

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE:**

**11 December 2013**

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**AGENDA ITEM: 6**

**PROPOSED TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY FOR  
ELECTED MEMBERS**

**REPORT OF THE COUNTY CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER**

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**Reason for this Report**

1. To seek approval of the Committee to implement a Training Needs Assessment Survey for all elected Members to inform a Member Development Strategy for Cardiff Council.

**Background**

2. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, places a requirement on all local authorities in Wales to provide all elected Members in Wales with an opportunity to have a personal development review to assess their development needs.
3. The Democratic Services Committee is currently undertaking a Task and Finish Inquiry with the aim of developing a Member Development Strategy that will enable Cardiff Council to meet the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and achieve the Wales Charter Status for Member Support and Development.
4. The Scrutiny Research Team has been commissioned by this Committee's Task and Finish Group to undertake a Training Needs Assessment (TNA) Survey that will inform the formulation of a Member Development Strategy. The results of the Training Needs Assessment will also feed into the Personal Development Review (PDR) Process for individual Members who wish to take up the PDR Scheme.

## Issues

5. A Training Needs Assessment (TNA) survey will be undertaken to establish the training and development needs and priorities of elected Members through a self-assessment process, with consideration of the various roles and responsibilities that they currently fulfil.
6. The survey has two key aims: firstly, to assess Members' knowledge and understanding of subject areas and knowledge sets required for their role; and secondly, to identify the skills sets and competencies that Members feel they need to develop to effectively discharge the various roles that they undertake for the Council.
7. The formulation of the survey will be informed by the 'The New WLGA Member Development Framework 2011' to identify the specific knowledge and skills sets that different Member roles require.
8. The survey questionnaire will be signed off by the Chair and Members of the Committee's Task and Finish Group and the County Clerk and Monitoring Officer prior to distribution. The survey will be sent out to all Members for completion during the first week of January 2014, with a data collection period of two weeks. Findings of the survey will be reported at Committee's Task and Finish Meeting in February 2014.
9. The survey methodology will comply with the existing quality control procedures and protocols (e.g. Data Protection legislation and Equalities Act 2010) adhered to by the Scrutiny Research Team. The survey data will be confidential and the findings will be anonymised. As the survey is collecting personal information from individual Members, the data sets will not be subject to Freedom of Information requests.
10. The completion of the Training Needs Assessment survey will be voluntary. However, it is recommended that the support of Party Group Leaders would be solicited to endorse the completion of the survey and consequently increase the response rate from Members.
11. It is anticipated that alongside this survey, Members will also be invited to attend focus groups and interviews in 2014 to provide their opinions and thoughts on current Member development arrangements, and how Members can feel ownership and benefit from a Member Development Strategy.

## **Legal Implications**

12. This Training Needs Assessment survey is a key approach in delivering the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. Completion of the survey will be voluntary, and the survey will be conducted in line with Data Protection and Equalities legislation.

## **Financial Implications**

13. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report with any costs associated with development and support being met with existing resources.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Committee approves the proposal and implementation of the Training Needs Assessment Survey for all elected Members of the Council.

**MARIE ROSENTHAL  
COUNTY CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER  
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

*The following Appendices are attached:*

**Appendix 1: RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Title: Cardiff Council's Training Needs Assessment for Elected Members**

#### **Research Project Aim:**

Establish current Members' views to inform the development and formulation of a Member Development Strategy for Cardiff Council.

The implementation of a Member Development Strategy and the establishment of arrangements for assessing the personal training and development needs (PDR) of individual Members are key requirements in achieving the Charter Status for Member Support and Development in Wales. The findings of this research project will feed into the development of these key documents.

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## **1. Members' Training and Development Needs Assessment**

### **1.1 Research aim and objectives**

Establish the training and development needs and priorities of elected Members with consideration of the various roles and responsibilities that they currently fulfil.

Specific objectives:

- Assess Members' perceptions of their personal capabilities and their confidence to effectively discharge the various roles and responsibilities that they have e.g. Cabinet, Scrutiny etc. as set out in the Constitution.

- Assess Members' knowledge and understanding of the generic subject areas/knowledge sets that will enable them effectively discharge their roles as elected Members of the Council.

*Note: Subject areas could include:*

*Local Government Operations*

*Role of Members and Officers*

*Member and Officer Protocols*

*Role of Committees*

*Ethics and Standards*

*Local Government Measure*

*Local Government Finance including the Council's financial processes  
and Medium Term Development Plan*

*The Council's Corporate Plan*

*Equalities*

*Role of Scrutiny*

*Planning and the Local Development Plan*

*Audit and review and regulatory responsibilities*

*Information and Data protection*

*Health and Safety*

- Identify the specific skills sets that individual Members feel they need to develop, in order to effectively fulfil the various roles they may have as elected Members.

The survey will make use of the competencies outlined in The New WLGA Member Development Framework in identifying the skills sets that Members need to develop.

Some of the core set of competencies and skills identified in Scottish Framework and the Warwick Business School's Political leadership competency

framework could also be used to inform the formulation of the questionnaire which include:

*Political leadership skills*  
*Promoting and leading change*  
*Effective communication*  
*Corporate focus and direction*  
*Decision making*  
*Analysis and innovative problem solving*  
*Providing leadership and direction*  
*Collaborative working*  
*Negotiation and diplomacy*  
*Building effective partnerships*  
*Personal effectiveness*  
*Advocacy and representation*  
*Political awareness*  
*Championing service improvement*  
*Chairing skills*  
*Debating skills*  
*Questioning and challenging skills*  
*Conflict resolution*  
*Influencing skills*  
*Handling casework*  
*Networking and building relationships and collaboration*

*The above list of core competencies will be considered*

- Identify the challenges or issues (personal, political, organisational barriers) that prevent Members from undertaking their specific roles effectively.
- Identify Members preferred approach or method for the delivery of learning and development.

- Assess Members' views regarding on the implementation and take-up of a PDR Scheme (Personal Development Plan and Review) particularly for those Members who are in receipt of a senior salary e.g. Committee Chairs and Cabinet Members.
- Assess the effectiveness of the existing Member induction and training and development opportunities or facilities.
- Identify Members' recommendations for improving Member training and development facilities and opportunities.
- Identify constraints that Members have which prevent them from effectively engaging or benefiting from Member development and support opportunities and facilities.
- Identify the different types of Officer Support that Members feel they need to enable them to effectively fulfil their role.

## **1.2 Methodology**

A survey questionnaire will be formulated to address the topic areas that are outlined above.

Survey questions that are relevant to specific Member categories (e.g. Committee Members, Cabinet Members etc.) will be formulated and appropriately routed in the survey design. The survey will contain a set of survey questions which will apply to all elected Members. However, there will also be specific questions which will only apply to particular Member groups depending on the specific roles that they fulfil on behalf of the Council.

The draft questionnaire will be sent to the Chair of the Democratic Services Task and Finish Group on Member Development and to the County Clerk and Monitoring Officer for review and comment.

The survey will be developed using the Survey Monkey Software and will be mainly distributed on-line.

The data collection, storage, analysis and reporting of the survey findings will comply with the requirements of Data Protection legislation. The responses to the survey will be kept confidential and will be stored in a restricted drive. The covering letter that will go out with the survey questionnaire will specify that the survey will be collecting personal information about individual Member's training and development needs, and therefore the individual results/findings will not be subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.

When required or appropriate, the generalised survey findings will be anonymised if these are to be made publicly available. The result of the TNA completed by Cabinet Members will not be made publicly available but will be reported back to them as a group and individually when required and appropriate. Individual results will be reported back to each Member and will be used to inform the formulation of their PDR. Overall (general findings) results of the TNA will inform the development and implementation of Councils' Member Development Programme that meets the requirements of the Wales Charter.

### **1.3 Resources required**

A research officer will be required to formulate the survey questionnaire.

The needs assessment will be mostly administered as a self-completion survey that will be available on-line.

To help increase the returns to the survey, it is recommended that we secure the Political Party Leaders' support to endorse completion this training and needs assessment.

Research Officers from the Scrutiny Team will also be available to encourage and assist Members in completing the survey questionnaire (by using computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) method) prior to scheduled Member meetings e.g. full Council Meetings or prior to Committee Meetings.



For those Members who would be unable to complete the survey unassisted it is recommended that a computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) method will be used. Hard copies of the questionnaire will also be made available to Members who prefer not to complete the questionnaire on-line.

#### **1.4 Timetable**

Draft Survey questionnaire will be sent out for consultation and sign off by the Leader of the Council, the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee and the County Clerk & Monitoring Officer during the month of December.

The questionnaire will be distributed in January and responses will be collected within a two week period.

It is anticipated that the high level results/findings of the survey could be presented to the Democratic Services Task and Finish Group on Member Development during their meeting in February 2013.