

MEETING	Sub-group (training) DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
DATE	13/11/2012
SUBJECT	MEMBERTS TRAINING
PUPROSE	Agree criteria for attending training courses outside the corporate training matrix.
AUTHOR	Chair of the Training Sub-Group

1. What is the current situation?

1.1 The Council has recognised that it wishes to train and develop elected members to help them to fulfill all elements of their role effectively.

1.2 The statutory guidance under the 2011 Local Government Measure notes

"..the Democratic Services Committee has general responsibility for deciding what should be considered as reasonable training and development opportunities as part of their remit to ensure support for elected members to fulfill their roles."

1.3 A full training programme for elected members has been developed and produced for 2012/13. The programme was shared with all elected members at the beginning of the new Council. The programme is a combination of internal courses, training provided by outside bodies, and others developed with the other authorities in North Wales. Any update to the programme is communicated with the elected members.

1.4 In addition to the above mentioned programme, a number of electged members have noted various fields of imprtance to them to develop and ensure better understanding in order to fulfill their roles as elected members better. They are a combination of courses, seminars and conferences.

1.5 This training is outside the elected members development programme. For the purpose of this report, they will be referred to as 'additional courses'. There is an additional cost to the Council for these courses/ seminars – be it cost of the course and/ or travelling and subsistence cost which must be remembered.

1.6 Currently, there is no formal procedure to ensure fairnes and consistency in deciding who should be allowed to attend 'additional courses'. Whilst the Council welcomes the eagerness of members to develop, the financial considerations must also be taken into account, therefore we must work within perimeters.

2. Draft Criteria

2.1 In order to try and ensure consistency, and value for money, it is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee adopt the draft criteria to assess whom should be allowed to attend 'additional courses'.

2.2 A sub-group (training) was established following the Democratic Services Committee meeting on 11th September, 2012, and the above has received attention by the group. The group decided to recommend a) draft criteria, seen in 2.3 below and b) a procedure to follow with regards to 'additional courses' which can be seen in 2.4.

2.3 The following questions/ criteria have been developed by the sub-group, and it is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee adopt the criteria.

- Elected Members should hold a job or responsibility in the field on behalf of the Council, and should be able to demonstrate that attending the “additional course” will enable them to undertake their work better.

The job or responsibility could include:-

- Scrutiny Chair or Vice-chair,
- Cabinet Member
- Champion
- Member of the Pensions Committee
- Chair or Vice-chair of any other committee.
- Represent Gwynedd Council as a member on an outside body
- Individual elected member who is part of a Scrutiny Review, where attending the course would lead to substantial gains for the Scrutiny Review.

(Please note, any visits by a number of members as part of a Scrutiny Review would be considered as part of the review and not ‘additional course’)

- The ‘additional course’ should not be available within the Elected members training programme or that it could be arranged in another way internally for a number of elected members to reduce costs.
- Cost of the course should be considered, and does it provide value for money.
- Travel should be avoided where possible, by participating in the additional course through different mediums eg video conferencing or webinar.
- Aim for a maximum of 2 ‘additional courses’ per member annually
- The relevance of the course to the member’s individual training programme should be considered.

2.4 Additionally, it is recommended that a formal procedure should be developed for submit requests and authorise. It is recommended:

- That all elected members give written notice (letter or email) explaining how they reach the criteria
- Members should ensure that they have a seconder for the request, eg the Chair or vice-Chair of a specific committee who is able to support the request as part of their role
- Present the request at least two weeks in advance to the Head of Democratic Services, who will consult with the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee, prior to deciding to allow the request or not

- The above to assess the request against the criteria and let the elected member know the result. Arrangements for reporting back and summarise / sharing the additional information should be made (arrangements will vary per field/ request).

3. Recommendation

3.1 It is requested that the Democratic Services Committee:-

- adopt the criteria noted in 2.3 and the procedure noted in 2.4 for implementation