STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday, 4 July 2022
Report Subject	Induction Programme for Councillors
Report Author	Democratic Services Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of our preparations for the County Council elections in May and the arrangements for a new Council, a comprehensive Member Induction programme was devised. This report gives details of the induction which was carried out during May, and proposals for continuing member development over the next year.

As well as covering basic knowledge elements (e.g. committee structures), there were, pertinent to the work of this Committee, several modules focussed on behaviour and ethics. These will hopefully help to set a culture of good behaviour for the new Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS	
1	That the Committee is invited to comment on the ethical component of the Member Induction programme held after the elections, included in Appendices 1 and 2.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE 2022 MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME
1.01	The design of the 2022 Member Induction programme had benefitted from feedback after the 2012 and 2017 elections, as well as consideration at the Ethical Liaison Meeting last summer. The topics were revised to provide a better grounding in how the Council operates and acceptable behaviours, in order to prepare Members for the new Council term.

1.02	Most sessions were delivered in three slots: morning, afternoon and evening, to give both new and returning Members the opportunity to attend at a convenient time. One of the sessions was delivered remotely, via Zoom in order to be able to record it for future reference.
1.03	Formal sessions were delivered by Council officers on skills and knowledge such as : • Introduction to the Council (History; governance structure; introduction to portfolios); • Planning Committee Members' training (Role of the Members of the Planning Committee in determining planning applications); • How we work (Chief and statutory officers gave details of their portfolios, who their key officers are, their roles in delivering on Council plan themes); • Strategic Finance (Size of budget, how it is made up, sources of income, members role in setting budget etc.); • Planning for non-Committee members (explain the Planning system for non-Committee members; their role in consultation and representation) • Governance & Audit Committee (Support and promote efficient and economic use of resources; effective control of expenditure and review audit performance, and signing off Annual Accounts); • Licensing Committee (how the Committee and sub-Committees work to deal with individual applications, delivered by an external provider). In addition, and more pertinently for the work of this Committee, sessions were provided that focussed on how the Council works, acceptable behaviours and ethics: • Meeting structure and Chairing Skills (How the five Overview & Scrutiny Committees operate and inter-relate. Introduction to effective chairing and recognition of the chair's role); • Constitution, Code of Conduct, the Flintshire Standard and Group Leader roles (Explaining 'the rules' so that new and returning Members are aware of them from May 2022); • How Members work (Participating in meetings, managing ward work, maintaining a healthy work/life balance, self-care arrangements, protocol on operating outside the ward. Cabinet and Committee roles. Social media profile.); and • Detailed training on interests, dispensations, and gifts & hospitality has been provided (or booked in) for the political groups.
1.04	In addition, three mandatory, remote sessions have been provided for Town and Community Councillors which covered the whole of the Code of Conduct. Further sessions are planned for the autumn once Town and Community Councils have had a chance to co-opt over the summer to fill vacancies that remained after the elections.
1.05	The table below shows the aggregate attendance at the different modules at County Council level. In addition 189 Town and Community Councillors out of a total 440 received training.

		Meetings & Chairing	Constitution & Code	How members work	Interests, gifts etc (partially complete)
	Attendees	23	58	27	36

1.06	The ethical component of the induction that will be delivered "live" is (noting the comments above about courses yet to be delivered) largely complete. The intention is to introduce a dedicated resource section for Councillors on the 'Infonet' that will include the filmed induction sessions as well as other relevant documents / links for those who have not yet been able to attend.

2.00	**RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**
2.01	Providing development sessions at similar times has been done to be as 'time effective' as possible, both for Members and officers. Delivering some sessions remotely aided this. Where possible, development is being provided by the Council's own officers, supplemented by external specialists as required.

3.00	**CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT**
3.01	This report has been prepared to consult the Standards Committee on the approach being taken to continuing Member development. A report will also be taken to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee on Thursday 7 July 2022.

4.00	**RISK MANAGEMENT**
4.01	The Member Induction Programme was designed to mitigate risk by providing councillors with the knowledge and skills to carry out their roles effectively. It is intended that the Member Development Programme will maintain and build on those skills.

5.00	**APPENDICES**
5.01	Appendix 1 - Schedule of Induction Sessions Part a Appendix 2 - Schedule of Induction Sessions Part b Appendix 3 - Flintshire County Council 2022/23 Member Development

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	**Contact Officer:** Steven Goodrum, Democratic Services Manager **Telephone:** 01352 702320 **E-mail:** steven.goodrum@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	WLGA - Welsh Local Government Association.