

Meeting date: Wednesday 24 March 2021

Report to: Governance Committee



Subject/report title: Review of New Member Induction Programme

Report from: Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

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Wards affected:

All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek approval of the New Member Induction Programme for 2021.

2. Decision(s) recommended

2.1 That the Committee reviews and approves a programme of induction training for newly elected Councillors in 2021 (Appendix A)

3. Matters for Consideration

3.1 In 2016 the Committee's views and approval were sought on an Induction Programme for newly elected Members. Given a number of years have now elapsed the Committee's view on the existing programme are being sought.

3.2 One of the key principles of the Local Code of Corporate Governance is that Councillors should have a clear understanding of their role and the competencies they are expected to display in order to perform their various roles.

3.3 For newly elected Councillors this begins with a programme of induction designed to provide them with the support required to carry out their elected role. The induction programme aims to:

- Ensure Councillors complete the relevant administrative processes and have the IT equipment to allow them to undertake their elected role;

- Provide Councillors with a comprehensive introduction to key services and an overarching view of the Council's work;
- Provide an opportunity for Councillors to meet key staff from across the Council; and
- Set the foundations for further training and development, as appropriate, for Councillors.

- 3.4 The programme includes a range of briefings and workshops covering key service areas including governance, safeguarding, overview and scrutiny, housing, planning, and equalities and diversity.
- 3.5 Due to the risk of information overload in the induction process the programme is phased over a period of months. Priority training is given in the first month after the elections, with further sessions offered over the next 4 to 6 months.
- 3.6 All newly elected councillors are provided with an information pack including a Members' guide and other key information.
- 3.7 Given the current situation with Covid-19 and how Council is currently operating remote meetings, how the training is delivered has yet to be determined, but it is envisaged it could be a mix of both physical and virtual. It is important that Councillors are introduced to the diverse range of services that the Council delivers. The meetings whether physical or virtual allow the opportunity to meet and ask questions of senior staff from a wide range of services and to start to build working relationships with Officers.
- 3.8 A draft Induction Programme for 2021 is attached as Appendix A to this report. Those Officers who will be delivering the training have been asked to consider how this could be done virtually if required. The Committee is invited to comment on the content and timing of delivery.

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 4.1 No other options have been considered.

5. Reasons for recommending preferred option

- 5.1 The focus for delivering the programme is to ensure Councillors understand how the Council works, how Councillors are supported in their role and how they are able to carry out their role as community leaders as effectively as possible.

6. Implications and Considerations

- 6.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the [Council Plan](#):

Priority:	Contribution:
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<p>Economy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revitalising our towns and local centres. 2. UK Central (UKC) and maximising the opportunities of HS2. 3. Increase the supply of housing, especially affordable and social housing. 	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Environment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Enhance Solihull's natural environment. 5. Improve Solihull's air quality. 6. Reduce Solihull's net carbon emissions. 	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>People and Communities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Take action to improve life chances in our most disadvantaged communities. 8. Enable communities to thrive. 9. Sustainable, quality, affordable provision for adults & children with complex needs. 	<p>Implement a framework for the development of community leadership/advocacy roles and skills of councillors</p>

6.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

6.2.1 To try inform Members the views of the most recent newly elected Councillors from 2019 were sought as to how effective they found the Programme. A number responded and were positive about the programme. In summary the following views were expressed:

- The induction programme was excellent and exceeded expectations;
- The induction pack contained the right amount of information, any more would have been too much. The who's, who section was very useful;
- All the induction sessions were useful and appropriate. They needed to be spread out but could they have been completed by August;
- Another comment was the first couple of weeks of the Programme were a bit heavy commitment wise; and
- The issue of refresh training was raised particularly around understanding the budget process, the timing of which would be around budget setting time.

6.3 Financial implications:

6.3.1 As the training is done in house the cost is minimal. If external facilitators are used the cost can be met from the Members Training and Development budget.

6.4 Legal implications:

6.4.1 None as a direct result of this report.

6.5 Risk implications:

6.5.1 None as direct result of this report.

6.6 Equality implications:

6.6.1 None as a direct result of this report.

7. List of appendices referred to

7.1 Appendix A - Proposed Newly Elected Members Induction Programme 2021

8. Background papers used to compile this report

8.1 None

9. List of other relevant documents

9.1 None