

# North Tyneside Council Report to Standards Committee Date: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014

## ITEM

Title: Survey on Training  
for Members Update

---

Report Author: Helen Davidson, HR Development Adviser (Tel: 643 5037)

Wards affected: All

---

### 1.1 Purpose:

To advise Members of the feedback and results of the Member Development survey.

### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

The Committee is requested to consider the recommendations and note the report.

### 1.3 Information

On 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014 the Committee considered a report detailing Member attendance at recent training and expressed concern at the number of training events cancelled due to lack of take up and little use of the online learning modules promoted to Members.

The Committee proposed to survey the views of Members on the Member Development Programme, to identify ways to improve attendance and consider the preferences of Members on the type, method and delivery of future events/learning.

Appendix A outlines the full results of the survey circulated to all members.

In summary:

- 7 responses were received;
- Members prefer workshop/face to face training and e-learning to other styles of learning;
- The majority of members were generally satisfied with the member development opportunities on offer and how they are delivered; and
- Members would like to see more e-learning on offer which is specific to their role. Individuals who have completed e-learning in the past 24 months felt it was effective

#### 1.3.1 Key areas for improvement

Some Members felt that the training offered was partially relevant to their role. Further work to ensure the content of training events is relevant and meets the expectations of Councillors is required. Communicating the relevance, benefits and outcomes of member training events could encourage more Members to attend.

Using plain English, keeping training sessions short with no duplication and increased attendance at events to encourage debate were suggested to further improve the delivery of training.

Work commitments and diary conflicts with other meetings were identified as the main barriers to attending training sessions. Member development events are programmed into the Council calendar at the same time Committees to avoid diary conflicts and provide protected time for training. Events are normally offered twice both in the afternoon and evening to offer a choice to Members and provide flexibility for working Members. Members suggested training could be offered mornings and prior to meetings.

Members felt that attendance could be improved if training was more relevant to a member's role and by sharing attendance figures with group whips. The Members Support Group is regularly consulted and provides feedback on the training priorities of Members, with the aim for the Member Development Programme to appeal to members and meet their needs.

### **1.3.2 Recommendations**

From the feedback provided by the Standards Committee, Member Support Group and survey responses on the Member Development Programme, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the learning opportunities on offer to Members.

1. Launch a range of member specific e-learning modules. Mandatory training identified within the Constitution will be priority as all Members will benefit from the learning. This includes regulatory committee training, code of conduct, safeguarding, corporate parenting and equality & diversity. A timetable for the development of e-learning will be agreed with the Member Support Group
2. Offer one to one/ group training and demonstration of the use of Learning Pool to ensure all Members can locate e-learning and review the development programmes on offer to officers.
3. Provide a monthly training update to all Members via email to promote up and coming Member development events, learning support (e.g. ICT mentors etc), e-learning and relevant officer development programmes that may be of interest to Members. Focus communications on "What's in it for me" promoting the benefits of development events to Members and how the learning can be used in their role.
4. Provide training (general development) prior to or after a Planning Committee, and review attendance figures/feedback. If successful extend this approach to other regulatory committees in the future.
5. Review regulatory committee training annually with lead officers to ensure that training is refreshed, learning activities and scenarios vary each year and alternative learning methods are considered for refresher training e.g. quizzes to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.
6. Provide training attendance figures to group leaders and deputies every 6 months, highlighting any gaps in mandatory training.

Appendix A

**Member Development Survey Responses**

Question	Responses						Comments
Preferred time for training?	2-5 pm	4	6-9 pm	2	Other	2 - Morning or Prior to Meeting	
Have you experienced difficulties with regard to attending training	Yes	3	No	4			Training clashes with work commitments & other meetings
Preferred Style of Learning	Workshops face to face events	7	E-learning	3	Regional Conferences	1	One to one training
Satisfaction with development opportunities offered within the member development programme	Very Satisfied	2	Satisfied	4	Room for improvement	1	Better presentations and use of plain English/management speak
Workshops are relevant to the role of a member	Mainly	4	Partially	3			
Information/training is pitched at the right level	Yes	6	No	1			Would like to know/learn more
Time allocated for member development events	Too Long	1	About Right	6			
Trainers knowledge of the subject	Good	4	Satisfactory	2			No response (1)
Improvements to the delivery of member development events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Plain English</li> <li>• Better attendance by members to add to discussion and debate</li> <li>• Brevity and no duplication</li> </ul>						

Question	Responses					Comments
	Very Satisfied		Satisfied			
Satisfaction with the member development events attended		2		4		No response (1)
Do you know how to access the Council's e-learning site?	Yes	3	No	4		
Members who have completed e-learning in the last 24 months	Yes	3	No	4		
Effectiveness of e-learning completed	Very Effective	1	Effective	2		
Would you like to see more member specific e-learning modules?	Yes	5	No	2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-learning must be to a high standard.</li> <li>• Difficult to engage with can feel very superficial</li> <li>• Quizzes as an alternative</li> </ul>
Member who would consider attending officer training programmes during the working day	Yes	6	No	1		
Training opportunities for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out expectations Officers have of elected members</li> <li>• Understanding Council speak in reports</li> <li>• Finance</li> </ul>					
Suggestions to encourage member attendance at training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making training more relevant to members' role</li> <li>• Group whips to receive attendance figures</li> <li>• More e-learning</li> </ul>					