



Belfast District Council (Shadow)

Report to:	Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Elected member capacity building
Date:	29 August 2014
Reporting Officer:	Jill Minne, Director of Organisation Development
Contact Officer:	

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Statutory Transition Committee, at its meeting on 9 April 2014, approved the high level member capacity building plan, set out at appendix one, for the shadow period. Elected members acknowledged the importance of building capacity during the shadow period and the induction programme in particular.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Initial awareness sessions Delivery of the initial member induction activities (awareness sessions on Initial Information and Orientation provision; Running the Council and Committees and Media Relations & Public Communications) is complete. Chairing skills training was also provided for the chairs and deputy chairs of committees.
2.2	Code of conduct training Training on the mandatory code of conduct has been attended to date by the vast majority of both the existing and shadow councils. A further mop-up session will be delivered in August. Feedback on the training has been positive with members indicating they found the details of the GB experience and examples arising from the 14 years of a mandatory code in England, Scotland and Wales, beneficial especially in the absence of the local guidance to the Code. This will be borne in mind when developing the further training in respect of the application of the Code in relation to planning matters to take place once the guidance is issued from the DOE.
2.3	Next steps The key capacity building activities for the remainder of the shadow year will focus on the technical knowledge; skills and leadership and behaviour aspects associated with the role of the council and elected members in preparation for the new Belfast Council:

2.4	<p>Governance arrangements and the decision making process- a session on the council's decision making processes will be provided for our newly elected members prior to the September meeting of the shadow council. Other members will also be invited to attend.</p>
2.5	<p>The generic skills programme- a series of short sessions will be delivered from September 2014 on key topics including: Delivering the new functions: Planning; Regeneration and Community Planning; How we manage our finances; How we plan the council's priorities and measure outcomes; the Capital Programme and Managing Good Relations and Equality.</p>
2.6	<p>Member site visits- Undertaking site visits is a key approach to learning as they help to reinforce learning; provide opportunities to see things in practice and can help to shape future thinking. A programme of site visits will be incorporated within the overall capacity building plan.</p> <p>At the 25 June 2014 Transition Committee meeting it was discussed that it would be beneficial for members of the committee to have the opportunity to attend site visits in order to get a better understanding of the areas that will transfer as part of Local Government Reform (LGR).</p> <p>To align this to the capacity building plan it is recommended that city wide site visits are offered to all elected members to cover both the current areas and those that are transferring to BCC in April 2015. This will raise Members' awareness of work that is currently underway across the city and the opportunities that are available to us as a result of LGR. The visits will allow members to explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key challenges and issues in local areas including detail of relevant statistics about the area(s); • key outcomes associated with regeneration projects; • development opportunities; • key projects underway or planned; • engagement opportunities with key stakeholders; • understanding of the key assets and liabilities to transfer and • reinforce learning regarding strategic leadership opportunities in the city (linked to the Leadership Academy programme and members roles around Planning and Community Planning). <p>In order for the site visits to add value to other capacity building activities it is proposed we host an initial one day programme for members to be followed up with a further programme of similar site/best practice study visits through the remainder of the year.</p> <p>This initial event will include a mixture of brief presentations; a tour of a number of sites across the city and stop off visits at a small number of focused areas or projects to allow members to engage with local stakeholders and obtain more detailed information on what is happening or planned in particular areas.</p> <p>The suggested programme for the initial site visits is set out at appendix two. This details the proposed areas and specific sites/projects to be included and the local contacts to be involved in hosting the visit(s) along with the expected outcomes of the visits.</p>
2.7	<p>Code of Conduct- further training in respect of the application of the Code in relation to planning matters will be provided when the guidance is issued from the DOE.</p>
2.8	<p>The Leadership Academy- a three day modular leadership development programme</p>

	<p>focusing on Community & Partnership leadership; Council leadership and Personal & Political leadership will be delivered from October 2014. The indicative content is set out in appendix one and will involve input from council officers and external experts.</p>
2.9	<p>Member development charter re-accreditation- Members may be aware Belfast City Council's approach to member development was recognised in 2011 when the council was the first council in Northern Ireland to achieve Elected Member Development Charter status.</p> <p>The Member Development Charter is a best practice framework designed specifically for the development of elected members and ensures that the practices and mechanisms required for elected member development are in place and working. We are continuing to implement the requirements of the Charter framework and plan to seek re-accreditation in November 2014.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	A significant part of the capacity building plan will be provided internally. Any externally commissioned resources will be financed mainly from the 2014-2015 £200,000 allocation from the DOE or from allocated funding from the Local Government Training Group. The 2014-2015 member development budget may also be used if required.
3.2	Corporate Human Resources will continue to work with key senior officers to ensure continued delivery of the plan.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality and good relations implications as access to capacity building will be provided for all members.

5	Call In
5.1	This decision is subject to Call In.

6	Recommendations
6.1	Members are asked to note progress with the delivery of the elected member capacity building plan to date and the planned capacity building activities for the remainder of the shadow period.
6.2	Members are asked to agree the suggested approach to conducting city wide site visits and the proposed initial site visit programme and itinerary.

7	Decision Tracking
Jill Minne, Director of Organisation Development	

8	Key to Abbreviations
LGR- Local Government Reform	
DOE- Department of the Environment	

Appendix One: High level member capacity building plan- shadow council 2014- 2015

Appendix Two: Belfast city initial site visit programme

Appendix Three: Wider site visit itinerary focused on particular areas and projects

Appendix One: High level member capacity building plan- shadow council 2014-2015

Member Development – Shadow Council 2014-2015 (focus on development and preparation)

Shadow Council Governance Arrangements – by Mid June 2014 Revised Member Role Profiles

Induction Programme (June to August 2014)	Leadership Academy - developing understanding and leadership(a mix of facilitation with input from council officers and external experts)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and introduction The new council- structure and services – what it is, what it does, how it does it Members and officers- roles and responsibilities, who's who, working together to lead and deliver, skills and behaviours Understanding the constitution- working in the council, governance arrangements; how to get things done; code of conduct Ongoing development- the generic skills programme; short concise information sessions; the 'academy', and action learning. 	Day one: Community & Partnership Leadership (external Focus)	Day two: Council Leadership	Day three: Personal & Political Leadership	Experiential Learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leadership- your role working with and understanding communities Community, city and the future- building a shared city vision In this together- working with partners, the partnership framework, new models for joint working Skill sets- engagement, communication, networking, influencing Leadership challenges – action learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The big picture- council strategic framework- structures, services, corporate plan, budgets, performance Working with officers- officer role, member-officer relationships- who does what? Working through constitution- rules, code of conduct, scheme of delegation Skill sets- emotional intelligence- working with others, power and influence Leadership challenges- action learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding leadership and role Skills and behaviours- competence and preference Standards and code of conduct Skill sets- innovation and creativity Leadership challenges- action learning 	Preparing for 2015- joint member-officer programmes around developing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategic framework, from priorities to outcomes Future governance, roles, standards, behaviours and constitution Partnership and community thinking The evolving organisation, structure, new themes and powers

Attendance at regional events – networks for different theme leads- such as regeneration, environment Personal Development Planning & Implementation

Delivery methodology- The programme of member development will use a range of approaches to learning such as:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct input Q & A Facilitated discussion Expert speakers Study visits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Booklets Scenarios and role playing Joint member officer engagement events On location in communities with councillors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short concise information sessions Capture on camera – potential change projects Action learning sets Leadership & management programmes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentoring Use of leadership self assessment tools Use of technology- e-learning; apps; videos |
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Appendix two: Belfast City site visits- initial site visit programme

Expected outcomes:

The site visits will allow members to explore:

- key challenges and issues in local areas including detail of relevant statistics about the area(s);
- key outcomes associated with regeneration projects;
- development opportunities;
- key projects underway or planned;
- engagement opportunities with key stakeholders;
- understanding of the key assets and liabilities to transfer and
- reinforce learning regarding strategic leadership opportunities in the city (linked to the Leadership Academy programme and members roles around Planning and Community Planning).

Proposed itinerary:

- Pre-tour visual presentation of site visit locations
- Wider visit itinerary with focused site visits to particular areas and projects, set out at table 1.

Table 1: Proposed areas for focused site visits

Area	Site	Local Contact
North	Girdwood	Girdwood Forum
	North Foreshore	BCC officers to facilitate
South	Olympia / Windsor	BCC officers to facilitate
	Lagan Corridor	Lagan Canal Trust
East	Hanwood	Hanwood Trust
	Connswater Community Greenway	Connswater Community Greenway Trust
West	Colin Town Centre	Colin Neighbourhood Partnership
	Innovation Centre	BCC officers to facilitate

Appendix three: Wider site visit itinerary focused on particular areas and projects

