

**Extract from the minutes of the Member Development Group Meeting on 10 July 2018**

**Mandatory Member Development**

The Group considered the minute from Full Council on 21 February 2018. Council had considered the proposals on mandatory member development made by the Member Development Group and endorsed by Cabinet. Council had asked that the Member Development Group look again at the timescales within which mandatory development be completed and refer the issue back to Council again.

The Group reiterated its support for the principle that training on safeguarding, equality and diversity and data protection be mandatory for all Councillors, and also that all new chairs undertake chairing skills training, unless they had extensive experience of chairing meetings in a local authority environment. The Group also noted that the views of the Independent Remuneration Panel had been sought on the principle of withholding payment of the relevant allowances should mandatory training not be undertaken and had supported the principle, subject to the inclusion of a safeguard to prevent hardship.

After considering the matter afresh, and In light of the comments made in the debate at Full Council, the Group considered that a period of three months from election, was a fair and practical period for the completion of mandatory training on these issues. This would give the opportunity for the training to be offered on more than one occasion to give members ample opportunity to complete it. It was suggested that there may be some benefit in offering a whole day training following the 2019 elections. However the precise details of the delivery of the training would be for the Group to agree nearer the time.

The Group were also of the view that if members had undertaken similar training at Essex County Council or at another relevant public body such as Colchester Borough Homes, this would satisfy the requirement and there would be no need to repeat the training.

In respect of the current municipal year, the Group considered that the required training should be completed by 31 October 2018. This would give a further opportunity for the training to be repeated at least once and to give members a

further chance to attend. The Group also asked that if the proposals were agreed, that the Group Leaders be provided with information about attendance at the session in May 2018 so they were clear who still needed to complete the training.

It was noted that Council had asked that the recommendation be referred back to them once again the Member Development group had considered the issue of timescales. Therefore it was *RECOMMENDED to COUNCIL* that:-

- (a) Training on Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and Data Protection be completed by all Councillors by 31 October 2018.
  
- (b) All new Councillors elected post May 2018 to undertake Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and Data Protection training within three months of election.
  
- (c) Training in Chairing Skills for all Chairs newly elected to the Council's Committees and Panels from May 2018 to be mandatory, unless the Monitoring Officer considers that the relevant Councillor has extensive experience of chairing meetings in a local authority environment.
  
- (d) For those Chairs newly elected in the 2018-19 municipal year all such training to be completed by 31 October 2018, and in future years such training to be completed within three months of election as Chair.
  
- (e) Where a Councillor has undertaken training of a similar nature at another local authority or relevant public body, then these requirements will not apply.
  
- (f) The Members Allowances Scheme be amended by the inclusion of an additional paragraph as set out below:-

## **7. Mandatory Member Development - Withholding of Allowances**

*Where the Council specifies that training and development on a particular subject is mandatory for all Councillors or specified groups of Councillors, should that training and development not be undertaken the payment of the relevant Councillors allowances, including any Special Responsibility Allowance, shall be withheld until the Councillor has undertaken the required training and development.*

*Where, in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer, the withholding of the payment of the allowance is likely to cause financial hardship then this provision shall not apply.*

Note: A copy of the minute from Council on 21 February 2018 is attached for reference.

## **Extract from the minutes of the Council meeting on 21 February 2018**

### **Mandatory Member Development**

It was proposed by Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, that the recommendation contained in draft minute 239 of the Cabinet meeting of 31 January 2018 and the recommendations contained in the report by the Assistant Director Policy and Corporate entitled "Mandatory Member Development – consultation with the Independent Remuneration Panel" be approved and adopted.

Following the debate, Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder, Portfolio Holder for Resources, indicated that he would alter the motion so that the recommendation from the Member Development Group be approved subject to the amendments incorporated below and to the recommendation being submitted to Council again once the all party Member Development Group had given further consideration to the period within which mandatory training should be completed.

(a) Training on Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and Data Protection be made mandatory for all Councillors from May 2018.

(b) All such training to be completed within a period to be defined by the all party Member Development Group.

(c) All new Councillors elected post May 2018 to undertake Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and Data Protection training within a period to be defined by the all party Member Development Group.

(d) Training in Chairing Skills for all Chairs newly elected to the Council's Committees and Panels from May 2018 to be mandatory, unless the Monitoring Officer considers that the relevant Councillor had extensive experience of chairing meetings in a local authority environment.

(e) All such training to be completed within three months of election as Chair.

(f) The views on the Independent Remuneration Panel be sought on the principle of withholding payment of relevant allowances should relevant mandatory training not be undertaken.

The motion was then put to the vote and was carried (majority voted for).

