

Committee(s): Civic Affairs Sub-Committee	Dated: 7 th October 2022
Subject: Members Learning and Development	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so how much?	N/A
What is the source of funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department	N/A
Report of: Town Clerk & Chief Executive	For Decision
Report author(s) June Haynes, Member Services Officer Polly Dunn, Principal Governance and Member Services Manager	

Summary

This report provides the Sub-Committee with an update in respect of Member's learning, development and training issues and seeks to establish a refreshed Member Learning & Development Steering Group in order to take this work forward.

Recognising the importance of robust and resilient Member leadership, which will enable all Members to fulfil their role as part of the Court of Common Council, the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee has taken the decision to embark on a new programme to achieve this outcome. It is proposed that this will be delivered by revisiting the existing Member Development Strategy, which will include a structured, rolling learning and development programme to support new and returning Members to Court; and a refresh of the Members Development Steering Group and its Terms of Reference.

In order to assist Members in making informed decisions, exercises have been undertaken to identify existing resources and basic administration has been implemented to help facilitate the development of a considered programme and strategy. This report aims to provide information on the positive progress made and present brief plans on how officers plan to engage the MLDSG to take the work forward.

Recommendations

Members of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee are asked to:

1. Note the information in the report and the progress made;
2. Approve the refresh and proposed membership of the Member Learning and Development Steering Group and revised Terms of Reference and to:
3. Approve option 2 as detailed within the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Member Development Steering Group, a body established to manage Member learning and development, has not met since February 2022. At its meeting of 18th July 2022, the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee agreed to endorse the proposal to review and refresh the Member Learning and Development (L&D) Strategy, incorporating a remodelled Member Learning and Development Steering Group (MLDSG) with the main objective to deliver a Members L&D rolling programme.
2. The existing Member Development Strategy expired with the last Court and focus from March 2022 had been on inducting the 38 newly elected Members. As these Members have been fully integrated into City of London business, we are now able to return our attention to the rolling programme of L&D.

Current Position

3. Historically, Member Development (as driven by the Member Services Department) has been particularly reactive, rather than pro-active. It is recognised that service departments across the organisation also provide training opportunities to Members, but these opportunities have not been proactively monitored, recorded or advertised. This has led to missed opportunities, duplication and lack of efficiencies.
4. Following implementation of the Target Operating Model, the Governance Member Services Team welcomed a dedicated Member Services Officer, who will (amongst other responsibilities) take a lead on Member L&D. This individual has been in post since July.
5. At its meeting of 9 June 2022, the Policy & Resources Committee agreed to allocated £60k for the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee, to be used for matters within its remit, including Member L&D. £11k has so far been assigned for the use of L&D, on top of an existing £9k budget.
6. The Civic Affairs Sub-Committee has shown their commitment to member learning and development by agreeing a set of principles and objectives to be achieved. Engagement has empowered Members to endorse the refresh and given them ownership of the process. The strategic approach to member development can be demonstrated by the agreement to revise the

development strategy and recharge the Member Learning and Development Steering Group who would have oversight of the rolling programme and be responsible for ensuring value for money and implementing appropriate future L&D spend. The existing Member learning and development framework and offer will result in a structured future plan. A fundamental to the success of the programme would be evidence that resources were successful being directed to deliver build capacity.

7. Following a range of stakeholder involvement and comment, it is recommended that a revised strategy would deliver on the Corporation's aspirations to support the future provision of Member development activity. As an important element of delivering the strategy, the Member Learning & Development Steering Group would be closely involved in the redraft and its eventual implementation.
8. Emphasis can be given to the experiences of newly appointed Members of Court and their evaluation of the induction programme, and combined with considerations of returning Court Members, this will helpfully influence the final offer.
9. The main objective of the MLDSG will be to deliver a new L&D Strategy and implement an invigorated rolling programme of events that are appropriate, timely and value for money. They would then be responsible for reviewing the programme on an ongoing basis.
10. To avoid even further duplication and silo-working, efforts since the last meeting have been focussed on consolidating existing resource. This has included, but is not limited to:-
 - Reviewing online training that is already available for Members
 - Establishing a record system so Member training history can be maintained
 - Seeking steers from Chief Officers on what statutory and/or desirable training they feel Members may benefit from in the exercising of their duties in that service area
 - Consultation with the L&D offer in local authorities nationally.
 - Commencing plans to evaluate the Member Induction work from March-June 2022
 - Active advertisement and monitoring of courses made available to Members from internal and external sources.
11. The process thus far has provided officers the opportunity to work collaboratively across departments ensuring all aspects of the work of the Corporation are considered in the eventual draft strategy. This approach to working would also see the benefits of a multi-disciplinary approach resulting in a reduction of duplication of effort. An example of the successful multi-disciplinary approach has seen the Member Services Department working closely with colleagues undertaking the City Corporation's Charities Review, to make suggestions to the delivery of the L&D

programme and to combine some of our outcomes with theirs review. Working with the wider team there has been the opportunity to share ideas and best practice. An example of responses in regards to the final offer from chief officers can be seen at Appendix A.

12. Comparison of the Corporation's offer against local authorities nationally has taken place, the local L&D structure and offer is significantly more involved. Please see comments attached at Appendix B.
13. A useful and ambitious benchmark for the City Corporation would be the [London Member Development Charter \(LMDC\)](#). The LMDC is based on the charter for member development, developed by North West Regional Employers and is a joint initiative with the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). The Charter was intended to be a statement of a council's commitment to developing and supporting its elected members. It is aimed to help councils adopt a structured approach to councillor development and to 'building elected member capacity'. Whilst at this stage the City Corporation may not be in a position to be recognised, Members may find that the LMDC provides a useful framework to assist us in the commencement of the new strategy, and eventual target to work towards. By way of review and challenge to the internal structure and offer at the Corporation, the use of the self-assessment tool used to accredit those councils hoping to achieve the (LMDC), principles could be used to underpin the programme and serve as a check and balance, ensuring the content and delivery are appropriate, seeking best practice and value for money. An example self-assessment template is attached at Appendix C.

Member Learning & Development Steering Group

14. As referred throughout this report, until 2022 there has been a Member Development Steering Group which considered all matters relating to Member development. This group consisted of any Members with an interest in L&D, and was chaired by the Chief Commoner. Its purpose is set out in Appendix D.
15. There are no proposed changes to the MDSG's purpose, but there is a proposed re-brand to MLDSG.
16. However, to reflect the wider Court interest and legitimacy of the eventual strategy, we would like to propose a slightly more formal Membership for the Sub-Committee's consideration:
 - Chief Commoner (Current)
 - Immediate Past Chief Commoner (changing to Chief-Elect following their appointment in November every year)
 - One Senior Alderman
 - One Junior Alderman
 - Chair, Civic Affairs Sub-Committee
 - Two Members of the Civic Affairs Sub (to be appointed by the Civic Affairs Sub)
 - *Four Members of the Court of Common Council (to be appointed by the Court)

17. If this Membership, or something similar, is supported by Members, they may wish to consider a few other matters:

- 'ring-fence' a number (perhaps two) of the wider Court places for new members (i.e. those elected at the last all out elections). This would ensure their essential input and representation. Newer Members will provide invaluable input, particularly on the delivery of an induction programme.
- MDSG has previously been chaired by the Chief Commoner – so we could carry this practice over. Alternatively, the chairmanship of this committee could provide a valuable development opportunity for a Member who does not Chair another Committee or sub-committee.
- Adding an external/co-opted Member to the Steering Group.

Options

18. Option 1 - To continue with the present arrangements for Member Development delivering a range of opportunities on an ad hoc basis with little or no targeted programmes outside the statutory offers being made. Members are, on the whole, happy with the services provided to them.

18.1 The member L&D offer continued to be delivered reactively, with a high percentage of the risk of duplication, limitations on member specific themed sessions with a potential for limitation in respect of value for money. Statutory training would continue to be delivered. Evaluation and monitoring the offer may be difficult to gauge accuracy as recording is reliant on information being communicated across teams.

19. Option 2 – To appoint the MLDSG as described, and task them with improving upon the current arrangements, building on feedback from all Members, particularly those more recently elected Members, seeking the advice from chief officers and senior management of the essential tools and skills required for Members to understand their role and perform their duties effectively as members of the Court and local ward councillors. To combine the qualitative information using the structure and elements of the Member Development Charter tool kit to underpin the service and to meet the objectives to produce an appropriate, timely and cost effective rolling programme that is regularly evaluated and monitored.

19.1 To raise the profile and ease of recognition, it is suggested that a rebrand of the service take place, this would be in the form of a recognisable strapline to be used for all L&D communication. To move away from the word training and replace it with Learning and Development. On receiving any communication members would instantly recognise it as a learning and development opportunity or notification. A refresh of the L&D Strategy using the LMDC assessment tool as the framework that underpins the work of the team. Using an amalgamation of responses from Members and senior officers in respect of what skills and knowledge Members feel would help them to fulfil their various roles and what senior officers would consider an essential baseline of information important for all members of the Court and in their role as ward councillors.

- 19.2 To seek out unique ways to attract member participation, to use a range of delivery methods to support higher rates of Member engagement.
 - 19.3 To continue on the work started with chief officers working collaboratively to inform the required level of need and the desire of Members want.
 - 19.4 The Member L&D Steering Group to be responsible for oversight of the budget and spend, it is therefore recommended to support monitoring in terms of spend and value for money that the Group move to meeting quarterly to align with budgetary deadlines.
 - 19.5 To develop a member facing internal web page to allow members direct access to all their L&D needs. This communication tool would act as a portal to L&D opportunities, it would act as an archive for previously hosted events, it could also be the first port of call to access the Members L&D rolling programme. This could also be used as a discreet area for Members to receive general information on Court and ward matters.
- 20. The MLDSG would report to the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee through submission of minutes. The Civic Affairs Sub-Committee would also retain final approval of the eventual draft strategy. Proposals on the regularity of that review will also be brought forward in due course.
 - 21. Option 3 – that the responsibilities outlined under option 2 be exercised by the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee, without the establishment of any working party or steering group.
 - 22. Option 2 is the commended option for delivery of the Member Learning and Development Strategy.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

Strategic Implications:

- 23. The main objective of proposals is to develop the skills and knowledge base of our Members and to assist them to perform their many varied duties. To build their resilience and support them to become experts in the exercising of those duties, which should ultimately assist in the delivery of all aspects of our Corporate and Strategic Plan. The profile of the L&D function both internally and externally to the organisation would demonstrate the drive of the Corporation to ensure that all resources are explored when seeking to deliver the business of the organisation, striving towards the delivery of our corporate plan. To embrace best practice and to deliver on value for money

Financial Implications:

24. The Civic Affairs Sub-Committee had provisionally allocate up to £9,000 from the contingency fund to support the Member learning and development offer, with interim arrangements in place for the approval of specific learning events and associated draw-down delegated to Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Chief Commoner. The Chair confirmed additional allocation of funding given to Civic Affairs Sub-Committee of 11k to bring the total Member Learning and Development training budget up to £20k for this year.

Resource Implications

25. Additional resources had been put in place with the appointment of a Members Services Officer who is responsible for ensuring that the objectives are met. This has help to create a team of officers responsible for the Learning and Development offer. There has been a strategic approach to developing the work programme which has ownership and buy in from Members and senior officers. It is anticipated that this work will be extremely beneficial in the streamlining of existing resource.

Legal Implications

26. There is a legal requirement for those Members serving on certain committees (notably Planning & Transportation and Licencing Committees) – any essential training will be recognised and incorporated in the final strategy. These training courses will be carried out as necessary in the interim period. There are therefore no legal implications.

Risk Implications

27. The success of the programme is reliant on the level of member engagement, if the offer is not appropriate or engaging the objectives would not be met. There are also corporate risks associated with Member L&D, as Members are required to attend some statutory/compulsory courses, in particular those Members sitting on committees of a quasar judicial nature involving the licensing and planning functions or school appeals. Areas of non-statutory nature areas across the Corporation require a minimum baseline knowledge to serve, in these areas such as any of the charities, Trustee responsibilities and generally chairing skills.

Equalities Implications

28. The programme will be accessible to all Members and would accommodate those requiring support to ensure that all delegates are starting at the same entry level. Under the Equality Act 2010, all public bodies have a duty to ensure that when exercising their functions they have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and to take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people and encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. The proposals contained in this report do not have any potential negative impact on a particular group of people based on their protected characteristics.

Climate Implications:

29. There are no climate implications arising from this report.

Security Implications:

30. There are no security implications arising from this report.

Appendices

Appendix A - Officer responses

Appendix B – Local Authority comment

Appendix C – London Council's Self-Assessment Tool

Appendix D – Proposed Terms of Reference of the MLDSG

Contact:

June Haynes, Members Services Officer

June.haynes@cityoflondon.gov.uk