

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF  
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

**STANDARDS & ETHICS COMMITTEE: 23 SEPTEMBER 2008**

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**REPORT OF THE CLERK TO THE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: 5**

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**MEMBER DEVELOPMENT TRAINING 2008**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. As part of Cardiff Council's approved Member Development Strategy, a Member Development Programme was devised in order to introduce new Members to the way that Cardiff Council, and local government in general, functions. The aim was to provide relevant development opportunities to the Councillors so that they could gain a better understanding of their role and perform their duties in the most effective way.

To date, the following opportunities have been offered:

**Code of Conduct**

2. The objective was to provide Members with a sound and practical working knowledge of the new code of conduct which has just been adopted and to ensure that Members were confident about when they should declare interests and consequences for their participation in Council business. Members were informed that it was a legal requirement that they attend this session.
3. These sessions were held by Kate Berry, City and County Solicitor, and were well attended. Five sessions were held on 12 June, 17 June (x2), 25 June and 21 July. In total, 72 out of 74 Members attended and sessions were rated 'excellent' or 'good' in evaluation forms.

**Meeting Practice**

4. The objective was to give an overview of the different meetings that Members may be asked to participate in; help Members to understand their roles in the different contexts and encourage them to review their own performance in these meetings.

5. These sessions were held by Kate Berry, City and County Solicitor, and Mike Davies, Clerk to the Council. Two sessions were held on 19 June and 7 July; 15 of the 24 new Members attended (Lib Dem 6, Conservative 5, Plaid 3, Independent 1).
6. Evaluation forms showed that administrative arrangements, facilities, facilitators, exercises and information pack were rated either excellent or good. One Member stated that it was a lot of information to assimilate but was nevertheless very interesting.

### **How the Council Works**

7. The objective was to give an introduction into how local government works, including Local Government Finance and Corporate Governance.
8. These sessions were held by Mike Davies, Clerk to the Council. Two sessions were held on 19 June and 7 July and were well attended by 17 new Members and 4 experienced Members (Lib Dem 8, Conservative 7, Plaid 3, Labour 2, Independent 1).
9. Evaluation forms showed that the majority of Members rated the administrative arrangements, facilities, facilitators and exercises excellent or good. Some Members stated that the session had overrun with too much information to assimilate and that this session would have been more useful when they had first been elected.

### **Are You My Ward Councillor**

10. The objective was to provide a briefing for new Members on frequently asked questions and key issues, with practical advice being offered from experienced Members.
11. The sessions were held by Mike Davies, Clerk to the Council with the assistance of 4 experienced Members. An 'experts panel' was set up to include representatives from C2C, Housing Management, Neighbourhood Renewal, Planning, Community Safety, and Waste, who gave an interview of key issues and frequently asked questions from their departments. Kate Berry, City and County Councillor, and Ada Flinn, Corporate Complaints Officer, were present to explain how to deal with Complaints to the Council. Health and Safety issues were also discussed.
12. Three sessions were held on 24, 29 and 30 July and in total 11 new Members attended (Lib Dem 6, Conservative 3, Plaid 1, Independent 1).
13. Evaluation forms showed that administrative arrangements, facilities, facilitators, usefulness and information pack were all rated excellent or good. Members stated that this session had raised important issues, although one Member felt that this training should have been held earlier on. This Member also stated that Councillors should play a more strategic role rather than be involved with reporting the public's problems.

## **Planning for Planning Committee Members**

14. The objective was to provide an insight into the key elements of the planning process (including the Development Plan process, and Development Control), the role of the Planning Committee in determining applications and probity of Members of Committee.
15. The sessions, given by Phil Williams, Manager Strategic Planning, were held on 2 and 11 June. In total 8 Members received training (Lib Dem 4, Conservative 2, Labour 1, Independent 1). The remaining four Members of the Planning Committee had previously attended a training session and therefore, as required by the Council, all Planning Committee Members had undergone the necessary training.

## **What is Scrutiny?**

16. The objective was to provide an introduction to Scrutiny aimed at new Scrutiny Committee Members.
17. Two sessions were held on 22 and 23 May, given by Richard Phillips, Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services. In total 15 Members attended the sessions, 9 new Members and 6 experienced Members (Lib Dem 7, Plaid 3, Labour 2, Conservative 2, Independent 1).
18. Further immediate level sessions are planned for the end of August 'Doing Good Scrutiny Well – Performance Management Information' – these will be aimed mainly at new Members of Scrutiny Committees.

## **City Bus Tours**

19. The objective of the tour was to provide background information on key Council site and development areas within the City. The tour visited Butetown (regeneration); new Police Station; Dumballs Road (+ Skills Training Centre); Litchfield court, Tudor Street; North Grangetown renewal area and Leckwith; Penarth Road and Barrage. Refreshments were served at the Environment Centre and Members were given a talk about the Sports Village and Harbour. The tour proceeded to Tremorfa – Splott Park and Tweedsmuir Road gully; Stenhousemuir regeneration; Rover Way – Gypsy site and motorcycle track; Lamby Way – landfill; brief tour of the Mansion House.
20. Tour guides were Martin Murphy (21 July), Dave Jaques and Richard Geen (28 July) from Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal.
21. Two tours were held on 21 and 28 July respectively, and 11 Members participated (Lib Dem 9, Conservative 1, Plaid 1) including 4 experienced Members.
22. Feedback from the tour guides was very positive and those Members who had taken part, had found it to be a very useful exercise.

23. Five Members who were unable to participate on this occasion expressed interest in another tour.

### **Equalities and Diversity**

24. The objective was to inform the Members of the legal responsibilities that Members have and offer practical training on the Council's policies and procedures of equality and diversity within Cardiff and Wales.

25. Two sessions were held on 23 and 29 July and Paul Keeping, Operational Manager (Equal Opportunities and Diversity) and Caroline Davies, Learning and Development Advisor (Equalities) gave the presentations. In total 7 new Members attended (Lib Dem 3, Plaid 2, Independent 1, Conservative 1). In spite of the low turnout for these sessions, the feedback from Members was excellent.

### **Decision-making for Licensing Committee Members**

26. The objective was to provide insight into the key elements of the licensing process and the role of the Licensing Committee.

27. The session 'Considering Licensing Applications – Determination Procedure at Licensing Hearings' was organised on 7 August by Paul Shone, Operational Manager, Licensing and Strategic Services, and the course provider was Nick Landells, Poppleston Allen, Licensing Solicitors.

28. In total 8 Members attended, 4 new Members and 4 experienced Members (Lib Dem 4, Plaid 2, Conservative 1, Labour 1).

### **ICT Skills Audit**

29. New Members were sent a questionnaire to ascertain how many would be interested in ICT training. To date, 10 new Members have responded and have expressed an interest in some form of training. Training courses for these Members will be organised during the coming month.

30. The Member Development programme for the Autumn is currently being planned, with dates already booked for :

- Introduction to Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal
- Sustainable Development