

**14. ANNUAL REPORT ON MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (JC/RC)**

**1. Purpose of the report**

This report sets out the Member learning and development framework and the proposals for the next annual programme of Member learning and development events (January to December 2022)

**Key Issues**

- Provision of learning and development opportunities for Members assists them to improve their effectiveness and fulfil their role as a Member.

**2. Recommendations**

- 1. To agree the Member learning and development framework (Appendix 1 of the report) and the events programme for January to December 2022.**
- 2. To continue to record Member learning and development activities in terms of hours and include personal learning and development by Members outside of events organised by the Authority, with the target of 20 hours per Member in every 12 months.**

**How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?**

3. This work contributes to achieving the Authority's outcome to be an agile and efficient organisation.
4. The Authority aims to help Members to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviours to improve effectiveness and fulfil their role as a Member of the Authority and to ensure that processes are in place to support this within a framework of good governance and continuous improvement.

**Background Information**

5. Member training and development has evolved over the past few years and has included the introduction of targets per Member for learning and development, personal development plans, annual self-assessments and a 'buddy' scheme for new Members. The Authority also signed up to working towards the achievement of the East Midlands Regional Member Development Charter.
6. Full details of the current Member training and development practices and current performance are presented as a framework document and this is attached at Appendix 1. This framework pulls together initiatives and arrangements previously agreed by the Authority.
7. An annual learning and development programme is produced each year and the sessions included within it aim to support Members in meeting their learning and development responsibilities. The programme is split into the following 3 sections:
  - Essential and Desirable learning and development
  - New Member Induction
  - Optional learning and development choices.

8. We are currently reviewing the new Member induction process and the Member Champion for Learning and Development will be consulted on this. The current new Member induction process starts as soon as a Member is appointed with a welcome letter and essential information sent to them. Following this we aim to hold an induction session with the Democratic Services Manager within 2 weeks of appointment.
9. Another important part of the new Member induction is the Planning Training. All new Members have to complete the planning induction which comprises of a set of reading material followed by completion of an online questionnaire and attending a Planning Committee meeting to observe. Members of the Planning Committee cannot actively take part in meetings without completing the induction.
10. Following on from the Planning induction all Members must also attend the annual Planning Training session (the same session is held twice, on different dates, so Members only need to attend one of the sessions).
11. In August 2021 the ELMS e-learning portal, used by Authority Officers, was introduced to Members with a compulsory module on 'Equality in the Workplace' for both Members and Officers to complete. It is envisaged that more modules will be added for Members to access via ELMS with a mixture of compulsory and optional topics. A 'GDPR Awareness' online course was also made available to Members but this was via an outside provider rather than ELMS.
12. At the annual Authority meeting in July this year Cllr Becki Woods was re-appointed as Member Champion for Member Learning and Development. Cllr Woods has been the Member Champion for the previous 3 years and has been consulted on this report. The Management Team and the Democratic Services Manager have also been consulted.

## **Proposals**

### Member Learning and Development Framework

13. The current proposed Member learning and development framework is attached at Appendix 1 for Members to agree current practices and performance levels.
14. The framework sets out the arrangements we have in place for developing Authority Members. It also highlights the tools we use to capture learning and development needs and makes sure that they are included in the annual programme. These include:
  - Personal Development Plans
  - Annual Self-Assessments
  - Biennial Members Survey
15. The section on performance demonstrates the take up of these tools is limited and fluctuates from year to year. Currently 30% of Members have a personal development plan (an increase of 6 % from the previous year) and 36 % have completed a self-assessment (a decrease of 11% from the previous year). This section also shows that due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic situation no Members were able to demonstrate that they met the target of 20 hours learning, however 43% had achieved 16 hours learning. Changes in membership also have an impact on these figures; during 2020/21 a number of Members left the Authority and new Members joined following the Local Government elections.

16. The Members Survey due to be undertaken during 2018 was held in abeyance following the creation of the Member led Governance Review Working Group. It was agreed that the bi-annual Survey would be held after the Group had completed its review so that feedback could be gained from the wider membership of the initiatives introduced by the Group and adopted by the Members of the Authority. In the 2018-19 report on Member learning and development, we stated that it was anticipated that the next Members Survey would be conducted at the end of 2020 however this has still not taken place so it is now our intention to conduct the survey by early 2022.
17. In approving the framework and this year's learning and development plan Members are encouraged to make full use of these tools so we can develop an informed programme.

#### Learning and Development Programme

18. The proposed Learning and Development Programme for 2022 is attached at Appendix 2 for Members to agree.
19. The programme includes a list of optional learning and development opportunities that can be delivered in a variety of ways. Members are encouraged to choose up to 3 options from this list that they are interested in pursuing during the forthcoming year. In choosing from the programme Members are asked to have regard to issues identified in their self-assessment and their personal development plan, while being realistic about what is achievable in a year and the Corporate targets for Member learning and development. Unfortunately, the provision of some choices requested by Members for this year, which are facilitated internally, have been affected by Covid 19 requirements and the availability of Members and officers. However sessions have been held on Community Engagement, Management of Authority Assets and Visitor Experiences, Moors for the Future, the Natural Environment and the National Park, the Role of the Rangers, and Transport Issues in the National park.

Members are asked to submit their optional choices for next year to Democratic and Legal Support Team by 17 December 2021. Arrangements for providing the optional elements will then be considered and progressed.

#### **Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?**

##### **Financial:**

20. Member development costs are funded by the Members budget and include funding for all training including attendance at National Parks UK conferences and workshops and the external facilitation of Member personal development plans.

##### **Risk Management:**

21. The main risk is failure to enable Members to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviours to improve effectiveness and fulfil their role. The Authority has provided development opportunities for Members for many years. The proposals in this report are part of continuous improvement in our approach but proportionate to the resources available.

##### **Sustainability:**

22. There are no issues to highlight.

**Equality:**

23. There are no issues to highlight.

**Climate Change**

24. Arrangements for provision of training will take account of any impacts on our carbon footprint and aim to minimise these including minimal travel to sites, use of web based training and virtual meetings.

A Member training session on climate change has been added to the 2022 training programme.

25. **Background papers (not previously published)**

None.

26. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Members Learning & Development Framework

Appendix 2 – Members Learning & Development Programme 2022

**Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date**

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