

Democracy Committee

13/08/2015

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Report title here

Final Decision-Maker	Democracy Committee
Lead Director or Head of Service	Dena Smart, Head of HR Shared Service
Lead Officer and Report Author	Catherine Harrison, Mid Kent Learning and Development Manager
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. To approve the Member Development Plan 2015-16.
2. To approve the estimated expenditure for the 2015/16 Member Development budget.
3. To note the Member Development Policy has been updated to reflect the changes to the Committee System

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Great People

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Democracy Committee	13 th August 2015

Member Development Plan 2015-2016

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report sets out the Member Development Plan for 2014/2015 and the actual spend for last year.
 - 1.2 The report also proposes the plan and estimated expenditure for 2015/2016 for approval.
 - 1.3 There may be additional training needs identified by the Democracy Committee that budget allowing can be included into the plan.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In previous years the Member Development Plan has been discussed and approved by the Member Employment and Development Panel. With the change in the committee structure, the responsibility for approving the plan and budget spend now falls to the Democracy Committee.
 - 2.2 In 2014/2015, we estimated that the Member Development Plan would spend nearly £10k of its £11k budget. The actual spend for last year was £6752.15. A large amount of this was spent on the Questioning Skills training, at a cost of £3400.00 (Appendix I).
 - 2.3 This is in line with previous years spends: 2013/2014 £7795.16, 2012/2013 £6281.39.
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The proposed Member Development Plan for 2015/2016 can be seen in Appendix II.
- 3.2 There may be additional or alternative needs identified by the Democracy Committee for Members. This might impact on the proposed plan for 2015-2016, but it can be refined or redeveloped if other priorities are identified as being more important or urgent.
- 3.3 An alternative would be to take a piecemeal approach and only book activities and events on an 'ad hoc' first come, first served basis. This is not recommended. Our recommended approach to Member development is preferred as this gives the potential of systematically identifying conferences/learning activities which will have the biggest impact on supporting the effective performance of Members in their various roles and/or the greatest impact for all Members.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The proposed Member Development Plan (Appendix II) includes the same conferences as in previous years. The general skills this year will focus on further Questioning Skills sessions, as well as sessions on Chairing Skills and Respecting Difference (Inclusion).
- 4.2 Currently Member Learning and Development activities are planned by the Mid Kent Learning and Development Manager in consultation with Members and Key Officers. Due to the nature of the Council and the way that the elections take place, many of the same learning activities, including conferences, need to be provided each year.
- 4.3 This being said there are many more learning activities that are required in line with the needs identified by Members themselves, legislation, central government and those that arise from our commitment to partnership working and our desire to learn from each other and best practice.
- 4.4 The plan aims to address as many learning needs as possible, for example:
- Individual skills building
 - Legislative requirements
 - Role related skills
 - Corporate requirements
 - Networking and keeping up-to-date
 - Knowledge and future focus
- 4.5 As with previous year it is proposed that the key areas for Member Development this year are:-
- Support and build on existing skills for their role in the community now and in the future
 - Support and build on existing skills for the various roles undertaken within and on behalf of the Council
- 4.6 It is important to ensure that an effective planning process is in place for all learning activities and that this planning process involves Members. With a continued commitment to provide value for money in all aspects, it is imperative that careful thought is given to how the Member budget is spent to ensure that maximum value from each activity is achieved. The responsibility for ensuring value for money rests with everyone and it is vital that all learning is shared effectively with all Members and disseminated widely.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Member Development Plan has been developed in consultation with the Democratic Services Officers, and the Heads of Service/lead Managers for the different services who provide development activities, for example Planning and Internal Audit.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Once the Member Development Plan has been approved, the Democratic Services Officers will schedule into the calendar for the year the briefings and training sessions.
- 6.2 The Mid Kent Learning and Development Manager will support the Democratic Services Officers in developing any new programmes and identifying any new providers that might be required.
- 6.3 It is the responsibility of Members and Group Leaders to identify any individual training needs, and subject to checking budget availability with the Mid Kent Learning and Development Manager, make the arrangements to attend the required training. These responsibilities are set out in the Member Development Policy (Appendix III).
- 6.4 It is also the responsibility of Members and Group Leaders to determine who should attend the conferences identified in the Plan, and to ensure that learning is disseminated and shared with other Members.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	This is a cross-cutting requirement as Member involvement is essential for the delivery of all priorities and good decision making impacts on the whole council.	Head of HR Shared Service
Risk Management	The risks associated with not investing in a planned approach to learning and development are that the investment does not lead to supporting good decisions and the expenditure on learning and development fails to deliver value for money.	Head of HR Shared Service
Financial	The annual budget for Member Development is £10,600. This budget will be used to resource the proposed programme set out in Appendix II.	Head of Finance and Resources
Staffing	The impact on staffing relates to the officer time invested in delivering the learning and development activities to Members	Head of HR Shared Service
Legal	There are no legal implications in the general nature of the report, however	

	some of the training relates to the learning and development required for quasi legal committees such as licensing and planning and it is essential members are trained to carry out these roles	
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	The training will be delivered flexibly and in line with equality policies to ensure that there is equal access to opportunities.	Policy & Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	None identified at this time	Head of HR Shared Service
Community Safety	None identified at this time	Head of HR Shared Service
Human Rights Act	None identified at this time	Head of HR Shared Service
Procurement	The procurement rules will be followed in the process of selecting organisations to deliver the necessary training.	Head of HR Shared Service
Asset Management	None identified at this time	Head of HR Shared Service

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Member LD Budget 2014-2015 Actual Spend
 - Appendix II: Member LD Budget 2015-2016
 - Appendix III: Member Development Policy
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