

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Extraordinary Audit & Corporate Governance Committee

**DATE:** 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Angela Wakefield, Monitoring Officer

**(For all Enquiries)** 07749 723013

**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR DECISION**

#### **MEMBER TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR THE AUDIT & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

1. **Purpose of Report**

To inform the Committee about the proposed training programme and to request Members to approve the programme.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Committee is requested:

- (a) To approve the training programme set out in section 6; and
- (b) To agree that the programme should be delivered to the timetable agreed by the Chair.

3. **Commissioners' Comments**

This report is commended to Council as a step on the way to complying with the Directions.

4. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

4a. **Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Training for Members will support the work of the Committee, which in turn will support all of the Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities and the JSNA.

4b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

Equipping the Committee to function well will support delivery of all five priority outcomes of the Five Year Plan.

- Outcome 1: Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful
- Outcome 2: Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs
- Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay

- Outcome 4: Our residents will live in good quality homes
- Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents

## 5. **Other Implications**

### (a) Financial

There are no direct financial implications of the proposed action, although a good Member training programme will support the council's financial control mechanisms and help ensure it meets its best value duty.

### (b) Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
To approve a Member training programme	Political, Legal & Regulatory risks associated with maintaining the status quo	Existing levels of expertise	Likelihood – Very Low – 2 Impact – Negligible – 2 Risk Score - 4	Enhanced and developed levels of expertise for Committee Members

### (c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act implications or other legal implications arising from this report.

### (d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for an EIA at this stage.

## 6. **Supporting Information**

- 6.1 The LGA governance review published in June 2020 recommended among other things that the Council should establish a comprehensive Member training programme.
- 6.2 The CIPFA review published on 25 October 2021 recommended that “*specific further training is provided to members of Audit Committee [sic] to raise awareness of their governance role and that this training is repeated as part of the induction process for all members when they join*”.
- 6.3 Between January 2022 and March 2022, officers will begin what is intended to be a rolling programme of training for all Members of the Council. To help design a programme which will be of maximum benefit, Members are asked to complete the CIPFA self-assessment form at Appendix A in advance of the first session. The information gathered from the completed forms will be used to identify training needs and Members are also invited to advise officers of any specific topics they would like to be included in the future training programme.

6.4 The following three preliminary training sessions will be delivered in the period between January and March 2022 to the Chair's preferred timescale for delivery of these sessions.

#### Session 1: Introduction to Local Government Finance

- ✓ Overview of Council cash flows
- ✓ Why is local government finance so complicated?
- ✓ Council Tax, Business Rates and the Collection Fund
- ✓ Setting and Managing the Council Budget
- ✓ Capital investment and Treasury Management

#### Session 2: Role of Members on the Audit Committee

- ✓ Overview of Council Structure
- ✓ Terms of reference
- ✓ Remit and accountability
- ✓ Key work areas
- ✓ Skills and Training

#### Session 3: Understanding the Statement of Accounts

- ✓ Members' role
- ✓ Statutory framework
- ✓ What the accounts look like
- ✓ Key differences between local government accounts and those of other organisations
- ✓ Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement
- ✓ Cash Flow Statements
- ✓ Ring Fences Accounts
- ✓ Movement in Reserves Statement
- ✓ Statutory adjustments and overrides
- ✓ Group accounts

### 7. Comments of Other Committees

This report has not been considered by any other Committee, however, it was previously brought to a meeting of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 9th December. On that occasion Members agreed that the report should be brought back to the extraordinary meeting of the Committee convened for the purpose of considering revised Terms of Reference. At the meeting on 9th December, Members also asked that modules on Chairing Skills and Cyber

Security should be added to the training programme. The Monitoring Officer has made enquiries and can confirm that a session on Chairing Skills forms part of the existing Member training programme, with the most recent session having taken place on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021. In addition, the LGA has devised its own training programme and will be delivering a Chairing Skills session for all committee chairs during February or March 2022. As part of the same programme, the LGA will be delivering Cyber Security training for Members on a date to be confirmed.

8. **Conclusion**

Approval of the Member training programme will secure compliance with the recommendations of the LGA governance review and the CIPFA review. In addition, it will assist all Members in general and Members of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee in particular to provide an independent and high-level resource to support good governance and strong public financial management. The Committee is therefore asked to approve the Member training programme.

9. **Appendices Attached**

‘A’ Self-assessment form

10. **Background Papers**

1. LGA Governance Review, June 2020
2. CIPFA Review, October 2021