

# Member Training – Licensing Committee – 14 December 2016

## Purpose

To decide how to progress member training to ensure it meets the needs of Members and the operational needs of the service whilst being provided as soon as possible.

## Background

The Licensing Committee has a specific training scheme designed to ensure members are equipped to meet the challenges presented by their Committee work and to ensure that it remains relevant and up-to-date to reflect the changing nature of licensing. The review is necessary to address the ongoing issue of providing training quickly for newly elected Councillors and the particular problems presented this year with the appointment to the Committee of 5 new members. This has meant that the work of the Committee so far this year has been considered by a small number of trained Councillors.

## Issues

### **Delivery of 'basic' legislation based training**

**Challenges** – time and member availability.

**Suggestions** – Arranged early and Groups advised prior to election when it is. It's vital that members of the Committee make themselves available for this training and it would be useful if Groups could take account of members' availability to attend the relevant training in making nominations to the Committee. It must be acknowledged that there is no guaranteed possibility of providing this training at another time nor in a specific location or at a specific time given the small number of trainers and the fact that training sessions are clustered around the election period when demand is at a peak.

### **Observation of Committees**

**Challenges** – inability to predict when meetings will take place and member availability.

**Suggestions** – to consider reducing the observations of Committee to one each of Hackney/Private Hire Appeals and Licensing Sub-Committee and to explore the possibility of recording either an actual hearing/appeal or mock hearing/appeal and use for training purposes.

### **Changes in Committee Membership**

**Challenges** – large scale changes in membership result in a very small almost unworkable number of members to sit on Committees threatening the Council's ability to fulfil its statutory duties. It also results in the loss of expertise built up by members over the years and potentially threatens the ability to make reasoned and sometimes difficult but necessary decisions.

**Suggestions** – It is recognised that some changes are unavoidable as a result of the election process. However, where possible it is suggested that when nominations to the Committee are proposed, it is taken into consideration that some meetings are held during the day and therefore members who do not work or are able to accommodate such demands within their working week are likely to have greater capacity to sit and will help avoid the burden being placed on a small number of members. The Council could also consider succession planning for members so that some can be trained and observe Committees in advance of sitting as a member on the Committee.

### **Modular Training for Existing Councillors**

**Suggestions** – information sessions delivered by partner agencies and other parties on topics of relevance to the work of the Committee should be provided before/after Licensing Committee.

### **Ongoing training and feedback**

**Suggestions** – the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Groups Spokespersons in their discussion with officers have suggested that there should be an opportunity for Councillors and officers to exchange views of the outcome of hearings and appeals as part of an ongoing learning process. Consideration needs to be given to the timing of this.