



## NOTES RELATING TO MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

**PRESENT:** Councillor Gina Lewis

### 1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Geoff Smith (Chair), Peter Coan, Karen Mundry, Phil Rimmer and independent (non-elected) member Derek Barnett. Therefore, the Group did not meet on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024

### 2 NOTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**That the notes for the meeting on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 could only be noted.**

### 3 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2024-26 - IMPLEMENTATION - QUARTERLY MONITORING UPDATE

The Governance and Corporate Planning Manager presented the report on the Member Development Strategy 2024-26 Quarterly Monitoring, updating Councillor Gina Lewis on progress made against the Implementation Plan for the quarter. She provided an update on each of the objectives included in the Strategy.

#### **Objective 1 – Identify and prioritise Member training and development needs**

Most Member development interviews had taken place with the Leadership Development Advisor and the Governance Officer. The Leadership Development Advisor provided a verbal update on progress made so far during item 5 – ‘Members’ Personal Development Review Update’.

#### **Objective 3 – Provision of an Annual Member Development Programme**

Further discussion was held during item 4 – Member Development Programme 2024-26 – Quarterly Monitoring.

#### **Objective 4 – Delivery of a comprehensive and effective Induction process for new Members**

It was reported that seven new Members had joined the Fire Authority in 2024-25. All new Members had met with the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and six had attended the half day induction on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024. The Member/Officer buddies arrangements were finalised, and Democratic Services were contacting all Members to arrange an initial meeting.

The Governance and Corporate Planning Manager advised that to date, 19 Members had met with their Buddy Lead Officer, one meeting had been arranged for

later in the month and three were outstanding

It was reported that a copy of the Member Induction Handbook 2024-25 had been circulated at the Fire Authority meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

### **Objective 5 – Member Champion**

It was reported that most Members had attended meeting with their Lead Officer. Five Members were yet to meet with their lead officer.

**That the report about the Member Development Strategy 2024-26 – Implementation – Quarterly Monitoring Update was noted.**

## **4 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2024-26 - QUARTERLY MONITORING**

The Governance and Corporate Planning Manager presented a quarterly update on the Member Development Programme 2024-26. She referred to the training sessions covered in Appendix 1 to the report and advised that the Programme was approved by the Fire Authority on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Councillor Gina Lewis referred to the lack of Member attendance at meetings and training sessions, and she proposed to raise this with the Chair of the Fire Authority and Lead Members.

There was a discussion about Member training and development suggestions for the remainder of the year and Councillor Gina Lewis requested that additional interview training was arranged for Members who may become involved Service Leadership Team interviews in future.

The Governance and Corporate Planning Manager advised that the following Member Training and Development Sessions had been confirmed since the preparation of the agenda: -

- Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024: Webinar Teams Session on Fire Safety and IFE Lecturette
- Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024: Webinar Teams Session on Strategic Risk Register Overview

It was proposed to arrange a Webinar Teams Session on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in January 2025.

**That the progress on the delivery of the Member Development Programme 2024-25 was noted.**

## **5 MEMBERS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW UPDATE**

The Leadership Development Advisor provided an update on the Member Personal Development Reviews which had been undertaken by both the Leadership

Development Advisor and the Governance Officer. She advised that to date seventeen Members had received their Personal Development Review either via teams or in person. One Member had an appointment booked and five Members were currently outstanding.

There was a discussion about how the current process aided both new and existing Members' understanding of the Service and helped Members to identify areas of improvement. It was suggested that new Members would need to complete their review to understand the process before providing any feedback.

Councillor Gina Lewis added that the preference would be to hold the reviews in person rather than virtually as this would help build relationships with staff and felt that it would be more beneficial to Members.

**That the Members' Personal Development Review Update was noted, and a further update be provided at the next meeting.**

#### **6 MEMBER OFFICER BUDDY SYSTEM REVIEW (DISCUSSION ITEM)**

Agenda Item 6 was deferred to the next meeting, which is held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

#### **7 WORK PROGRAMME 2024-25**

The Governance and Corporate Planning Manager provided a copy of the Member Training and Development Group Work Programme 2024-25. Councillor Gina Lewis noted the content for the meetings and Members would be contacted by Democratic Services to encourage the identification of any additional items.

**That the Work Programme for the Member Training and Development Group was noted.**

#### **8 NORTH WEST EMPLOYER'S MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CHARTER**

The Governance and Corporate Planning Manager advised that Cheshire Fire Authority had successfully achieved Level 1 of the North West Charter in Elected Member Development in 2011, 2016 and again in 2019. There was an option of reviewing Level 1 every 3 years to ensure the continuous achievement of supporting member development within each Authority assessed and there was a view for Cheshire Fire Authority to undertake the Level 1 Review again this year.

The aim of the North West Charter for Elected Member Development was to demonstrate commitment to, and achieve excellence in, elected member development to ensure that Members are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to perform their various roles as community representatives including their vital role in modernising local government. The Charter operated at two levels. Firstly, authorities signed a declaration to show their commitment to the principles of the Charter. Secondly, following external assessment, authorities were awarded the Charter to show that they had demonstrated their commitment in practice and had all

the required elements in place.

To sign up to the Charter Level 1 Review the Chairman of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive had to sign the 'Declaration of Commitment to the principles'. Evidence required to support an application for the North West Charter Level 1 Review would then be collated. Once this is completed an assessment visit would be undertaken by representatives from North West Employers who would come into Fire Headquarters to meet with the following Members/Officers in small groups:

- Chairman of the Authority
- Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive
- Leader of Opposition
- Member Champion for Member Development
- A newly Elected Member
- 3 existing Members
- Officer/s Responsible for Member Training.

If the Group was agreeable, it was the intention to complete the Level 1 Review by April 2025.

Councillor Gina Lewis supported the proposal and suggested that this was raised with the Chair of the Fire Authority and Member Training and Development Group outside the meeting.

**That the update was noted and this should be raised at the next meeting of the Group.**