

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

MEMBERS' SERVICES AND CIVIC CEREMONIAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 2 NOVEMBER 2005

ELECTED MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To provide an update and overview of training and development for Elected Members and to submit for consideration of the Sub-Committee proposals for future training and development initiatives.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** East Ayrshire Council recognises the importance of an appropriate training programme for Members of the Council, particularly new Elected Members. Consequently, a training module was devised and covered the broad areas outlined as follows, viz:-

- early, overview training for all new Members; Committee and Departmental structures; legal issues and Codes of Conduct; Members' Allowances; Local Government Finance; and, planning issues.
- more detailed training for all Members on the Council's corporate policies and procedures; eg, Best Value and Community Planning, Performance Management, Recruitment and Selection;
- more detailed training for all Members on the functions and responsibilities of all the Council's various Departments and Committees; and
- Members' attendance at conferences.

- 2.2** East Ayrshire Council has determined that training for Members should be an ongoing process and it should be Members themselves who determine their training needs and how they might be met.

- 2.3** Members' training is provided as part of the Council's in-house training programme, which allows Councillors to participate in dedicated courses run for Members only, one-to one sessions, eg Effective Committee Skills covering the areas of chairing meetings, presentation skills, public speaking and IT skills.

- 2.4** Further training and information exchange is provided by individual Service Departments in relation to Service issues and details of such sessions are contained within the Appendix to this report.

- 2.5** Elected Member training to date has focussed primarily on new Elected Members' induction and training and thereafter providing general briefings on topical issues as referred to in the Appendix to this report. On the whole, ongoing training and development for Elected Members has relied on the

individual Elected Members themselves determining their training needs and how they might be met.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1** It is considered that the approach to Elected Members' training and development might benefit from review.
- 3.2** There is an ever increasing demand on Local Authority Members to further raise standards and leading up to and beyond 2007, Local Authorities and Elected Members will face new challenges with the introduction of proportional representation and multi-member wards. It is important to provide appropriate training and development opportunities for Elected Members to help them meet these new challenges.
- 3.3** Accordingly, it is proposed that we develop a systematic and tailored approach to assess Members' development needs and to prepare a training programme for Members which meets their priorities.
- 3.4** Further, it is proposed to develop a training programme based on what might be considered as core knowledge, skills and competencies for an Elected Member, eg

Core Knowledge could cover:

- decision making structures,
- Local Government functions;
- Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations
- Local Government Finance

Core Skills

- written/verbal communication
- organisational
- presentational
- time management
- Information Technology

Core Competencies

- advocacy skills
- interpersonal ability
- ability to prioritise
- patience
- flexibility

- 3.5** The above is merely illustrative and any proposed training programme would be developed to take cognisance of the various roles an Elected Member undertakes, eg the representative/constituent role, the executive/policy maker role and the monitoring/scrutiny role.

3.6 In the run up to 2007 and beyond it is anticipated that there will be an opportunity for Elected Members and Officers to participate in discussions on Members' training and development, both on a regional and national basis. Such events will both inform and aid local discussion within East Ayrshire.

3.7 For any training and development programme to be successful, it is believed to be essential that sufficient resources be devoted to it. The Council has recognised previously that it is important to create and maintain a culture where Member Development is seen as essential to the Council's performance.

3.8 To ensure effectiveness of any such programme, Members must both support the programme and be involved in its development - the programme must fully involve Members and not be Officer led.

4. MEMBERS' DEVELOPMENT FORUM

4.1 Accordingly, in order to provide a discussion forum for Elected Members' training and development needs, it is suggested that a core group consisting of five Elected Members, the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support, Head of Personnel or representative and the Administration Manager be established. Officers of this Group will liaise with Services in regard to developing training programmes as required. The Terms of Reference for the Discussion Group might be:-

- to develop a systematic and tailored approach to assess Members' development needs
- to prepare a training programme for Members which meets their priorities
- to submit a final Training and Development Scheme for consideration by the Members' Services and Civic Ceremonial Sub-Committee

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 No specific financial implications other than minimal administrative costs associated with Members' attendance on the Discussion Forum.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS - Nil.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The creation of a Training and Development Scheme for Elected Members will support both present and future Members in fulfilling their duties and is in further implementation of the Council's training commitment to Elected Members.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Sub-Committee agrees:-

- (i) to remit to the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support to develop a systematic and tailored approach to assess

Members' development needs and to prepare a training programme for Members which meets their priorities.

- (ii) to establish a Members' Development Forum as outlined in paragraph 4 above.
- (iii) to recommend to Council to make the necessary appointment of Elected Members to the Members' Development Forum.
- (v) otherwise, to note the report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/
Executive Director of Corporate Support

BW/FM

Enc (1)

18 October 2005

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS - NIL

Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager on telephone number (01563) 576135.

Implementation Officer: Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager.

APPENDIX

<u>Department</u>	<u>Training/Information Exchange Completed</u>	<u>Training/Information Exchange Planned</u>
Corporate Support	<p>IT training and various IT computer programmes, effective meetings skills, selection interview skills and presentation skills</p> <p>Performance Review Group - Performance Development Programme</p> <p>Councillors' Code of Conduct Part 1</p> <p>Freedom of Information Seminar</p>	<p>Suggestion - aspirational learning</p> <p>Councillors' Code of Conduct Part 2 - particular reference to the planning regime and conduct within the Committee meeting</p> <p>Training of Members in connection with their membership on external organisations</p>
Development and Property Services	<p>Planning System (all aspects)</p> <p>The new list Scheme of Delegation</p>	<p>Scheme of Business Support which is available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Business Gateway and what it can and can't do • An overview of the West of Scotland Loan Fund and some case histories • An understanding of other EAC Business Support budgets • An overview of funds available from various sources and how they inter-relate
Educational and Social Services	Information sessions following Education and Social Work Committee	Information sessions following Education and Social Work Committee
Neighbourhood Services	<p>Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy</p> <p>Housing Stock Option Appraisal/Standard Delivery Plan</p> <p>Local Housing Strategy</p> <p>3 Bin System, Amnesty on Airguns and the purchase (and use) of speed guns for Community Police Officers</p>	

