

Member Development Bulletin



**Your Elected Member
Development Update**



Member Development Programme – 2019 Bulletin Two

Fellow Councillors, as Chair of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee, it gives me great pleasure to endorse this second bulletin relating to your Member Development Programme. This programme is already proving to be a success, with high levels of attendance at the recent Corporate Parenting Training – 60% in total – as well as real progress in designing the programme through 2019 and beginning to implement the digital agenda, which will be designed to suit our needs.



Progress is good, however there is much still to be done. That is why I politely request you make every effort to attend **at least one session** for each offered. Remember, this is training that we, as Elected members, have requested and whilst some of you may have strong knowledge bases on certain topics in the programme, it is our duty to ensure we have the most up to date skills, knowledge and experience, ready to implement as and when the residents of Sandwell require it.

Please contact member_development@sandwell.gov.uk to state your intention to attend sessions as and when they arise, and keep an eye out for e-mails from this account for exciting Member Development updates.

Additionally, I would also like to bring to your attention that in the recent Peer Review, the Member Development Programme was labelled as 'phenomenal' and an 'exemplar'. This is outstanding feedback for the Council in such a short space of time and I would like to, on behalf of all Members, thank the Civic and Member Services team for their hard work in helping us bring this programme to life.

Best wishes,
Councillor Geoff Lewis



Early successes

To build on early momentum, following Universal Credit sessions and the launch of the Member Development Programme brochure, 'Focus on' Partnership sessions were held in early January followed by Corporate Parenting training. Feedback has been excellent. In a Corporate Parenting session for example, 100% of Members rated the session as Very Good or Good – an astonishing result!

Commenting on the Corporate Parenting training, Lesley Hagger Executive Director – Children's Services stated '***It was great to see so many Members at the Corporate Parenting sessions I facilitated in January. The enthusiasm within the room, the level of conversation and enthusiasm to ensure the Looked After Children of Sandwell have the best start in life was both refreshing and excellent to see! Watch this space for further Corporate Parenting information in the near future!***'

You Said We Will

In Civic and Member Services, we realise and accept we won't always get the perfect approach first time round. This programme after all is about developing over time to find solutions that are fit for purpose and works for all. Already we have learned lessons which we will implement throughout the programme going forward:

- Providing a copy of the PowerPoint, just before each session starts so you can see the detail on each slide and feel empowered with the information to ask follow up questions.
- Provide refreshments in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits at each session for Members. For early evening sessions, a range of sandwiches will be available for sessions lasting longer than an hour.

Dates for your diary...

Understanding Council Finances

Between key Council meetings on the budget, this session will inform and empower Members in relation to the finances of the authority and some of the key headline figures they should be aware of. Facilitated by senior officers, including the Head of Finance, this promises to be an informative and engaging session!

Where? Sandwell Council House, Annexes 1 & 2

When? 18 February @ 11am – 1pm and 5pm – 7pm



Understanding and using social media effectively

Facilitated by our former Communications Manager, and accredited LGA facilitator Darren Caveney, this session will empower and enable Members to utilise social media effectively in their role and what they can do to promote the strategic objectives and priorities of the Council.

Where? Sandwell Council House, Council Chamber and Annexes 1

& 2

When? 4 June @ 11am – 1pm and 5pm – 7pm

Understanding Grant Funding within Adult Social Care

Facilitated by officers within Adult Social Care, this session will enable Members to understand the grant funding process in relation to aids and adaptation and what this means for their constituents and how best they can be advised in this process.

Where? Sandwell Council House, Council Chamber and Annexes 1 & 2

When? To be announced, watch this space



Induction and Refresher Courses

The time immediately following the election in early May can be a whirlwind of excitement and preparation for the new Municipal year – the Member Development Plan will be no different this year!

Building on the success of last year's induction programme to newly Elected Members, we will be running this again, taking on board the feedback from last year to the new tranche of Members as offering refresher topics on some of the key building blocks of knowledge **all** Members need in their role ensuring it remains current and relevant to Sandwell in 2019-20. No matter how long you have been a Member, you are invited to attend all of the sessions.

Before you go...

A reminder than the Safeguarding Training sessions, delivered by our in house Artemis Team – Jan Wakefield and Jenny Tarrant will be running on Thursday 21 February from 11am – 1pm in Annexes 1 & 2 and on Thursday 28 February from 11am – 1pm in Annexe 1 & 2 also.



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