

Corporate Governance & Standards Committee Report

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director of Finance

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Date: 13 June 2019

Review of the Councillors' Development Steering Group

Executive Summary

Council Procedure Rule 24 (v) requires the appointing body to review annually, the continuation of task groups appointed by them. Although the Councillors' Development Steering Group was set up originally as an Executive working group, it was agreed in 2015 that the Steering Group would report on its work to this Committee.

This report asks the Committee to review the work carried out by the Steering Group over the past twelve months and the work they are likely to undertake over the next twelve months and to agree that it should continue its work. It is vitally important that the Steering Group is representative of all political groups on the Council. The Committee is therefore asked to appoint five councillors to the Steering Group for the 2019-20 municipal year, one from each political group.

Recommendation to the Committee:

- (1) That the Councillors' Development Steering Group continues its work and that the numerical allocation of seats on the Steering Group to each political group shall be one member per group, plus a nominated deputy.
- (2) That each of the political groups be asked to nominate one member to sit on the Steering Group for the 2019-20 municipal year, plus one nominated deputy.

Reason for Recommendation:

To comply with the requirement for this Committee to review the continuation of the Councillors' Development Steering Group, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 24 (v).

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report asks the Committee to review the work carried out by the Councillors' Development Steering Group over the past twelve months and the work they are likely to undertake over the next twelve months. As part of this review, the report also asks the Committee to agree formally that the composition of the Steering

Group should be five members, one appointee from each of the five political groups on the Council, plus one nominated deputy per appointee.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 The work of councillor task groups should assist in the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and the fundamental themes that support that Plan.

3. Background

- 3.1 Council Procedure Rule 24 (v) requires the Committee to review annually the continuation of those task groups for which it is responsible. The Councillors' Development Steering Group is such a group.
- 3.2. The Council agreed in December 2016, as part of a review of the Constitution, to include for the purposes of clarity and avoidance of doubt, information in Council Procedure Rules on the appointment, terms of reference, composition and duration of:
- working groups (appointed by the Leader, a lead councillor, or the Executive) and
 - task groups (appointed by Council, a committee, or an EAB),
- including the appointment of working/task group chairmen and substitutes.
- 3.3 At its meeting on 21 May 2019, the Executive considered a report on the review of working groups for which it is the appointing body. The format of this report is similar to the Executive report and sets out in **Appendix 1**:
- (a) the terms of reference and current composition of the Steering Group; and
 - (b) a summary of general progress including work undertaken, goals achieved and work still to be carried out.
- 3.4 Clearly, the work of the Steering Group is vital to ensure that the Councillor training and development programme continues to meet the needs of councillors and strives to maintain the standards required by the South East Employers Charter for Elected Member Development. Accordingly, the Committee is asked to agree that the Steering Group continues with its work.
- 3.5 Under Council Procedure Rule 24, this Committee may determine, amongst other things,
- the number of councillors on a task group,
 - whether the task group should be cross-party (it is essential that *all* political groups are represented on the Steering Group) and
 - whether to ask political group leaders to nominate councillors for membership of the Steering Group or appoint those councillors itself.

4. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 4.1 The Steering Group is responsible for taking due regard to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) when making any policy recommendations.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Any proposals, projects or suggestions from the Steering Group with financial implications will either be contained within approved budgets or considered as part of the Service and Financial Planning cycle.

- 5.2 The budget for councillor training and development in 2019-20 is £12,000.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There is no legal requirement to establish working groups but most councils use them for purposes similar to ours. As stated above, we have made provision for their operation in Council Procedure Rules.

7. Human Resource Implications

- 7.1 Currently, we are able to service the Steering Group from within existing staffing resources within Democratic Services.

8. Summary of Options

- 8.1 In the light of the information provided in this report, the Committee (as the 'appointing body') is asked to agree that the Steering Group continues with its work.
- 8.2 The Committee may also revise terms of reference and composition of the Steering Group. In that regard, the Committee is also asked to agree the numerical allocation of seats to each political group. Officers are suggesting that this should be on the basis of one member from each of the five political groups on the Council.

9. Background Papers

None

10. Appendices

Appendix 1: Table showing details of the Councillor Development Steering Group including work undertaken over the past 12 months, and work still to be carried out

Appendix 1

NAME OF GROUP	DATE ESTABLISHED / FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	TERMS OF REFERENCE	DETAILS OF GENERAL PROGRESS AND WORK STILL TO BE UNDERTAKEN
<p>Councillors' Development Steering Group</p>	<p>Dec 2005/ The Group met on 4 occasions in 2018-19</p>	<p>TBC following CGSC meeting on 13 June 2019 (anticipated number of meetings in 2019-20: 4 based upon the group continuing to meet on a quarterly basis)</p>	<p>The current terms of reference of the group are as follows:</p> <p>“To continue to support councillors in their ongoing development and training needs through a clear, structured Action Plan for councillor development that responds to the fundamental themes that support the vision of the Corporate Plan: Place-making, Community and Innovation.”</p>	<p><u>Progress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Steering Group has continued to lead on helping the Council meet the standard of the SE Charter for Elected Member Development. The Council's next full assessment will take place in November 2019 and an 18 - month interim assessment was held on 11 June 2018. • At each meeting, the steering group reviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the councillors' training and development programme ○ evaluation forms completed after each training/seminar session and recommends changes to the organisation of future events where required ○ the councillors' training and development budget. • Arranged once a month training courses for councillors' that were relevant to their needs, including bite-sized training prior to Planning Committee meetings. • Created the Councillors' Section of the website, which gives councilors access to a host of resources pertinent to their role. An area where they can download claim forms, councillor's personal development and a calendar of training events.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoted the 'Becoming a Councillor' sessions scheduled on 17 October 2018 and 11 February 2019 through the 'beacouncillor.co.uk/guildford' website. • Created an induction programme for the new councillors elected in May 2019. • Updated and circulated the 'Guide to being a Councillor' for the new councillors elected in May 2019. <p><u>Work to be undertaken:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate the feedback received following the intensive induction period for councillors scheduled May-July 2019 and provide an overview summary for the Councillor Development Steering Group to review the effectiveness of the induction. • Obtain councillors' views on the new Councillors' Pages that are now hosted on the Council's website, rather than the Loop (intranet). The Pages include access to information on forthcoming training events, links to recent training presentations and other useful information – e.g. on data protection, FoI and local government finance. • Roll out the Personal Development Plans (PDPs) to all councillors for completion. The results of which will inform the development of the councillor training programme moving

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				<p>forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Group's terms of reference. • Prepare for South East Employers (SEE) Charter Assessment Day in November 2019 • Review online training offer for councilors following termination of contract with Learningpool in August 2019.