

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **Scrutiny Coordinating Committee**

**Friday 3 October 2014**

#### **Member Development Needs (Update)**

**Report of:** Tessa Mallett, Overview and Scrutiny Officer

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 On 23 July 2014 a joint Overview and Scrutiny (OSC)/Cabinet member workshop was held, attended by 19 councillors, focussing on the joint working required between OSC members and Cabinet for OSC reviews to be successful. The ideas generated can be found attached as **Appendix A**.
- 1.2 At the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee meeting of 10 July 2014 the committee discussed plans to develop a practical and interactive "Questioning and Challenging Skills" event. An update on the progress in organising this event is provided below under point 4.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Committee note the report and provide feedback on what should happen to follow up the workshop of 23 July 2014.
- 2.2 That Committee note the update on the progress with organising the Questioning and Challenging Skills event and consider the best time for the delivery of the workshop.
- 2.3 That the Committee considers its continuous professional development needs and recommends possible further training or development sessions it would like to undertake.

#### **3. Overview and Scrutiny/Cabinet Member workshop of 23 July 2014**

- 3.1 A workshop was held on 23 July 2014 attended by 19 OSC and Cabinet members to discuss and come up with suggestions on how OSC and Cabinet can work together to ensure OSC reviews are successful.
- 3.2 Discussions were held in smaller groups and feedback gathered at the end. The ideas generated can be found attached as **Appendix A**.
- 3.3 The Committee are asked to decide how to take forward the ideas generated.

#### **4. Questioning and challenging skills for OSC**

- 4.1 At their meeting of 7 July 2014 the Committee discussed plans to develop a practical and interactive "Questioning and Challenging Skills" event.
- 4.2 At their meeting on 2 September 2014 the Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services OSC supported the idea of a Questioning and Challenging skills workshop as part of members continuing professional development.
- 4.3 Since this meeting the Overview and Scrutiny team have been investigating external suppliers who can deliver what is required while providing value for money. A supplier has been commissioned to design and deliver a drama based workshop on 3 December 2014.
- 4.4 The aims of the workshop are to provide members with tools and techniques to enhance their questioning and interviewing skills, reduce the time spent interviewing witnesses and create a positive experience for witnesses.
- 4.5 The plan is to deliver two three hour workshops, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Members are asked to discuss the best timings for these workshops to encourage attendance by as many councillors as possible to ensure it delivers the best value for money.
- 4.6 It is planned to provide a light buffet and refreshments in between the two workshops.

#### **5. Background Documents**

- 5.1 None