

Meeting	Democratic Services Committee
Date	11th July, 2017
Subject	Training and Developing Members
Purpose	Updating the committee on the current provision and what is being planned and to seek guidance and observations on further developments
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1. One vital part of the role of this committee, in ensuring appropriate support for the Council's members in their work, is to keep an eye on and offer improvements to the provision for training and developing members.
2. The committee did this prior to the election and there was considerable discussion with members about the content of the training and development programme, particularly for the first year of the new Council. This led to the arrangements for the new initial induction days implemented soon after the election (that will be the subject of a separate discussion at the committee meeting) and also the programme of training and development sessions for the first year.
3. A copy of the programme for that first year is attached to this report as Appendix 1. We can report verbally to the committee on the response to the provision so far but, of course, it is still early days with many important sessions on key matters yet to take place. However, even at this time, it would be useful to have the reflections of committee members on what has been offered and any needs not provided for yet.
4. One thing that was very clear, from members' views expressed previously, was that the greatest interest was not in formal training (courses etc) only but a number of observations were made about the need to ensure less formal but more regular support for members.
5. This has led us to seek to establish arrangements for mentoring and coaching. Appendix 2 reports on these two provisions, what they entail and the difference between them.
6. This possible provision was mentioned at the Learning and Development Stall on the Induction Days and, soon, we will be circulating all the members to see who would be interested in such support. Some members have already expressed an interest and we are organizing suitable provision. Amongst them are some new members who have been offered initial 1:1 interviews with a senior officer to identify development needs.
7. As is clear from Appendix 2, the roles of mentor and coach are different and it is important that it is more experienced fellow councilors operate as mentors. In this regard, two things are in hand. Firstly, we have contacted all political groups to seek the names of more experienced councilors who would be willing to act as mentors to less experienced members. Secondly, we are organizing training for those keen to act as mentors to help them to be effective in the role.
8. The committee's observations and guidance are sought on the training programme and on the development of mentoring and coaching arrangements for members.