Member Development Sub – Committee: 9th March 2010

Member Development for Financial Resources

Report of the Director of Financial Resources

1. Introduction

Whilst a range of member development / training sessions have been provided over recent years which, from the feedback received, have been well received the attendance levels have been relatively low. Training has been made available to all members and additional specific sessions have been organised where deemed appropriate, for example for the Audit and Governance Committee members. As such the opportunity has been taken to review the coverage and timing of sessions as well as the method of delivery to ensure it remains useful and relevant to members.

This report sets out proposals for 2010/2011 in relation to development for those areas provided by Financial Resources.

2. Coverage and Timing

2.1 The opportunity has been taken to rationalise the topics offered, as follows:

a) Procurement
b) Local Government Finance Overview (including a general financial management update)
c) Governance, Risk Management and Internal Audit
d) Benefits

2.2 It is considered that the timing of the sessions should be aligned with relevant Council activity, and as such the following is proposed.

a) Procurement

A review of how procurement is undertaken and organised is taking place during the first half of 2010, therefore scheduled for October 2010 in order to cover new arrangements.

b) Local Government Finance Overview

It is proposed that this be scheduled for September 2010 as the lead in to the budget setting process commences.

c) Governance, Risk Management and Internal Audit

The Corporate Risk Profile is reviewed every 6 months and it is therefore suggested that this session be scheduled for March 2011 after the second review has been undertaken and reported.

d) Benefits

There is no relevant need to link this session to specific activity within Benefits, and it is therefore suggested that this session be scheduled for June 2010.

2.3 In order to ensure the sessions meet the needs of members it is proposed that the intended scope and objectives of each session will be sent to members in advance in order that they can consider and notify officers as to their specific needs or areas of interest, i.e. what they want from the session.

3. Methods of Delivery

3.1 Given the different roles of members, e.g. member of Cabinet, Audit and Governance Committee, Scrutiny Committee, Area Committees etc., it is considered that it may be useful to tailor the training provided to the role of the members. Views from the Member Development Sub-Committee would be welcomed.

3.2 It is proposed that for all of the areas listed in paragraph 2.1 above, that e-learning modules will be developed, in order to provide an alternative method of delivery for those members who wish to use this option.

3.3 It is also proposed that a greater use of activities which involve and promote greater interaction between members and those leading the sessions be adopted, e.g. use of case studies to seek to 'bring to life' the topics covered. It is expected that this will make the sessions more relevant and interesting for members.

4. Recommendations

4.1 The Sub-Committee is asked to consider and agree or provide comments on the following:

a) Are the topics listed in paragraph 2.1 accepted?

b) Is the timing of the proposed events agreed?

c) Does the committee agree that events should be tailored to the different roles of members?

d) Should e-learning modules be developed and offered as an alternative?

e) Should case studies and other methods of achieving greater interaction be used more?