

Report to	-	Council
Date	-	15 May 2017
Report of the	-	Member Development Task Group
Subject	-	Annual Report of the Member Training and Development Task Group

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**Recommendation:** It be **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

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### Introduction

1. The Member Development Task Group (MDTG) provides a structured and on-going Member-led approach to Member training and development. This report provides Members with an annual update on Member Training and Development issues.
2. The Membership of the MDTG is usually fixed for the life of the Council (as far as possible) but two changes were made in the last year following the resignation of Councillor Rowlinson and change in political group for Councillor Watson. The current membership is confirmed as: Councillors Lord Ampthill (Member Training and Development Champion and Chairman), Azad (newly elected 2015 Member), Clark (non-Group Member), Dixon (Liberal Democrat Group Leader), Graham (newly elected 2015 Member), Kenward (Conservative Group) and Oliver (Independent Group Leader).
3. The MDTG has met four times since the last annual report and the minutes arising from the meetings are highlighted within the Members' Bulletin eZine and published on the Members' Area of the website.
4. Whilst the initial intensive training requirement for the newly elected Council has passed, there has remained a steady provision of Training and Development opportunities for Members during the past 12 months.

### South East Charter for Member Development

5. Members will be aware that the Council currently holds the South East Employers' Charter for Elected Member Development which was awarded for a third time in December 2014. The Charter provides a robust, structured framework designed to help the Council enhance and hone Member development; it demonstrates this Council's commitment to developing its Councillors in order to assist with the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and meeting the needs of the community.
6. The Charter award is for a period of three years subject to an 18 month review. The 18 month review took place in May 2016 by way of a written submission to South East Employers (SEE) and a conference call between Mark Palmer, Development Director, SEE, key officers and the Chairman of the MDTG.

7. SEE was pleased to confirm that the Council continued to make excellent progress, provided some excellent examples of good practice and continued to meet the requirements of the Charter Standard. In particular, the following key strengths and improvements since the award in December 2014 were identified:
  - Further developing and enhancing the profile of the MDTG by the current group. The MDTG ensures that Member Development has a strategic focus and that it supports the corporate priorities of the organisation.
  - New Members of the Council have been well supported following the 2015 election that saw a 28% change in composition; and the Council is undertaking positive succession planning with two new Members appointed to Cabinet.
  - The MDTG is taking a lead role in evaluation.
  - Member engagement in development continues to be high with 97% of Members completing the Training Needs Analysis.
8. The discussion also highlighted the following improvements for consideration and progression:
  - Developing an annual work programme for the MDTG to provide a structured and strategic focus – this has now been implemented;
  - Prioritising 'Learning Days' in the Members calendar on an annual basis – Members/ officers views have been canvassed and this will be progressed during the forthcoming year; and
  - Developing the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) function with a particular focus on ensuring that scrutiny is viewed as a "Resource" to Cabinet and can influence and contribute to the decision making process – the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report regarding its future structure and membership as part of developing the O&S function at its March meeting.
9. The Council's Charter status expires in December 2017 and the MDTG recommended to Cabinet that the Council reaffirms its commitment to the SEE Charter this year and reapplies to retain the status; this proposal was endorsed and supported by Cabinet at its meeting on 3 April. The SEE Charter framework against which Councils are judged has been streamlined which makes the accreditation process less onerous; the cost of renewal is £2,000 which is being met from the underspend on the 2016/17 Member Training Budget.

## **Training and Development Programme**

10. This past year has seen the continuation of the Member Training Programme identified through the initial Training Needs Analysis (TNA) undertaken in June 2015. As well as concentrating on essential service related training and personal skills, more wide-ranging development / learning opportunities have included PREVENT Awareness, Housing Tour of the district, Association of Carers, Dementia Awareness, SCAM Prevention and Health & Safety Awareness Training.

11. In accordance with the Member Training and Development Strategy a second TNA will be undertaken during the coming year to ascertain on-going requirements and to help evaluate the success of the programme delivered thus far. Members are requested to look out for the TNA and ensure that it is completed and returned within the prescribed timescales.
12. A full list of the development activities that have been offered to Members during the last year is attached at Appendix 1 to this report; the feedback from all training sessions is considered by the MDTG and published on the Members' Area of the website, where appropriate.

## **Finance**

13. In recognition of the Council's ongoing financial challenges and the need to make savings year on year, in September last year, the MDTG agreed that the Member Training Budget be reduced by £5,680 to £12,000 per annum with the proviso that supplementary funding for specific identified training needs would be provided, if required.
14. Historically, each year, the Member Training Budget is not spent and the budget spend fluctuates significantly depending on the election cycle. The MDTG are confident that the revised budget of £12,000 per annum will not compromise the scale, quality and diversity of the Member Training Programme which was offered in previous years. The budget is subject to quarterly reporting to the MDTG and was underspent by some £9,000 this year.
15. In order to ensure value for money (vfm) it is essential that once Members have requested a place on a training session that the date is reserved, particularly where an external consultant or other additional expenditure such as transport is involved; at the request of the MDTG, the cost of training per head is now advised to Members at the time that places are offered.
16. There have been occasions during the last year where the overall vfm has been compromised when the participants have reduced due to last minute drop outs – it is acknowledged that there are occasions (sickness, family crisis etc.) which are unavoidable. With a reduced budget it will be even more essential to ensure vfm and the MDTG will be monitoring Members' requests to attend and drop-out rates.

## **Partnership Working**

17. Member training and development opportunities have continued to be shared with our local authority neighbours as and when appropriate. It is anticipated that there may be generic training and development opportunities arising from the training programme currently being put in place by East Sussex County Council following their elections in May 2017. Appropriate generic opportunities will be shared with all Members as soon as they become available.
18. The Council also continues to work with the Parish and Town Councils across the district to share knowledge and practice, in particular with regard to planning matters.

## **Member Attendance Statistics**

19. The MDTG continues to receive an update at each meeting of the number of training events each Member has attended since the elections in May 2015; this information is primarily for use by the Group Leaders and the most recent update is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
20. Training and Development is not compulsory except for those Members serving on the Council's regulatory committees; each Member has very specific training and development requirements, based on their own personal circumstances which will include experience, role (both internal and external to Rother), interests, availability and length of service as a Councillor.

## **Conclusions**

21. This last civic year has seen the continued delivery against the Member Training Programme with many opportunities for Member development being made available. The Council has received a positive 18 month check in May 2016 following re-accreditation in December 2014 under the South East Employer's Member Development Charter.
22. Cabinet has supported the Council's continued commitment and maintenance of the Charter; the whole purpose of the MDTG is to ensure that the training and development offer at the Council is of high quality, responsive and meets the needs of the authority and individual Members; retention of charter status sends an outward message that this Council is serious and committed to this ethos.
23. Whilst it is likely that Member Training and Development needs will decrease over the remaining two years of this Council, in looking ahead the MDTG will be concentrating its efforts on ensuring the remainder of the training programme meets the evolving needs of Councillors and looking ahead to a pre-election event in 2018 and the Induction Programme for 2019.
24. I am pleased to take this opportunity to thank formally my fellow Task Group Members, Councillors Azad, Clark, Dixon, Graham, Kenward and Oliver together with the participating officers for the commitment and contribution they have made over the past year.

Councillor Lord Ampthill  
Chairman of the Member Development Task Group

## 2016-2017 MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

DATE	SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES	TRAINER / PROVIDER	INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL	POTENTIAL FOR JOINT WORKING	COST
<b>APRIL 2016</b>					
20 April	Meeting Skills 9:30am to 12:30pm	Beckwith Consulting	External	NO	£600 plus VAT & expenses
<b>MAY 2016</b>					
3 May	IT 1:1s	Elaine Tucker IT Consultant	External	NO	£330 per day £950 plus VAT & expenses
10 May	Public Speaking Skills 9:00am to 4:00pm	2Train	External	NO	plus VAT & expenses
19 May	Annual Planning Training (Mandatory)	Tim Hickling	Internal	NO	Officer Time
<b>JUNE 2016 – NO TRAINING</b>					
<b>JULY 2016</b>					
12 July	PREVENT Awareness	David Law Safer East Sussex Team	External	NO	FREE
13 July	1:1 Training Councillor Azad	Elaine Bolton Beckwith Consulting	External	NO	See 23.09.16
18 July	Annual Licensing Training (Mandatory)	Andy Eaton	Internal	NO	Officer Time
20 July	Development and Site Allocations Local Plan Workshop (DaSA)	David Marlow	Internal	NO	Officer Time
22 July	Development and Site Allocations Local Plan Workshop (DaSA)	David Marlow	Internal	NO	Officer Time
27 July	1:1 Training Councillor Azad	Elaine Bolton Beckwith Consulting	External	NO	See 23.09.16
<b>AUGUST 2016 – NO TRAINING</b>					

DATE	SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES	TRAINER / PROVIDER	INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL	POTENTIAL FOR JOINT WORKING	COST
<b>SEPTEMBER 2016</b>					
6 September	IT 1:1s	Elaine Tucker IT Consultant	External	NO	£330 per day
23 September	1:1 Training Councillor Azad	Elaine Bolton Beckwith Consulting	External	NO	£1,186.80 Plus VAT & expenses
<b>OCTOBER 2016</b>					
5 October	Licensing Panel Chairman Training	Andy Eaton	Internal	NO	Officer Time £225
6 October	Affordable Housing Development Tour	Amy Fearn	Internal	NO	Transport + Lunch
10 October	Finance Briefing Revenue and Budget Setting Processes	Robin Vennard	Internal	NO	Officer Time
14 October	Licensing Panel Chairman Training	Andy Eaton	Internal	NO	Officer Time
20 October	Association of Carers	Jan Fuller Association of Carers	External	NO	FREE
<b>NOVEMBER 2016</b>					
2 November	Licensing Panel Chairman Training	Andy Eaton	Internal	NO	Officer Time
9 November	IT 1:1s	Elaine Tucker IT Consultant	External	NO	£330 per day
<b>DECEMBER 2016 – NO TRAINING</b>					
<b>JANUARY 2017</b>					
18 January	Planning Training Councillor Curtis	David Marlow	Internal	NO	Officer Time
18 January	Alcohol Licensing Training Councillor Mrs Earl-Williams	Andy Eaton	Internal	NO	Officer Time
25 January	Taxi Licensing Training	Andy Eaton	Internal	NO	Officer Time

DATE	SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES	TRAINER / PROVIDER	INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL	POTENTIAL FOR JOINT WORKING	COST
	Councillor Mrs Earl-Williams				
31 January	Dementia Awareness	Sally Hemmings Bexhill Dementia Action Alliance	External	NO	FREE
<b>FEBRUARY 2017</b>					
7 February	External Conference Annual Licensing Conference 2017 Councillor Mrs Hart	LGA	External	NO	£199 Plus VAT
27 February	Code of Conduct Training (including Declarations of Interest)	John Collins	Internal	NO	Officer Time
<b>MARCH 2017</b>					
3 March	SCAM Prevention	Deborah Derber Age Concern	External	NO	FREE
6 March	Health & Safety Awareness Training	Adam Harding ADM Training	External	NO	£375 Plus VAT
8 March	IT 1:1s	Elaine Tucker IT Consultant	External	NO	£330 per day
23 March	Neighbourhood Planning	Chris Bowden Navigus Planning Limited	External	NO	£1,200 Plus VAT

## Member Development Task Group

20 March 2017

## MEMBER TRAINING ATTENDANCE STATISTICS 2015-2019

1. Detailed below is a summary of the number of training events that each individual Member has attended since election in 2015 to date.

COUNCILLOR	TRAINING EVENTS		COUNCILLOR	TRAINING EVENTS	
Lord Amphill	24	↑ (2)	Tom Graham	34	↑ (1)
Abul Azad	43	↑ (2)	Sally-Ann Hart	30	↑ (3)
John Barnes **	1	↑ (1)	Ian Hollidge	30	↑ (1)
Mary Barnes	13	↑ (1)	Joy Hughes	37	↑ (3)
Roger Bird	9	↑ (2)	Ian Jenkins	16	↔
Graham Browne	18	↑ (1)	Gillian Johnson	11	↔
James Carroll	24	↔	Jonathan Johnson	8	↔
Richard Carroll	4	↑ (1)	Brian Kentfield	12	↑ (2)
Charles Clark	8	↑ (2)	Martin Kenward	2	↑ (1)
Gary Curtis	30	↑ (4)	Eleanor Kirby-Green	5	↑ (1)
Kevin Dixon *	5	↑ (1)	Carl Maynard	4	↑ (1)
Patrick Douart	10	↔	Martin Mooney	11	↑ (1)
Stuart Earl	25	↑ (3)	Doug Oliver	20	↑ (1)
Deirdre Earl-Williams **	3	↑ (3)	Paul Osborne	4	↑ (1)
Simon Elford	6	↔	Jacqueline Potts	14	↑ (2)
Robert Elliston	19	↑ (1)	Sue Prochak	15	↑ (1)
Kathryn Field	8	↑ (1)	Chris Saint	25	↑ (3)
Tony Ganly	7	↑ (1)	Gennette Stevens	26	↑ (3)
Bridget George	16	↑ (1)	Maurice Watson	27	↑ (3)

2. Details of the actual events attended by individual Councillors can be provided on request, by the appropriate Group Leader, if necessary.

## Conclusion

3. Members are asked to note the Member Training Attendance Statistics for 2015-2019.

Julie Hollands  
Democratic Services Officer

KEY	
↔	None attended since last MDTG meeting
↑ + (number)	Attended since last MDTG meeting

\* Elected 15 July 2015

\*\* Elected 27 October 2016