

Cherwell District Council

Council

17 May 2023

Member Development Framework

Report of Monitoring Officer / Assistant Director Law & Governance

This report is public

Purpose of report

To consider and agree the Member Development Framework and note the Member Development Programme for 2023/24.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Agree the Member Development Framework (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 Note the Member Development Programme for 2023/2024 (Appendix 2).
- 1.3 Note that the Monitoring Officer/Assistant Director Law & Governance will regularly review and amend the Programme where necessary throughout the Municipal Year to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The LGA Corporate Peer Review Report noted that “Cherwell District Council’s member development programme continues to be developed, it is recognised and appreciated by members. There is a positive focus on continuous improvement.”
- 2.2 Following elections, all Members, but particularly newly elected Members, are provided with an initial induction programme of training following the Election. A Programme of Member Development is also run in the remainder of the year to brief all Members on relevant current issues.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The Member Development Framework is attached at Appendix 1. It emphasises the purpose and importance of Member development, the approach and opportunities to support Members in gaining the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil their various roles effectively.
- 3.2 The Member Development Programme 2023/24 is attached at Appendix 2. The programme includes the topics agreed as part of the 2023/24 meeting calendar by Council in October 2022. It includes key induction sessions that will be mandatory for newly elected Members, and are open to all Members to attend. Equally, as always, some development sessions remain mandatory for some or all Members.
- 3.3 The Political Group Leaders (PGL) met on 20 April 2023 and gave consideration to the Member Development Framework and the Programme for 2023/24. Group Leaders unanimously endorsed the Framework.
- 3.4 The Monitoring Officer / Assistant Director Law & Governance will regularly keep the Programme regularly reviewed and amend it where necessary to ensure it remains fit for purpose. This will ensure that the Programme retains flexibility with additional development sessions being added as and when a need is identified.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Council is recommended to agree the Member Development Framework and note the Programme. The Programme will be kept under review, training dates will be added and made available to Members as soon as possible.

5.0 Consultation

Corporate Leadership Team
Political Group Leaders

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not to agree the Member Development Framework. This is not recommended as the Framework was endorsed by Political Group Leaders.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no budget implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, Michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Shiraz Sheikh, Monitoring Officer / Assistant Director Law & Governance,
shiraz.sheik@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

- 7.3 Failing to put a Member Development programme in place potentially leaves elected Members unable to fulfil their electoral mandate and poor decision making and potential for challenge.

Comments checked by:

Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus, shona.ware@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Equalities and Inclusion Implications

- 7.4 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 7.5 The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. The Member Development Framework will be sensitive to the protected characteristics of the councillor cohort, and considerate of their diverse needs (e.g. making training sessions accessible). In addition, equality will continue to be one of the components of member training in order to ensure that the organisation fully understands its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Comments checked by:

Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus, shona.ware@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Sustainability Implications

- 7.6 There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Jo Miskin, Climate Action Manager, jo.miskin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision N/A

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All

Lead Councillor

N/A

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 – Member Development Framework
- Appendix 2 – Member Development Programme 2023/24

Background papers

None

Report Authors and contact details

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