

STANDARDS COMMITTEE, 11 JANUARY 2022

Report title: Member Induction 2022

Wards: All

Portfolio: Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, Councillor Andy Wilson

Report Authorised by: Tasnim Shawkat, Interim Director of Legal and Governance

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REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the proposed induction programme and arrangements for newly elected and returning Councillors following the May 2022 local elections.

The draft programme, included at Appendix 1, is presented in draft for consideration by Standards Committee. This is to help facilitate its development, its subsequent delivery and to ensure it promotes high standards of conduct.

FINANCE SUMMARY

There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To consider and comment on the proposed induction arrangements set out in the report, including Appendix 1.
2. To support the establishment of a cross-party working group to facilitate the development and delivery of the Member Induction and ongoing Member Learning and Development Programme.

1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 The role of a Councillor is complex and challenging and the political, legislative, and local landscape, in which they operate, is constantly changing.
- 1.2 Communities have high expectations of their elected representatives from the day of their election and throughout their period of office. Professor Colin Copus highlights in [a manifesto for councillors](#) that:

“The public expect local councillors to solve personal case work issues; address local community problems, from the mundane to the complex; provide access to the council; and take action to force change in the policies and practices of the council.”
- 1.3 Therefore, it is essential that elected Members are given every assistance to be able to quickly and successfully navigate the numerous aspects of local government.
- 1.4 The forthcoming Local Government elections on 5 May 2022 will necessitate an induction programme for new and returning Councillors. The overarching objective of the programme will be to provide Councillors with an understanding of how to discharge their role as an elected representative of Lambeth and to provide an understanding of the governance framework of the council.

2. PROPOSAL AND REASONS

- 2.1 A draft programme, setting out the Member Induction Programme, is set out at Appendix 1. This has been created using the following principles:
 - Prioritised and phased, focusing on the most essential session sessions early on.
 - Digital by default and self-managing, using online tools as much as possible and giving councillors a greater ability to “learn and discover” at a time of their own choosing.
 - Integrated with the wider member development programme.
 - High quality, refined through feedback and evaluation, learning as we go.
- 2.2 Officers have also created a detailed project plan which has assigned key tasks to officers/teams across the organisation. This, together with the proposal (set out in 5.1) to establish a cross party working group, will help facilitate the development and delivery of the programme.
- 2.3 It should also be noted that the draft programme, by its very nature and timescale, contains some content which is indicative and subject to change. Members of Standards Committee are asked to comment on the programme and also advise on how the programme should continue in the months leading up to the election in May 2022.

3. FINANCE

- 3.1 The Member Induction, and ongoing Member Learning and Development Programme, will be delivered by a mix of officer time, using in-house resources, and from externally funded sources. All costs will be met from existing budgets.

4. LEGAL AND DEMOCRACY

- 4.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, in developing plans for the Member Induction and ongoing Member Learning and Development Programme it should be highlighted that:
- The Monitoring Officer has a legal responsibility to ensure good governance.
 - The Council has a duty under Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its members. As set out in Part VI of the Constitution, the Standards Committee is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors and non-elected co-opted representatives.
 - Some Members, including Members of Planning Applications Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee, are required to attend designated training to ensure they are up to date with current legislation and practice. Decisions made by Members who have not attended such training could be open to challenge.
- 4.2 The Member Induction and Member Learning and Development Programme will support the Council, the Standards Committee, and the Monitoring Officer in ensuring these duties and responsibilities are discharged.
- 4.3 There are no further comments from Democratic Services.

5. CONSULTATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

- 5.1 In addition to seeking feedback from Group Leaders/Whips and senior officers it is proposed that a cross party working group be established to help finalise the development and subsequent delivery of both the Member Induction and ongoing Member Learning and Development Programme.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 Access to a comprehensive induction is vital to ensure both newly elected, and returning, members are fully conversant with all aspects of the various roles they undertake. A comprehensive programme of training and development and access to online resources and officer assistance will support sound decision making and avoid reputational risk to the Council.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Public authorities are required to have due regard to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) when making decisions and setting policies.
- 7.2 While there are no specific equalities implications arising from this report, all induction and member learning and development sessions will be open and accessible to all Councillors. Information will be provided in a range of formats. For example, taught sessions, e-learning, and information packs to try and accommodate different learning styles. In addition, there will be opportunities for Councillors to indicate whether they have further development needs. Before finalising arrangements, officers will explore the most appropriate times and locations for sessions and how Councillors wish to be communicated with and developed.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY

8.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

9. ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The induction programme has been structured to empower all Councillors to take a full and active role as community and council leaders. A key emphasis of the programme will be the partnership between Councillors and officers and the Council and key partners in delivering services.

10. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A roadmap to May 2022 is set out as part of Appendix 1.

AUDIT TRAIL

Name and Position/Title	Lambeth Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in paragraph:
Councillor Andy Wilson	Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance	28.10.21	For Info	
Tasnim Shawkat, Interim Director Legal and Governance	Legal and Governance	22.10.21	For Info	
Hamant Bharadia, Finance	Finance and Property	22.10.21	22.10.21	Finance Summary
Andrew Pavlou, Legal Services	Legal and Governance	22.10.21	26.10.21	None
Wayne Chandai, Head of the Chief Executive's Office and Democratic Services	Legal and Governance	22.10.21	27.10.21	Appendix 1

REPORT HISTORY

Report deadline	01.11.2021
Date final report sent	01.11.2021
Part II Exempt from Disclosure/confidential accompanying report?	No
Key decision report	No
Date first appeared on forward plan	N/A
Key decision reasons	N/A
Background information	A manifesto for councillors – LGIU
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Draft Member Induction Programme