

Elected Member Training

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The key purpose of this report is to update the Committee on Elected Member training activity since August 2013 and to seek their endorsement for the key focus of activity in drawing up a programme for the next year.

The proposals draw on feedback gained through the recent Elected Member Seminar Survey and the development workshops undertaken between 7-11th August to support the new Committee Structures.

The Policy & Resources Committee is requested to:

- a) note the activity that has been undertaken to support elected member training since August 2013,
- b) note that feedback that has been gained through the Elected Member Seminar Survey and recent Committee Development Days which will inform the training programme for the next year, and
- c) endorse the approach to be adopted in the development of the forthcoming programme and to agree that this be delegated to the Director of Customer Services to take forward through discussion with the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council, Depute Leader of the Council and Group Leaders.

Elected Member Training

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The key purpose of this report is to update the Committee on Elected Member training activity since August 2013 and to seek their endorsement for the key focus of activity in drawing up a programme for the next year.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Policy & Resources Committee is requested to:
- d) note the activity that has been undertaken to support elected member training since August 2013,
 - e) note that feedback that has been gained through the Elected Member Seminar Survey and recent Committee Development Days which will inform the training programme for the next year, and
 - f) endorse the approach to be adopted in the development of the forthcoming programme and to agree that this be delegated to the Director of Customer Services to take forward through discussion with the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council, Depute Leader of the Council and Group Leaders.

4.0 DETAIL

Elected Member Seminars

- 4.1 The Elected Member Seminar Programme was revamped in August 2013 and in the past year the Council has run a programme of 12 Seminars covering a wide range of topics with attendance levels in brackets:
- 1. Education Management Review (67%)
 - 2. Reshaping Older Peoples Services (75%)
 - 3. Review of Children and Families Social Work Services (39%)
 - 4. CPD Framework (64%)
 - 5. Budget Review & Health & Social Care Integration (64%)
 - 6. Improvement Service Workshop (75%)
 - 7. Civil Contingencies ((47%)
 - 8. Audit Scotland Action Plan (72%)

9. Local Development Plan, Standards Commission, Health & Social Care Integration (44%)
 10. Single Outcome Agreement, Next Generation Broadband (50%)
 11. Strategic Risk Register, Marine Renewables Planning & Mobile infrastructure (60%)
 12. Education, Children & Young People, Risk Management (66%)
- 4.2 A specific site has been set up on the intranet to store all materials issued at the seminar so that members who were not able to attend can access these. This can be accessed at <http://intranet.argyll-bute.gov.uk/members-seminars>
- 4.3 Elected Member attendance at seminars is recorded through the use of a sign-in sheet and average attendance levels are 60%. Attendance levels are variable and while some members have very high attendance levels there are a few members who have not taken up the opportunity to attend.
- 4.4 In order to review the programme a survey was issued in June seeking Elected Members feedback to ensure the programme remained relevant to their needs and addressed issues which supported them in their role. This information would then be used to develop a programme for the next year.
- 4.5 24 responses were received (70%) and key satisfaction scores were:
- | | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Frequency of Seminars | 61% |
| Duration of Seminars | 59% |
| Content of Seminars | 75% |
| Materials used | 78% |
- 4.6 Narrative feedback and suggestions for future learning events will be pulled together with content from recent committee development days to develop a forward programme and a copy of the survey findings will be issued to all Elected Members with details for the proposed forward programme.
- 4.7 As highlighted in addition to the seminar programme a programme of development days has been put in place to support the establishment of the new Committees as follows:
- May Audit Committee – 30th
 - August Policy & Resources – 7th
 - Environment
 - Development and Infrastructure – 8th August
 - Community Services – 11th August
 - Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee – 26th August
- 4.8 A programme of Elected Member development is ongoing in respect of PPSL and this usually takes place for at least an hour prior to each scheduled meeting

and is supplemented by external visits e.g. wind farm, fish farm etc. Speakers are drawn from external organisations such as SEPA, Historic Scotland and the Council Planning and Legal Services Team. The most recent session on Competent Motions has been hosted on the intranet as it may be of wider interest to members. The Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee have also introduced a Pyramid preview session with a member of the IOD Team prior to the Committee Meeting to support members fulfil their scrutiny role by looking in more detail at the scorecards.

- 4.9 Training sessions were also undertaken at Area Committee level on developments with respect to the Elected Member Portal and this has had a positive impact on the numbers and frequency of usage by Members. The Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee, there will be an opportunity for you to have a Pyramid preview session with a member of the IOD Team prior to the Committee Meeting to allow you to look in more detail at the scorecards.

Continuous Professional Development Framework

- 4.10 A total of 23 Elected Members have agreed to in participate in the Continuous Professional Development Framework for Elected Members and these are at varying stages of the process which will now be further progressed following the summer recess. Members who have not yet agreed to participate will be encouraged to reconsider their participation prior to the end of August.
- 4.11 A key challenge in supporting development needs relates to putting in place arrangements that facilitate meaningful development on an individual basis. Some of this may be best facilitated by the Improvement Service or external providers and this is being followed up directly with them. It should also be noted that in addition to in-house development events elected members also take up the opportunity to engage in a wide range of external learning opportunities and courses. A clearer overview of this activity would support ongoing development planning and elected members are reminded that there is an existing protocol to attend courses, conferences and seminars with the approval of the Leader of the Council which is in keeping with the Scheme of Approved Duties and could capture such activity and enhance learning opportunities.
- 4.12 The Council participates in the National User Group and areas of note are:
- The Improvement Service (IS) is currently gathering update figures from Councils and this will be useful for future benchmarking.
 - The IS are planning to do some work on a political mentoring framework based on a similar approach in England.
 - The IS have revamped some of the Effective Communication notebooks and resources and are developing an iBook for elected members. This will be available for all CPD Framework councillors who have iPads and iPhones whether council provided or privately owned. The content within the iBook will be available to members without iPads/iPhones in other formats.

- The IS are still looking to use webinars to deliver training to elected members and will be working with a few CPD Framework councils over the coming months to see if this approach will work. This is an area we would be keen to explore further within Argyll and Bute.

Next Steps

4.13 Following on from the Elected Member Seminar Survey feedback and Committee Development day feedback it is proposed that the Development Programme for the year ahead be refocused as follows:

- Achieve a better balance between information giving and interactive seminars.
- Review length of seminars – where a short session is required, seek to link to existing meetings or committees where appropriate.
- Review requirement for monthly seminars and scheduling.
- Build opportunity for new Committees to have “space” to explore key strategic issues outwith committee process.
- New Committees to put in place a planned development programme linked to remit e.g. similar to PPSL which was seen as a best practice example.
- Explore wider use of technology where appropriate e.g. webinars, VC if an information session but not an interactive session.
- Incorporate the following topics:
 - Integration of Health & Social Care
 - Economic Development
 - Effective Governance and Standards Commission/Code of Conduct
 - Care in the Community
 - Capital Programme
 - Strategic Housing Plan
 - Asset Management
 - Overview of Scottish Government
- Continue to progress CPD Framework for Elected Members and underpin PDP process with opportunities for focused individual development support.
- Review protocol for elected member attendance at development events to support high level overview of development activity and sharing of knowledge and information

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Policy & Resources Committee is requested to note the activity that has been undertaken to support elected member training since August 2013 and the feedback that has been gained through the Elected Member Seminar Survey and recent Committee Development Days to inform the training programme for the

next year. In order to take this forward the Committee is asked to endorse the approach identified in the next steps section at 4.13 and that this is delegated to the Director of Customer Services to put in place an appropriate programme through discussion with the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council, Depute Leader of the Council and Group Leaders.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy: Underpins commitments set out in Audit Scotland Action Plan and supports strategic focus on policy issues.
- 6.2 Financial: Costs associated with training programmes.
- 6.3 Legal: N/A
- 6.4 HR: Requirement for HR input to good development practice.
- 6.5 Equalities: N/A
- 6.6 Risk: Approach addresses risks highlighted in Audit Commission Statutory Report in respect of Elected Member roles and relationships.
- 6.7 Customer Service: N/A

**Douglas Hendry,
Executive Director of Customer Services
18th August 2014**

Policy Lead: Dick Walsh, Leader of Council

For further information contact: Tricia O'Neill, Central Governance Manager 01546604384