

Member Training on the New Governance Arrangements

Final Decision-Maker	Democracy and General Purposes Committee
Lead Director	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report sets out the proposed briefing and training arrangements to embed the new governance arrangements and constitution which will be in place from the Annual Meeting on 21 May 2022.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendation to this Committee:

The three stage approach as set out in section 3, Option 1, for ensuring Councillors are briefed on the new constitution and development suggested for embedding the new governance model is approved.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Democracy and General Purposes Committee	16 February 2022

Member Training on the New Governance Arrangements

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>Effective governance arrangements ensure that the Council's objectives are met, the report sets out proposals for Member training on the new model of governance and constitution to embed the new system.</p>	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>Effective governance arrangements ensure that the Council's objectives are met, the report sets out proposals for Member training on the new model of governance and constitution to embed the new system.</p>	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Financial	A member training budget is in place and the proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Legal	There are no specific legal implications. However, Council seeks to exercise its functions in the best way to secure effective decision making within its adopted system of governance and in accordance with its constitution. The briefing and training proposed in this report will contribute to this process	Interim Deputy Head of Legal Partnership
Privacy and Data Protection	No impact	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Crime and Disorder	The recommendation will have a negative impact on Crime and Disorder. The Community Protection Team have been consulted and mitigation has been proposed	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Procurement	On accepting the recommendations, the Council will then follow procurement exercises for any external training required. We will complete those exercises in line with financial procedure rules.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Biodiversity and Climate Change	Specific training on biodiversity and climate change and Member roles and responsibilities will be included in the Member Training Programme for 2022-23, a full report on the proposed plan will be brought to this Committee in June 2022.	Biodiversity and Climate Change Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In May 2021 the Council resolved to change its governance arrangements from a Committee System to an Executive and Scrutiny Model with Policy Advisory Committees in place undertaking pre-decision scrutiny.
- 2.2 As part of the transition to a new model of governance the constitution is in the process of being rewritten through a working group of this Committee prior to submission to Council on 13 April 2022.
- 2.3 Both the change in governance arrangements and the new constitution will require training for all Councillors. This was identified in the report on the new model considered by this Committee and then Council in September 2021.
- 2.4 The proposal is to split the approach into three stages

Stage 1 – Ensure all Councillors are briefed on the draft new constitution prior to consideration at full Council.

Stage 2 - training for Councillors on the operation of Executive and Scrutiny Arrangements and Procedure Rules for meetings of Council, Executive and Committees as part of the Member Induction to which all Members will be invited.

Stage 3 - bespoke training for key roles to be delivered post-annual meeting as part of the Member Development Programme for 2022-23 and will include Chairing Skills, Overview and Scrutiny Skills (budget scrutiny, questioning etc), training for Committee roles such as Licensing and Planning.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

Option 1

Briefing on the New Draft Constitution

- 3.1 It is proposed that to enable all Members to make an informed decision on the new constitution as it is a significant change to present or previous models a briefing is held prior to the Council Meeting in April on Monday 11 April at 6:30 pm via Microsoft Teams. The session will focus on the main changes to the document and the plain English guide to the constitution which is currently under production.

Training on New Governance Model and Procedures

- 3.2 Training will be delivered by Officers on the proposed new governance model in two sessions. One will be to describe the new arrangements and in particular decision making in the new system and the second will be a session on the procedure rules for Council, the Executive and Committees. These sessions will be carried out as part of the new Member Induction to which all Councillors are invited in May/June.

Member Development Programme 2022-23

- 3.3 A Member Development Programme will be developed and brought forward to this committee for consideration and approve in June 2022 or at the first full meeting of the Committee. The report will include training for specific Councillor and Committee roles and requirements for example scrutiny training, councillor call for action and conducting reviews covering the latest guidance and legislative framework and powers. The programme will also include briefing sessions on key topics and areas of work. The programme should be reviewed at the mid-year point to ensure any new areas of training on specific areas of governance can be included in the programme.

Option 2

- 3.4 This Committee could identify and request a different approach for the briefing and training of Members on the new arrangements. There is a budget available for external training if that is deemed appropriate.

Option 3

- 3.5 Do nothing, the Committee could decide that training is not necessary on the new arrangements. As it has been 5 years since the Council last operated an executive model, the significant difference to the previous executive system and a number of Councillors only have experience of the Committee System not providing any training on the new system is not recommended.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Committee is recommended to take forward option 1. Option 1 will be delivered through inhouse resources for the briefing and initial training sessions. Bespoke training can be commissioned via external suppliers for the new roles such as scrutiny and existing roles for example chairing skills. This can be taken forward as part of the member development programme for 2022-23.

5. RISK

- 5.1 The options recommended will mitigate the risk to effective governance and decision making following the change to council's governance model.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 This Committee has been instrumental in the development of the new Model and constitution. As part of the development of the new model. Member training was considered in September 2021.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Officers will take forward the option agreed. There will also be training for officers on the new model and constitution.
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None