



City of Westminster

Standards Committee

Date:	6 December 2018
Classification:	For General Release
Title:	Review of May 2018 Induction Programme and Member Development Update
Report of:	Member Services Manager
Wards Involved:	Not Applicable
Policy Context:	Not Applicable
Financial Summary:	The cost of the induction programme
Report Author:	Janis Best
Contact Details:	Member Services Manager Tel: 020 7641 3255 Email: jb主@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report reviews the Induction Programme for Members for the May 2018 election, listing lessons learned and recommendations for future programmes.
- 1.2 This report will also briefly update the Committee on work on the ongoing Member Development programme.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Committee Members note the report and provide their observations on the programme.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Cabinet Secretariat and Member Services Team, worked with the Committee and Governance Services team to prepare an induction programme, which followed the local elections in May. The intention of the programme was 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 was also open to re-elected Members and they were encouraged to take part.

4. 2018 Induction Programme

4.1 Pre-election

4.1.1 After the Statement of Persons Nominated was published, the Head of Committee and Governance Services wrote to all prospective new Councillors with a copy of the Code of Conduct and a list of the dates for the induction sessions, so these could be diarised.

4.2 Post-election

4.2.1 After the election on Friday 4th May all Councillors (new and re-elected) were sent a letter and email containing information about how to access the Councillor only website (to book on induction sessions and fill out all the forms required); a list of dates (and topics) for the induction sessions, useful contacts for their ward and the Members' Handbook.

4.2.2 A Members only Sharepoint site was created to host all the information newly elected Members would need. The site provided links to forms to order business cards and parking permits, a personal information form and all the new IT policies. The site also contained an electronic copy of the Members Handbook and a calendar listing all the Code of Conduct, Governance and service-led session dates. After all the service-led sessions had been completed the presentations were uploaded to this site for Members to use for future reference.

4.3 Office-based sessions

4.3.1 All Members were instructed to attend a Code of Conduct Session and these were held on the 10 May and 7 June. Due to a number of Members not being able to attend these sessions a further two sessions were organised. By the end of July all 60 Councillors had attended a Code of Conduct session. A detailed breakdown of attendance can be found in Appendix A.

4.3.2 A Governance and Safe-Guarding session was held on 14 May and although attendance was not mandatory, it was requested. 25 Councillors attended this session, a detailed breakdown of attendance can be found in Appendix A.

4.3.3 Throughout June and July 12 service-led introductory sessions were held over six nights. These were introduced by an Executive Leadership Team (ELT) member, but delivered by frontline staff. Each ELT member was also asked to compile a summary sheet that Members could take away from each session with the main pertinent information they might need in the future. As mentioned above these, and the Powerpoint presentations, were uploaded to the Councillors' Sharepoint site after each session and remain there for reference.

4.3.4 A detailed breakdown of attendance at the office based sessions can be found in Appendix A but the Committee should note the following:

- Average attendance at each office based session (excluding the Code of Conduct and Governance sessions) was **9**.
- The average percentage of newly elected Members attending the office based sessions (excluding the Code of Conduct and Governance sessions) was **58%**.
- Members who had been nominated to sit on a Policy & Scrutiny Committee, whose portfolio was being discussed in the specific service-led session, in most cases, made up the majority of the attendees at that session.

4.4 Frontline Service visits

- 4.4.1 In addition to the office based sessions it was felt that Members would benefit from some on-site visits to services. These were arranged for after the end of the service-led sessions in August and September.
- 4.4.2 The specific details of each session can be found in Appendix A. However, it should be noted that attendance was very poor at these sessions. If they are run in future as part of an induction programme it would be more appropriate that they are offered as an addition to the service-led sessions and advertised as such; rather than an add-on at the end of the programme.

4.5 Additional elements of the programme

- 4.5.1 All Members were required to sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the 16th May, in the presence of the Chief Executive. With support from the Chief Executive's office this was all completed in advance of the first Full Council meeting on the 16th May.
- 4.5.2 As these signings were arranged for after the election itself it provided more time for the Chief Executive to spend with new Members and also provided a chance for the Member Services Officers to meet the new Councillors face to face to discuss their support arrangements.
- 4.5.3 A professional photographer was available before the first Code of Conduct session and also before the first Full Council meeting so that all Members could have photographs taken for use on the Council website. All newly elected Members took up this opportunity, as did the majority of re-elected Members; however as some did not the website and the Councillors poster is not as cohesive as it could be. In future, it is suggested that all Councillors have a new photo taken after an election has taken place to ensure consistency in our materials.
- 4.5.4 Before each service-led session there was an IT drop-in service available to Members to assist with the set-up of their Westminster email address, use of Office 365 and to answer any other IT related questions. These sessions were very popular and continued after the induction period as one to one sessions booked directly by Members with the IT team.

5. Feedback

- 5.1 A survey was sent to Members after the end of the induction programme to ask for their thoughts on it and also on any future development sessions that will be programmed.
- 5.2 The detailed analysis of this survey is provided as background data in Appendix B, however the main points for the Committee to note are:
- Members felt the sessions were the right length and time of day and that having them a little time after Election Day was preferred.
 - That Members preferred a longer series of short sessions rather than a whole day or two half days of sessions.
 - That the presenters and the presentations on the whole were suitable and of a high quality; however maybe the length of some sessions could be extended as some ran over the time allotted.
 - In terms of future topics maybe one on the more formal elements of Council work, such as Full Council meetings and ceremonial events may be useful. In addition, a session on casework, which could be run by the individual Member Services Officer on a ward basis, would be beneficial.

6. Lessons learned

- 6.1 Although Members had the dates of the induction sessions well in advance there was still a very high proportion of sign ups, and then drop outs, before the sessions began. It is suggested that Party Whips ensure that all their Members are advised that these sessions are prioritised in their diaries, especially in the case of newly-elected Members.
- 6.2 Having a mandatory Code of Conduct session helped with attendance, but perhaps introducing sanctions if these are not attended would be appropriate; because as mentioned previously in this report, a number of sessions had to be run in order to ensure all Members had attended.
- 6.3 The Committee should consider making the Governance and Safe Guarding session mandatory as well. This was well attended but the content was important for all to hear.
- 6.4 Frontline Service visits should be integrated into the main service-led part of any future induction programme. This could be in the form of running the office based session off site in order to visit the service afterwards, or offering City Management walks directly after office sessions have taken place.
- 6.5 The integration of the IT sessions into the programme was very successful and should be considered in the future as well. The IT team provided a single point of contact for Members and this worked extremely well.

7. Recommendations

7.1 In any future induction programme the following should be taken into consideration at the outset.

- Mandatory Code of Conduct and Governance/Safe Guarding sessions.
- The service led induction sessions should start a couple of weeks after the election and be prioritised by Members for attendance.
- Frontline service visits to be included in the main induction programme.
- The continuation of a mainly electronic introduction pack for Members to ensure newly elected Members are used to using the Council's IT system early in their tenure.

8. Member Development

8.1 Member Development comes under the Leader's remit and a paper will go to her shortly on the future of the programme. However, comments from the survey, which was sent after the induction programme, will be considered in the programming of topics. A yearly update will be provided to this Committee on Member Development for information. The next update will be at the March/April 2019 meeting of this Committee.

9. Financial Implications

9.1 The cost of the induction programme was met from existing budgeted resources.

10. Legal Implications

10.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

If you have any queries about this report please contact:

Janis Best, Member Services Manager

Tel: 020 7641 3255

Email: jb@westminster.gov.uk