



City of Westminster

# Standards Committee

**Date:** 7 December 2017

**Classification:** For General Release

**Title:** Induction Programme

**Report of:** Member Services Manager

**Wards Involved:** Not Applicable

**Policy Context:**

**Financial Summary:** The cost of the induction programme

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## 1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report outlines the proposed plans for the induction of new Councillors following the City Council elections on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 and seeks the Committee's comments.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Standards Committee comment on the proposals outlined in this report for the induction of newly-elected Members, for further detailed development by the Cabinet Secretariat and Member Services team, working with the Committee and Governance Services team and
- 2.2 That all Members be advised that the Standards Committee strongly recommends the attendance of all members at the session on the Members Code of Conduct. Accordingly, further sessions will be arranged as necessary.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 The City Council elections will be held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, with 60 Councillors elected to represent the 20 wards of Westminster. The votes will be counted and the results announced later that evening/early the next morning.
- 3.2 The Cabinet Secretariat and Member Services Team, working with the Committee and Governance Services team, is preparing an induction

programme following the elections. The intention of the programme is to help newly-elected Councillors prepare for their new role and outline the support and facilities available to them, while also fulfilling specific legal requirements relating to their acceptance of their new post. The induction programme will also, however, be open to re-elected Members in full or in part and they are encouraged to take part.

3.3 The proposed approach to deliver a successful Member induction process, and the timescales involved, are outlined below. The Committee's views on and approval of the proposals is sought.

#### **4. Feedback from 2014 sessions and new cohort**

4.1 Members of the 2014 cohort were asked for their views on the induction programme at the time of the sessions in May 2014 and also again in September 2017 in advance of writing this report.

4.2 Members asked at the time of the sessions in 2014 remarked that:

- Three sessions over two days was quite tiring
- Officer sessions worked best when time was allowed for questions rather than just listening to a presentation
- Marketplace worked well as gave Members a chance to pick up basic information from departments they wouldn't necessarily have gone to a specific session on
- It would have been useful to have a quick guide on working with officers including timescales for responses etc.
- Sessions should be more focused on what Members' role in a department's work is
- It would be helpful to have a list of who to contact in the Council on various issues and contact details
- It would be helpful for prospective candidates to have the induction dates in advance
- Marketplace: might be best to have at the beginning and end rather than all the way through the evenings
- From an EMT Member: it was difficult to get all my department does in one hour

4.3 Members responded in August 2017 with the following:

- What I think would be useful is to stress in a session how the Support Officer can really help with anything. I know we were given mentors but I think non-politically the officers are more helpful.
- Once the candidates have been selected, it would have been useful to have advance notice of the date and times of the sessions, whether or not they are successful in becoming a Councillor.
- I think the key thing is getting a contacts list, an org chart and an overview of each department and committee. Our induction was too focused on officers telling us about their teams rather than how we might interact with them. Some ward based stats and contacts would also be really helpful.

## 5. Outline Chronology

5.1 An outline chronology of the key milestones connected with the May 2018 elections, and the subsequent induction programme, is as follows:

<b>Pre-Elections</b>	
Tuesday 27 March	Notice of election published
Monday 9 April	Statement of Persons nominated
<b>Election Period</b>	
Thurs 3 May	ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE
Thurs 3 May/Fri 4 May	Votes counted and RESULTS ANNOUNCED
<b>Post-Election Period – before Full Council</b>	
From Fri 4 May – Tues 13 May	Members sign Declarations of Acceptance of Office
Mon 7 May (Bank Holiday)	New Councillors take up office, provided they have signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office
Thurs 10 May (eve)	1 <sup>st</sup> Code of Conduct session (mandatory attendance)
Mon 14 May (eve)	1 <sup>st</sup> Governance ‘how things work’ session
Wed 16 May	Meeting of Full Council – Election of new Lord Mayor and Leader of the Council and Appointment of Committees
<b>Post-Election Period – after Full Council</b>	
June – July	Induction evenings – as set out in section 6.4
June/July (tbc)	Subject-specific Induction Sections, e.g. Compulsory Code of Conduct session; Licensing Committees; Planning Committees etc.

## 6. The Induction Programme

6.1 It is proposed that the induction programme for newly-elected Councillors should be three-pronged, in terms both of format and timing:

- **New Member Material:** provided in electronic format predominantly via a link to a secure Sharepoint site; given directly to Members on the announcement of the election results on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> May (or as soon as possible thereafter).
- **Mandatory Code of Conduct sessions:** the first of these will be held on Thursday 10 May; the second and subsequent ones, if needed, will be held before the summer recess.
- **WCC/Departmental Introductory Workshops:** these will start with a Governance session on Monday 14 May; a second one will be held as part of the fuller induction programme to be held before the summer recess.
- **Technical/Subject-Specific Workshops:** workshops on Scrutiny will be held for Scrutiny members as part of the June cycle of meetings any others will be arranged for before the summer Council recess. These will be arranged either on a strongly recommended basis (e.g. Code of Conduct and Governance) or targeted according to the roles new Members are asked to fulfil (e.g. on Licensing or Planning Committees).

### 6.2 (A) *New Member Material*

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, the Statement of Persons Nominated for the elections will be published. The Head of Committee and Governance Services will at this point write to all prospective new Councillors with a copy of the Code of Conduct and a list of the dates for the induction sessions.

On the evening of the election count and results (Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> May), the Cabinet Secretariat and Member Services team will be present and will provide all 60 elected Councillors (whether elected for the first time or re-elected), with a card with their Westminster email address and a link to the secure Sharepoint site, which will have uploaded to it:

- Information about the timetable of Induction Sessions (including ways for Councillors to advise their indication of session preferences)
- Information about Members' Allowances
- Register of Interests submission to complete
- Parking Permit application form
- Business card form
- Link to Constitution including Codes of Conduct and Governance

- An electronic copy of the Members' 2018 Handbook (hard copies will also be available on request) – a draft index for this is included as Appendix B

### 6.3 (B) *Compulsory/Technical Workshop Sessions*

All new Members will be obliged to attend a session given by the Director of Law and Monitoring Officer, covering Councillors' responsibilities to abide by the Code of Conduct and Governance. As mentioned previously, as agreed by this Committee, attendance at this session will be mandatory. A separate session on Member level decision making will also be run.

As mentioned above in section 6.1 a number of more technical sessions will be organised over June and July, once new Members' Committee roles are clearer, covering, Scrutiny, the work of the Planning and Licensing Committees and other quasi-judicial panels.

### 6.4 (C) *Introductory Workshops*

Induction sessions will be held at City Hall after the 16 May and run through to the summer recess in early July. Dates proposed for these sessions are 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of June and the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of July.

The sessions will be open to all Councillors, but will primarily be aimed at newly-elected Members and will offer a chance to hear from key Council Officers about the work of their Departments, how they can help Members in their roles and how Members can engage with them.

Workshops available at the induction sessions will include: the work of the Council's EMT Directorates, Governance (how decisions are made) and Member-Led Decision-Making including the committee structure and Policy and Scrutiny function and ward support provided to Members.

EMT Directors and relevant Managers and Officers across the organisation will chair and facilitate each of the workshops.

It is proposed that each induction evening covers two topics; this does mean that Members might need to attend on more evenings but it was felt each topic needed at least an hour's discussion to make it useful for Members.

At each session there will also be an IT drop in session for Members to discuss their IT needs.

An example timetable of what these evenings could look like are included as Appendix A.

## 7. **Additional Logistics**

- 7.1 It is anticipated that all elected Members will sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Chief Executive on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> May or Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May. Or at a subsequent date suitable for the individual

Member, noting that all must be signed in advance of the first Full Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May.

- 7.2 In addition to the Induction Programme work outlined above, the Cabinet Secretariat and Member Services team will be responsible for ensuring that all logistical arrangements are in place with regards the arrival of new Members, including, for example, updating the City Council's website, arranging security passes for new Councillors, and ensuring IT services are available from the moment that new Members join the Council.
- 7.3 A photographer will be available on Wednesday 9 May at City Hall and also before Full Council on Wednesday 16 May for Members to have their official photograph taken.
- 7.3 The team will also put in place arrangements for a tour of the key Member facilities on offer at City Hall including, for example, the meeting space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, the Lord Mayor's Parlour, the Leader and Deputy Leaders' offices, the Chief Executive's office and the Members' Rooms on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors; plus a briefing on fire evacuation procedures.
- 7.4 After the election, the details of each of the 60 Councillors will be collated into a Members' Directory, to be distributed to all Members.
- 7.5 As part of the Cabinet Secretariat team's own introduction to new Councillors, the relevant Member Services Officer will make contact with new Members within the first few days and will provide them with key contact details, including planning contacts, environmental health officers, housing options contacts and the relevant City Inspectors and community protection officers for their Ward, and offer to organise a Ward walk, either with Councillor colleagues or relevant officers.

## **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 Combined, the above programme of events offers newly-elected Councillors the opportunity, within the first few days and weeks of their election, to be introduced to their new surroundings as Members at Westminster City Council, as well as to the work of the Council's various Departments and services.
- 8.2 The induction programme will be finalised in full consultation with the party Whips to ensure that they are content with what is proposed for delivery and that it dovetails with plans that parties may have in terms of their induction and welcome of new Members.
- 8.3 The above programme will also ensure that all logistical arrangements are efficiently put in place for the arrival of new Councillors, as well as fulfilling legal requirements of both the Council and Members in relation to their election as representatives of the City of Westminster.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 The cost of the induction programme will be met from existing budgeted resources.

## **10. Legal Implications**

- 10.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report. Members are required to make a Declaration of Acceptance of Office before undertaking formal duties. Provision for this has been included in the draft programme. The legal aspects of the requirements relating to the disclosure and registration of Members interests will be covered in the session conducted by the Director of Law.

**If you have any queries about this report please contact:  
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## Appendix A – draft timetable for induction evenings

### Timetable

6 – 6.30pm - refreshments; IT drop in session

6.30 – 7pm – session 1

7.15 - 8.15pm – session 2

### Topics to be covered:

Planning and Licensing (applications)

Economic Development

Street Management

Communications

Housing (allocations)

Housing (CityWest Homes)

Children’s Services

Governance (including ward support)

Adult Social Services

Public Health

A draft timetable is below; if it is felt sessions are needed to be run twice there are four spare slots these could be used for.

	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Session 5</b>	<b>Session 6</b>	<b>Session 7</b>
<b>Topic 1</b>	Housing (allocations)	Adult Social Services	Communications	Children’s Services	Planning and Licensing Applications	Street Management	TBC
<b>Topic 2</b>	Housing (CityWest Homes)	Public Health	Economic Development	TBC	Governance	TBC	TBC

## **Appendix B - Index for Members' Handbook**

Welcome from Chief Executive

Introduction to Westminster (history, map)

1. Being a Councillor in Westminster
  - A: Top Tips from Current Councillors
  - B: City Hall Facilities (this would include info on 5 Strand and Portland House and estimated return to Victoria Street)
  - C: Cabinet Secretariat and Member Services Support
  - D: IT Provision and Facilities
  - E: Allowances and Expenses
2. The Council
  - A: Chief Executive and the Executive Management Team
  - B: Directorate Overview and Tri/Bi-Borough
  - C: The Lord Mayor of Westminster
3. Legal Framework
  - A: Indemnity to Councillors
  - B: Freedom of Information
  - C: Data Protection
  - D: Anti-Fraud and Corruption
  - E: Members' Code of Conduct
4. Governance and Decision Making
  - A: General Guidance
  - B: How Decisions are Made
  - C: Council Meetings
  - D: The Role of Regulatory Committees
  - E: The Role of Policy & Scrutiny Committees
5. Glossary