

16. Member Development 2011/2012

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on the current position with regards to Member Development.
-

Recommendation

The Member Development Champions recommend that the report be noted.

Introduction and Background

2. The Code of Corporate Governance sets out the Authority's values and principles which underpin its governance arrangements. The values that have been adopted by the Authority set the standard expected of Members and officers responsible for governance. It is against these values and principles that our structures and procedures will be tested on an annual basis to ensure that they remain effective.
3. One of the principles of good governance that the Authority has adopted is to develop the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective. Good practice recommends that to demonstrate the practice of this principle Authorities should:
 - Provide induction programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for Members to update their knowledge on a regular basis.
 - Assess the skills required by Members and make a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively.
 - Ensure that effective arrangements are in place for reviewing the performance of individual Members and agreeing an action plan which might; for example, aim to address any training or development needs.

Member Development Programme 2010/11

4. The Committee Services Team developed a Programme for 2010/11 that aimed to improve the support and information available to Members and ensure that Members were properly trained to enable them to carry out their roles as Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority.
5. This incorporated an annual Induction for new Members, which included the legislative framework for the Fire and Rescue Services and an initial session on the Members' Code of Conduct. This session was also a useful refresher for existing Members to keep updated with changes in the Service.

6. The Development Programme also provided a range of seminars on core issues to which all Members were invited. It aimed to provide opportunities for Members to improve their knowledge and skills in relation to their role as key decision-makers and linked in with the Authority's key objectives.
7. In addition to the core programme there were sessions provided for Members with specific roles eg Committee Members, Member Champions, Chairs and Vice-Chairs. Committee Services also provided opportunities for all Members to remain up to date with operational developments in service delivery through equipment demonstrations, station open days and briefings.

Member Development 2011/2012

8. In June this year, the Authority appointed three Members (one from each political group) to act as Member Development Champions and promote the training and development amongst their Groups and the Authority. The Member Development Champions are Mrs L. Hodgson, Mr C.T. Smith and Mr D.C. Taylor.
9. Following a meeting with the Member Development Champions it was agreed that Members should be surveyed to establish their current skills and knowledge and how these areas could be developed. A copy of the skills questionnaire will be distributed at the Authority meeting for completion. Member Development Champions are keen to encourage their fellow Members to complete the survey and for all Members to maintain their commitment to develop their skills and knowledge.
10. The results of the questionnaires will be analysed to inform the next phase of the Member Development Programme. This next stage of the programme will build on the knowledge and skills developed in 2010/11 and will be tailored to the specific needs of Authority Members, where possible.
11. It is envisaged that the programme will again be Service specific and supplementary to sessions delivered at the Constituent Authorities by focussing on the needs of Members and co-ordinating with local Councils. Most sessions will be delivered using in-house staff and where possible the potential for undertaking sessions in conjunction with other Authorities will be investigated. The Authority has previously made a commitment to developing the skills of Members by identifying funds within the 2011/12 revenue budget. Any external sessions that may be required will be funded using this existing budget.
12. The Member Development Champions also discussed how Members could be given opportunities to visit locations and staff in each District to provide an overview of areas such as specialist vehicles, types of appliances, training facilities and scenarios. The Committee Services Team will progress this as part of the overall Development Programme.

Summary

13. One of the principles of good governance that the Authority previously adopted is to develop the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective. This report updates Members on the current position with regards to Member Development and encourages all Members to undertake a skills analysis by completing a survey which will help in identifying their needs. This will enable an assessment to be made regarding the skills required by Members.

Financial Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e paragraph no.
There are financial issues that require consideration	Yes	Paragraph 11

Legal Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e paragraph no.
There are legal issues e.g. contractual and procurement, reputational issues that require consideration	No	

Additional Considerations

14. The table below sets out any additional issues arising from the proposals contained in this report and identifies the relevant paragraphs in the report where such issues are addressed.

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e paragraph no.
Resources (e.g. Assets, ICT, Human Resources, Training & Development, Sustainability).	Yes	Paragraph 11
Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact).	Yes	Paragraph 6
Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).	No	
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No	

Supporting Information

None

Contact Officer

Alison Hughes, Corporate Support Manager
(01905 368331)

Email: ahughes@hwfire.org.uk