
MEMBERS' TRAINING

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor John Williams, Leader

Responsible Director – Paul Wildsmith, Director of Corporate Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To request Council to consider designating two further training courses in the Members' Training and Development Programme as Mandatory.

Summary

2. The Standards Committee at its meeting held on 16th March, 2009 received a report which sought Members approval for the introduction of mandatory training for Members on Safeguarding Adults.
3. In addition to this, at the meeting of Cabinet held on 28th April, 2009, Members considered and endorsed a recommendation from the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee to introduce mandatory training for all Members of the Planning Applications Committee at the beginning of each Municipal Year.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that
 - (a) mandatory training on Safeguarding Adults be introduced for all Members on a biennial basis (every two years);
 - (b) mandatory training for all Members of the Planning Applications Committee be introduced on an annual basis and that the training be open to all other Members of the Council to attend on a non-mandatory basis; and
 - (c) power be added to (i) of the Standards Committee terms of reference to approve mandatory training courses.

Reasons

5. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:
 - (a) To strengthen the approach to safeguarding adults at risk in Darlington.

- (b) To ensure that Members are fully trained and updated annual on planning matters.
- (c) To ensure that training and awareness raising exists in Darlington.
- (d) To enable the Standards Committee to approve mandatory training courses for Members.

Paul Wildsmith
Director of Corporate Services

Lynne Wood: Ext 2287

Background Papers

Report to the Standards Committee 16th March, 2009.
Report to Cabinet – 28th April, 2009

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report does not have any specific impact on Crime and Disorder.
Health and Well Being	This report does not have any specific impact on Health and Well Being, however, the training on Safeguarding Adults will inform Members on how to recognise when a referral to the Safeguarding Team is appropriate and be aware of the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding adults at risk.
Sustainability	This report does not have any specific impact on sustainability.
Diversity	This report does not have any specific impact on diversity.
Wards Affected	This report does not have any specific impact on any ward.
Groups Affected	This report does not have any specific impact on any groups.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not have any specific impact on budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	This report does not represent a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This report does not represent an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report does not have any specific impact on One Darlington: Perfectly Placed.
Efficiency	The delegation of responsibility for approving mandatory training to Standards Committee will reduce paperwork and officer time.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Planning Applications Committee

7. The Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee undertook a review of Development Control, following concerns in respect of performance on Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 109 which related to the speed of processing planning applications received by this Council.
8. One of the recommendations from that Review was to introduce training for all Members of the Planning Applications Sub-Committee at the start of the Municipal Year and that Members remain exempt from the Committee until such training is completed. The recommendation was considered and endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting held on 28th April, 2009.
9. Although the training is mandatory for Members of the Planning Applications Committee it will be open to all other Members to attend on a non-mandatory basis.

Safeguarding Adults

10. The Council and partner agencies are strengthening their approach to safeguarding adults at risk in Darlington. Resources have been secured to develop a Safeguarding Team to ensure the effective further development of excellent safeguarding practices.
11. The Department of Health is due to report on the outcome of extensive consultation on the policy guidance 'No Secrets' in April 2009. It is widely hoped that this review will strengthen the approaches to safeguarding adults, bringing things more in line with those for Children.
12. Training and awareness raising is central to ensuring effective practices exist in Darlington. It is considered good practice for member training to be routinely part of this programme and that all members are required to participate given the responsibilities the council has to protect adults at risk.
13. Adult Social Care is due to be inspected by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) between April and August 2009. A key theme for the inspection will be safeguarding. It is important that we are able to evidence the positive work going on in Darlington in respect of Safeguarding Adults.
14. A report was submitted to the Standards Committee meeting held on 16th March, 2009, and it was agreed to recommend to Council that Mandatory training on Safeguarding Adult responsibilities be introduced for all Members on a biennial basis.
15. Standards Committee currently has responsibility for monitoring attendance at training and to ensure that decisions on mandatory training are linked to enforceability. The Standards Committee could approve future decisions of this nature.

Outcome of Consultation

16. There has been no consultation in relation to this matter.