



# **Essex Fire Authority**

## **Induction Programme Proposal**

**Report Produced February 2017**

Proposals for an Induction Programme for new members and further Development Programme for all members

## **1. General**

For personal development to be effective, programmes should take into account the difference in individual's learning styles. These can be identified by use of a pre-existing questionnaire based on Kolb's Theory of Learning available under license. Individual learning plans can then be produced. This is a feature of the Member Development Charter.

When it comes to Induction, best practice is to offer learning opportunities using different approaches e.g. theoretical, activity-based, reflective, on-the job.

### **From the workshops, some guiding principles arose:**

- Secure engagement of members by emphasizing the benefits of induction and development in boosting transferable skills and knowledge that can be used in other spheres.
- Align with Induction and Development programmes on offer through other Essex authorities, especially the County Council following the 2017 Elections e.g. on Scrutiny training.
- Inform members in advance of the detailed content and purpose of programme elements.

There was also discussion about whether there should be a Lead Member role for Member Development and/or a Member Development Panel.

The Programme elements and approaches below are those arising from the Phase 2 workshops.

## **2. Programme**

### **2.1 Content**

#### **2.1.1 Induction - for new members only**

<b>TOPIC</b>	
Roles and Responsibilities	Using material produced for the workshops, to include roles of post-holders
ECFRS	How the Service operates – core business activity and the operating model
Committees	Specific introduction to each committee
Member Duties	What is expected of a member and how this is measured including the role of peer-to-peer evaluation/review

#### **2.1.2 Development – for all members**

<b>TOPIC</b>	
Performance and Risk Monitoring	Including how to measure outcomes, process for evaluating success, following up on recommendations and informing the planning for next steps
Holding to Account	
The Top 5	Time-to-time briefings on the Top 5 Issues and the Top 5 Risks
Unconscious bias	Intended to support meeting equality and diversity requirements and improvements

Briefings	Continuous briefing system on significant strategic issues in advance of formal consideration at committees and Authority meetings.
Political Leadership	See below

## 2.2 Approach

**Bitesize** – short events to provide essentials, potentially linked to attending other meetings or events.

**Briefings on Fire Authority and Service issues** – see above: Top 5 Issues and Risks, continuous briefing system.

**Buddying** – member to member to draw on the knowledge of experienced members and possibly also officer to member. Prior training for the mentors would help ensure effectiveness and consistency.

**Handbook** - including Who's Who (photos and synopsis), FAQs, glossary and acronyms, code of conduct, visit protocols. As development sessions are delivered, notes of each can be added. The handbook should be in both hard copy and online format.

**Visits** – go and see visits including to Fire Stations for officer briefings, also to activities such as the Fire Breaks scheme.

**Relevant Expertise** – harnessing the experience and existing skills of members identified through pen portraits and/or a skills audit so that these can be applied most effectively in serving on appropriate committees, task and finish groups or in specific roles.

**Members' resource area online** – from the essentials to current activities, media releases etc Use of the Political Skills Framework as adapted for the Fire Authority and included in the Handbook.

**Political Leadership development** - identify what Learning and Support is required to carry out specific leadership roles, produce individual development plans with reference to a range of options, e.g. attendance at LGA Leadership Academy, mentoring and coaching, external visits and attendance at conferences.

## 3. Handbook

The Outline Content is as below:

- What is the Fire Authority and what does it do?
- The role of the Essex Fire Authority Member
- The Role of the Chairman
- The Role of the Vice-Chairman
- The Role of Committee Chairman
- The Role of Lead Members
- The Role of Group Spokespersons
- The Role of Member Champions
- Essex Fire Authority member Skills Framework
- Essex Fire Authority Statutory Responsibilities
- Essex Fire Authority Governance and Probity
- Roles and Responsibilities of Senior Essex Fire and Rescue Officers
- ECFRS Structure Chart
- Member-Officer Relations, including Staff Engagement Protocol
- Member Communications Protocol
- Member Visits to Fire Stations Protocol

Member Training and Development Programme 2017/18  
Member Briefing Programme 2017/18  
Events Planner 2017/18

#### **4. Calendar**

It is suggested that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Group Spokesperson supported by appropriate officers meet to draw up a timetable and calendar once the programme proposals are agreed.