

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



COMMITTEE	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	11 MARCH 2019
SUBJECT	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT
LEAD OFFICER	KATIE MILLS, HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR PAULINE HELLIAR-SYMONS
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	NOTE

1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 To receive an Annual report on Member Development activities in 2018/19.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 To **NOTE** the report.

3. **REPORT**

3.1 Members may be aware Management Committee approved the Member Development Strategy 2017-19 at its meeting held on 3 April 2017. The Fire Authority approved the Member Development Action Plan at its meeting on 27 February 2018, which outlined the learning and development activities to commence at the beginning of the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

3.2 This report sets out the Member Development activities attended in 2018/19.

3.3 **1:1 with Group Leader**

Between March and May 2018 Members completed 1:1's with their Group Leaders. Using the Members skill questionnaire developed by the Task and Finish Group, Group Leaders and Members were able to identify areas in which they would like more training. The results were used to formulate the Member development courses for 2018/19.

3.4 **New Member Induction – 26 July 2018**

At the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) Annual Meeting in June 2018 and the Fire Authority meeting in July 2018, we welcomed the appointments of Councillors Jeff Brooks, Jan Gavin, Satpal Parmar, Ted Plenty, Rachelle

Shepherd-DuBey and Dexter Smith. A New Member Induction was held where they were taken through the role of RBFA, Modern.gov, Members Handbook and Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Projects. New Members were introduced to each member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and learned specifically about their area of work within the Service. The Monitoring Officer, Graham Britten took Members through Members' Code of Conduct and Member / Officer Protocol.

3.5 Member Buddy

In July 2018 new Members were assigned a member of SLT to act as a buddy during their first year on the Fire Authority. This was to help support their understanding of the Fire Authority in their first year. This also provided new Members with a SLT point of contact if they had any questions.

3.6 Member Strategy Workshop

In October 2018, a Member / Officer Workshop was held. Members and Officers discussed the Strategic Commitments and high level outcomes on the IRMP 2019-23 Consultation. The workshop also gave Members the chance to provide feedback on a range of topics including; Budget, Strategic Asset Investment Framework, Collaboration and the People Strategy including Member development.

3.7 Thames Valley Fire Control Service Visits

Five in depth control visit sessions were organised throughout 2018/19 allowing Members to get hands on experience with call handling, appliance mobilisation, listening to recordings of calls received and shadowing members of the team. Following the success of the control visits within RBFA, the offer was formally extended in December 2018, to Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority and Oxfordshire County Council Members to attend sessions at TVFCS.

3.8 Understanding the Financing of the Fire Authority

In September 2018, Head of Finance and Procurement and Deputy Head of Finance facilitated Understanding the Financing of the Fire Authority course. The sessions covered revenue and capital expenditure, budget, Medium Term Financial Plan, Efficiency Plan, 10 Year Strategic Asset Investment Framework and the Statement of Accounts.

3.9 RBFRS Core Skills course: Understanding the Fire Authority

Run by the Democratic Support Team for RBFRS staff, this course went through the role of the Fire Authority, understanding the role of Members, committee structure, decision-making, report writing and the importance of deadlines. Fire Authority Members were invited to attend as part of their own learning and development and to share their individual experience in their role as Councillor. During 2018, two courses were attended by Councillors Smith and McKenzie-Boyle. Both provided positive feedback following the sessions commending the friendliness, pace and instructiveness of the course.

3.10 Modern.gov training

Developed by the Democratic Support Team this course took Members through the modern.gov app. The session demonstrated useful tips on how to bookmark, annotate, send and write electronic reminder notes on agenda papers.

3.11 Protecting information awareness e-learning

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on 25 May 2018. E-protection learning was circulated to all Members to update their knowledge on new guidance around data protection.

3.12 Events

Members have attended Graduation ceremonies for firefighter trainees in May and August, Young Firefighter's passing out parade, Awards Ceremony, handover of the new appliances at Newbury Fire Station and the official opening of the refurbished Firehouse at Whitley Wood Fire Station.

3.13 Conferences

The total cost to the Fire Authority on Member attendance at conferences in 2018/19 was £210. One Member attended Combined Fire Authority Conference 2018 on 10 October 2018.

3.14 Course cancellations

Six courses were cancelled during the year due to the low number of Members that confirmed their attendance. The Healthy Organisation and Wellbeing course had been cancelled twice due to the number of Member attendance. Media training was cancelled once due to low numbers and postponed on a second occasion. Two out of five Control Visits scheduled were cancelled. In 2019/20 all of the courses agreed in the 2017-19 action plan will be arranged, however, fewer will be scheduled during the year to reflect attendance levels in 2018/19.

3.15 Member Feedback Survey

Members will complete feedback questions on the courses offered throughout 2018/19.

3.16 Attached as appendices A and B are the Member Development Action Plan and Strategy 2017-19. The Action Plan outlines the actions that have been completed and sets out a revised target date of activities for completion by the end of 2019.

3.17 The table below sets out the attendance at sessions offered during the 2018/19 municipal year:

Course Title	Facilitators	Attendance
Thames Valley Fire Control Visit	TVFCS	9
Understanding the financing of the Fire Authority	RBFRS	7
Healthy Organisation and Wellbeing	RBFRS	Cancelled
Modern.gov App	RBFRS	2
Media Training	Ronan Kelly (Kelly Vision)	Postponed
Understanding the Fire Authority Core Skills	RBFRS	2
New Member Induction	RBFRS	4
Strategy Workshop	RBFRS	14
Protecting Information	e-Learning	0
Combined Fire Authority Conference		1

3.17 **Risk and Governance**

RBFRS internal auditors, RSM gave Risk and Governance their audit opinion of substantial assurance to Audit and Governance Committee on 11 December 2018. They noted the improvement of the Member Development programme and in particular made reference to the 1:1 meetings with Members and their Group Leaders that had been used with the skills audit (questionnaire) to develop the training plan.

4. **CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**

4.1 The Member Development Programme will seek to develop understanding of the Strategic Commitments for new Members as well as development awareness of strategic issues that will contribute and affect the delivery of these Commitments.

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.2 A number of the training and development activities were provided internally by RBFRS officers within existing resources. An additional expense was associated with attendance at conferences. Joint training opportunities would continue to be sought with Unitary Authorities to minimise costs. Funding for external courses can be obtained via the central training budget should a business need arise.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 None specified.

7. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training formed part of the Member Development Programme 2017-19.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

9.1 As outlined in the Member Development Strategy, we will continue to identify opportunities to work with partners to deliver the Member Development programme where possible.

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

10.1 Statutory officers and the Senior Leadership Team have been consulted in the development of this report.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix A – Member Development Action Plan 2017-19

12.2 Appendix B – Member Development Strategy 2017-19

13. CONTACT DETAILS

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