

Audit, Risk and Governance Committee
Meeting to be held on Monday, 28 January 2019

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Skills and Development Needs Review
(Annexes 'A' to 'C' refer)

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Executive Summary

At a meeting held on 30 July 2018 meeting of the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee agreed a review of the skills and development needs of the current committee members. This reports sets out the findings of the review and next steps.

Recommendation

The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee is asked to note the outcome to the review at Appendix 'C', and confirm the subject areas for initial training and the preferred training methods (as outlined in this report).

Background and Advice

At a meeting held on 30 July 2018, the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee agreed a review of the skills and development needs of the current committee members. To support the review, a draft audit committee knowledge and skills framework was identified (Appendix 'A' refers) from the 'The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police'.

Using this framework, a questionnaire was developed by the Member Development Team (Appendix 'B' refers) to support councillors in exploring their key skills and to review any areas for learning and development (circulated to members on 3 September 2018).

The following definitions were utilised for this review:

- "Low need" means that you are confident in this area, you have recently received training and/or you have good knowledge and experience.
- "Medium Need" means that, whilst you have some level of understanding, you feel you need more to be able to do your job well; or, you have received training, but it was some time ago or only partial.

- "High Need" means it is an area you have little or no experience in, have never had training, or where you would really like to know more.

The review produced a 100% response rate from the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee members. The responses received were logged against the criteria from the review and can be found at Appendix 'C'.

By utilising the definitions (outlined above) for this review, this will allow for a targeted training package to be identified, responding primarily to those training areas of highest need. Therefore, from the responses received it can be ascertained that there is a need for two types of training, targeted one to one training for individual members and general subject specific training for all members.

The Member Development Team provides training from a variety of resources including:

- Bite sized briefings – utilising the skills and knowledge base of officers within the authority.
- One to one training with relevant officers within the authority.
- External paid for training packages and/or conferences.
- Online training package.

Initial 'High Need' areas for training include:

- Governance (including values of good governance).
- Internal Audit.
- Financial Management and Accounting.
- Counter Fraud.
- Communication skills and focus on the needs of users.

At this point, it is important to highlight to committee members that a further, wider training needs analysis is currently underway for all 84 councillors. This review included some of the core areas of knowledge specific to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee.

This was included to primarily capture information from other councillors who would like further development in these key areas with a view to either becoming a future member of the committee or to enable political groups to have an established list of members with the skills required to undertake duties as a replacement committee member when required. Once this review has been concluded, the outcome will be included as part of the overall training package for the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee (Appendix 'C' refers).

Next steps

The Member Development Team will contact individual members who identified a high need for specific training and agree an individual training plan. For those areas where a number of councillors identified a high or medium need, appropriate training will be provided by one of the methods set out in the report, e.g. bite sized briefings.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There is a range of knowledge and experience that committee members can bring to the committee and which will enable it to perform effectively. No one committee member would be expected to be expert in all areas, but there are some core areas of knowledge that committee members will need to acquire in order for the committee to be effective. The knowledge and skills framework has been used as a basis to identify training needs so that appropriate training plans can be developed for individual committee members. This will improve the overall effectiveness of the committee and reduce the risk of the committee not fulfilling its statutory function.

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		