

## **HBC Councillor Development Panel – Progress Update**

### **1.1 Summary**

- 1.1.1 The Councillor Development Panel was established by Cabinet in September 2015, with the remit to promote, oversee and monitor the Council's Member Development programme. Panel members have since worked to improve member development and establish a robust programme of training for our Councillors. This work feeds into the Council's bid to achieve accreditation for the SEE Charter for Elected Member Development.
- 1.1.2 The Panel have completed several actions in this bid to achieve accreditation, each aimed at meeting the criteria of the Charter and in turn improving member development at the Council.
- 1.1.3 The Panel completed a draft self-assessment and action plan against the charter criterion, providing evidence against each of the requirements to achieve accreditation. These were submitted to South East Employers in March 2017, receiving positive and encouraging feedback.
- 1.1.4 The Panel has since worked to complete further actions identified within the action plan, with the aim of fulfilling each criterion of the Charter. This evidence will be submitted to SEE prior to assessment.

### **1.2 Training Needs Analysis**

- 1.2.1 A 'training needs analysis' was conducted in January 2017 and circulated to all members, with the aim of identifying the training and development needs to inform the Councillor Development Programme. The Panel was pleased to note the 62% response rate, and through analysis of these results, established a training programme based on the priority topics identified by the TNA.

### **1.3 Councillor Development Programme**

- 1.3.1 The main areas highlighted by Councillors as in need of further development were local government finance, social media and the socio-demographic profile of the Borough. As a result, training courses were arranged on these subjects for all Councillors between March and July 2017. These sessions all received positive feedback from members.
- 1.3.2 Alongside these sessions, courses were also arranged that aimed to keep members fully apprised and trained in key areas of responsibility. Training has been arranged that is specifically aimed at our Licensing Committee, Development Management Committee, and Governance and Audit Committee members, to ensure they are aware of their role on these bodies.
- 1.3.3 In addition, regular briefings on the Local Plan and quarterly Planning healthchecks keep members apprised on key issues, while further training has covered wide-ranging areas from fraud awareness to dementia

awareness, safeguarding to emergency planning. All sessions have received positive feedback, with any areas highlighted in feedback forms considered the Councillor Development Panel and used to improve future programmes.

- 1.3.4 A mid-year training review was also recently conducted, to ensure the training programme has fully covered key areas and continues to meet member development needs going forward. The Panel has also considered the training plan for Development Management Committee members, endorsing the programme containing a mix of in-house, external and online learning.

### 1.4 Councillor Development Strategy

- 1.4.1 Another key part of the Panel's work towards the Charter is the review of the Councillor Development Strategy. Key changes recommended by the Panel include full recognition of the new role of the Panel within the Council's training programme, updates to references of officer roles to reflect structural changes and to make reference to the Councillor Induction Process.

### 1.5 Promotion of Councillor Development

- 1.5.1 The Panel take a leading role in the promotion of development opportunities to the Council membership. Central to this is the regular update given by the Cabinet Lead as part of the routine Cabinet Lead Report submitted to each Full Council meeting, which highlights training courses available and encourages members to engage with these sessions. Information is also widely available through articles in the Councillor's Newsletter and the Councillor Development Brochure, tabled for each member at Full Council meetings.

### 1.6 Future Actions

- 1.6.1 Looking forward at the Panel's project plan, the Panel aim to arrange mentors for newly-elected Councillors and engage in a full 'Be a Councillor' campaign in line with the May 2019 election cycle. The preparation of a thorough and wide-ranging Councillor Induction Programme following the May 2018 elections is also key to the future work of the Panel, with elements including a 'skills scan' of those newly-elected to ascertain the skills and experience they are bringing to the Council, and identifying the topic areas in need of further development.
- 1.6.2 The Panel will also continue its regular items of overseeing the current training programme, considering feedback from sessions and promoting the available courses to the wider Council membership.

### 1.7 Charter Assessment

- 1.7.1 The Panel have agreed the date of Monday 11 December for the external peer group to conduct their assessment of the Council's Charter bid. Having previously received the Panel's written evidence, the assessors will interview Panel members on their role, as well as meet with the Chief Executive,

## **APPENDIX 2**

Leader of the Council and other Councillors to gain an understanding of the Council's approach to councillor development.