

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Audit Committee

3rd February 2012

Report of: Strategic Director: Corporate Services

Report Title: Audit Committee Training Provision

Ward: Citywide

Officer presenting report: Richard Powell, Chief Internal Auditor

Contract Telephone Number: 0117 92 22448

RECOMMENDATION

The Audit Committee review the proposed training provision and indicate their interest.

SUMMARY

This reports details the proposed training provision for Audit Committee Members, to be delivered by the end of September 2012.

The significant issues in the report are:

- Proposed Training programme (paragraph 2)

Policy

This report is submitted in accordance with the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference and Internal Audit's Charter and Strategy.

Consultation:

Internal: Councillor Development Programme Lead, Audit Committee Members.

External: None necessary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It had long been the aspiration of the Core Cities Audit Chairs' Group to formulate a generic training programme initially for Audit Committee Chairs, but also with the view of rolling the training out to other Committee Members. However, a decision was taken at their February 2011 meeting that the responsibilities of each committee were sufficiently diverse to preclude the provision of a meaningful generic training programme for Chairs and Members. Therefore, individual Council's should proceed on their own, but provide the training for other Core Cities to utilise, if appropriate.

Additionally, as a result of a review of the effectiveness of the Audit Committee by the external auditor, it was recommended that a skills assessment of the Committee Members would be beneficial in order to identify gaps and assist in the formulation of a training programme.

- 1.2 As a result of these issues, Internal Audit were commissioned to carry out a skills assessment involving the Audit Committee Members and a report on the outcome of this assessment was brought to Members on 8th April 2011.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to propose a training programme for Members with sessions to take place before the end of September 2012. It is appreciated that membership of the Audit Committee changed slightly at the commencement of the new municipal year and new Members were asked to complete the skills assessment. Their feedback has been incorporated into this proposed programme.

2. Training Programme

- 2.1 The table below details the identified training needs of the Audit Committee and the possible source of that training. It is hoped that this programme will provide a training basis for current and future Committee members.

Area	Source	Comments
Understanding the Authority's: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● structure;● culture; and● relationships	Councillor Induction and Refresher Programme	If Members feel the information provided as part of the programme is insufficient, then further training can be provided.
Understanding the Local Authority's processes	Councillor Induction and Refresher Programme	As above.
Understanding the Authority's procedures and legislation	Councillor Induction and Refresher Programme	As above

Area	Source	Comments
and Understanding the Internal External Audit Function	Short presentation by IA & GT or short report.	
Partnership Working	Training session provided by IA	As the situation with Partnership is currently quite fluid, IA would not envisage providing training in this area until the LEP is more established and any movement within the Bristol Partnership has occurred.
Risk Management in partnership working	Training session provided by IA	As the situation with Partnership is currently quite fluid, IA would not envisage providing training in this area until the LEP is more established and any movement within the Bristol Partnership has occurred.
Information Security	On-line e learning package available.	A number of Members have already undertaken this training, those who have not are highly recommended to do so as they may find it useful.
Freedom of Information issues	Councillor Induction and Refresher Programme FOI Lead	With the increase in the number of FOI requests and the effect FOI requests could have on committee reports, Members may feel that additional training in this area would be of use.
Treasury Management	Treasury Management Team	Training to concentrate on how the Council manage their funds as opposed to Treasury Management per-se.
Asset Management	Corporate Property Management Team	Again, training to concentrate on providing an understanding of how the Council manage its assets.
Project Management	Centre of Excellence for Portfolio Programme Project Management	An overview of how the Council manages its projects, providing a more in-depth understanding, than the Gateway Review reports can provide.

Area	Source	Comments
Fraud	Internal Audit - Fraud e-learning package. Annual Fraud Update.	A number of Members have accessed the Internal Audit training and found it useful, those who have not done so yet may wish to as they may find it useful.
International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and Statement of Accounts	PR /Grant Thornton	This is an annual training provision, last session was on 19 th September 2011.

Further training on an ad-hoc basis for current topics could be arranged as necessary.

2.2 The following training is proposed for delivery by the end of September 2012. Members are requested to indicate their interest as numbers will impact on whether the training proceeds.

- Freedom of Information issues
- Treasury Management, from the Council's prospective
- Asset Management, from the Council's prospective
- Project management - overview of the Council's process

2.3 Training sessions would be held separately from the scheduled Audit Committee meetings at a time to suit Committee Members commitments.

2.4 The use of Modern Councillor, an online e-learning training provision, was considered however this facility did not prove to be versatile enough to meet the requirements and its use was therefore dismissed.

3. Other Options Considered

3.1 Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) draft training Programme for Audit Committee Chairs.

3.2 Modern Councillor online e-learning provision.

4. Risk Assessment

4.1 Risk: Committee members are not fully trained and therefore ineffective in their role within the Committee.

Mitigation: Councillor Training Programme, training facilitated by Internal and External Audit

5. Equalities Impact Assessment

5.1 None necessary for this report

6. Legal and Resource Implications

6.1 Legal - none sought

6.2 Resource implications

There will be a resource requirement for Council Officers to provide the specific training which is outside their normal remit. The training provided through the Councillor Induction Programme is already resourced, therefore there will be no implication for those areas.

Appendices

Appendix A: Updated Councillor Training Programme - for information

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCESS TO INFORMATION



WINTER/SPRING COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2011

Please note that all sessions will start promptly with a light buffet available for all evening sessions (unless stated otherwise) 15 minutes beforehand.

DATE AND VENUE	TIME	WHO	WHAT
JANUARY 2012			
4th Jan The Council House	14.00 – 16.00	Daphne Hall and Ruth Frost	Welfare Reforms by Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service This briefing covers the main changes to welfare benefits and tax credits
9th Jan The Council House	10.00 - 12.00	Jim Cliffe and Sarah O'Driscoll	Community Infrastructure Levy and Neighbourhood Planning (Planning)
13th Jan Kingswood Training Centre	09.30 – 4.30	Jane Smith, Word Smiths Lunch included	Speed Reading This course is a must do for anyone who wants to be able to deal with vast amounts of information quickly.
16th Jan The Council House	09.30 – 16.30	Helen Sewell Simply Speaking Lunch included	Public Speaking This session increases your ability and effectiveness to communicate with constituents, colleagues and officers
26th Jan The Council House	14.00 – 15.30	Cllr Barbara Janke	Localism Act: A Briefing by the Leader (programme tbc)
31st Jan The Council House	18.00 – 20.00	Gary Collins, Ian MacDougall and Jack Allan	Economic Development and Regeneration
FEBRUARY			
1st Feb The Council House	14.00 – 16.00	Gary Collins, Ian MacDougall and Jack Allan	Economic Development and Regeneration
1st Feb The Council House	18.00 – 20.00	Cllr Barbara Janke	Localism Act: A Briefing by the Leader (programme tbc)

DATE AND VENUE	TIME	WHO	WHAT
8th Feb The Council House	09.30 – 16.30	Local Government Information Unit	The Localism Act – over to you National Conference being held in partnership with the Local Government Information Unit. Speakers to include Local Government Minister Andrew Stunell and Cities Advisor Lord Shipley.
27th Feb The Council House	09.30 – 16.30	Patrick Donovan CMS Training Lunch included	Conflict Management This highly participatory session focuses on the practical application of conflict management skills
MARCH			
1st Mar The Council House	14.00 – 16.00 and 18.00 - 2000	Gary Collins and Colin Chapman	Town Centres Uses and Development
5th Mar Kingswood Training Centre	09.30 – 16.30	Jane Smith, Word Smiths Lunch included	Making the most of your memory This exciting new session offers some steps you can take to make the most of your memory and is for anyone who wants to realise more of their potential for storing and recalling facts and ideas
15th Mar The Council House	10.00 – 12.00 and 18.00 – 20.00	Daphne Hall and Ruth Frost	Welfare Reforms by Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service This briefing covers the main changes to welfare benefits and tax credits
28th Mar The Council House	09.30 – 16.30	Jane Smith, Word Smiths Lunch included	Making the most of your memory This exciting new session offers some steps you can take to make the most of your memory and is for anyone who wants to realise more of their potential for storing and recalling facts and ideas

NEW COUNCILLOR INDUCTION AND REFRESHER PROGRAMME 2011 - BOOKING IN SHEET

NAME:

CONTACT DETAILS (inc telephone number and email address):

PLEASE HAND THIS COMPLETED FORM INTO RACHEL BOAST AT THE WELCOME SESSION ON 9TH MAY OR SEND TO ROOM 404, THE COUNCIL HOUSE.

NAME OF SESSION	DATE(S)	ATTENDANCE TIME

Do you have any dietary or access requirements? If so, please note here:

Thank you for completing this form.