



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Members' Generic Development Programme
Date:	Friday, 8 th February, 2013
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext. 6314)
Contact Officer:	Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer (ext. 6316) Lisa Rogan, Principal HR Advisor (ext. 3251)

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Member Development Steering Group has been responsible for developing a framework to ensure that all Members are supported and equipped to carry out their roles effectively especially when considering the working through and implications of local government reform. Quite a significant amount of progress has been made to date with the Steering Group and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee having agreed to the design and delivery of number of key elements of the framework, such as, a revised induction programme following the local government elections in 2011, a range of specific development activities, the revised Personal Development Planning (PDP) process and the 'Belfast Members' Academy'.
1.2	In March, 2012 the Council approved the revised PDP process for Members. The revised process, which was conducted between May and September, 2012 with 40 out of 51 Members, identified a number of both individual and generic development needs of Members.
1.3	Furthermore, the Committee at its meeting on 21 st September, the generic development needs which had been highlighted by Members during the PDP process. Members agreed that these development needs should be addressed through the delivery of an overall generic development programme which would begin to be delivered in the early part of 2013. Furthermore, it was agreed that the Belfast Members' Academy should be included in this programme.

2	Key Issues
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2.1	A draft development programme has been designed in the form of the 'Members' Generic Development Programme' (Appendix 1) and will be considered by the Member Development Steering Group at its meeting on Wednesday, 4 th February.
2.2	In addition to the development programme, the enclosed 'Action Plan' (Appendix 2) will also be considered by the Steering group. This action plan seeks to take account of those areas for elected member development which will be necessary but must yet be worked through, such as Community Planning, the planning function and scrutiny requirements.
2.3	It is proposed that the development programme will run until the local government elections to the shadow Council in 2014 in order to not add unduly to Members' already busy schedules. In addition, as work progresses with Local Government Reform, we will be able to tailor the Generic Development Programme to ensure that Members have the opportunity to build their capacity to effectively deliver on the new functions transferring to local government.
2.4	An important element of the Member Development Framework is the 'Belfast Members' Academy' (Appendix 3) which was agreed by Committee at its meeting on 21 st September, 2012.
2.5	The 'Belfast Members' Academy' is a bespoke programme specifically designed for elected members of the council to build the capacity of our city's current and future leaders and to equip them with the skills required to effectively deliver for the city and our communities. It provides space for individual and group learning through a range of approaches and styles within the context of Belfast City Council. One such approach is 'Action Learning Sets' which is an effective process whereby members work and learn together by tackling real issues and reflecting on their actions. Participants acquire knowledge through actions and practice rather than traditional instruction.
2.6	The 'Belfast Members' Academy' will complement the 'Members' Generic Development Programme' and will commence in March 2013. It may be possible for the programme to be formally accredited and this will be explored over the coming months. In order to receive accreditation it may be necessary to amend the programme and the steering group will be asked to consider any proposed refinements.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	Provision has been made within the revenue estimates for the delivery of the development programme, which will mostly be delivered in-house.

4	Equality Implications
4.1	N/A

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Committee is asked to note the report and the decision of the Member Development Steering Group thereon.

6	Decision Tracking
<p>Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer Lisa Rogan, Principal HR Advisor February, 2013</p>	

7	Key to Abbreviations
PDP – Personal Development Plan	

	Documents Attached
<p>Appendix 1 – Members’ Generic Development Programme Appendix 2 – Action Plan Appendix 3 – Belfast Members’ Academy</p>	