

Code of Conduct Training

Report of the Clerk and Monitoring Officer

For further information about this report please contact Jonathan Eatough, Clerk and Monitoring Officer, on 01952 383200 or Matthew Cumberbatch, Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer, on 01952 383255.

1 Purpose of Report

This report provides the Committee with an update on the possible format of future Code of Conduct training.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

3 Background

In November 2008 eight Members and three officers of the Fire Authority and three Independent Members of its Standards Committee attended Code of Conduct training sessions organised by Telford & Wrekin Council. As a result of the feedback from that training Telford & Wrekin Council's Standards Committee asked officers to conduct a review of training with a view to improving its content and increasing attendance.

4 Proposals

Having conducted a review Telford & Wrekin Council officers made the following proposals, which were accepted by their Standards Committee:

- Introducing an interactive style of training with a workshop/café style layout. This would include greater emphasis on attendees looking at case studies and contributing more during the sessions.

- Reducing the maximum capacity for the sessions but increasing the number of sessions available. This would include stretching the sessions over a period of a few weeks and providing afternoon and evening sessions to accommodate and encourage members, who may not have attended in the past because of other commitments.
- Providing various venues around the Borough, rather than limiting the venue solely to the Civic Offices. This again is with a view to encouraging higher attendance.
- Reviewing the use of external trainers and providing more training by officers, which would reduce expenditure and allow more workshop sessions to take place.
- Seeking views from Members as to the aspects of the Code, which they find most challenging and preparing the training accordingly.

5 The Way Forward

The Code of Conduct is expected to change this year with particular emphasis on the reintroduction of actions undertaken by Members in a private capacity. Accordingly it is important to ensure appropriate timing of the training to encapsulate the new changes. With this in mind the following timetable is proposed:

July 2009 (the June meeting is likely to be rescheduled to July)
Report back to the Standards Committee with details of provisional dates, venues, trainers and an outline of the training material

September/October 2009
Provide the training

October 2009
Feedback to the Standards Committee and determine whether further training is required during the 2009/10 municipal year or alternatively commence plans for training for the next municipal year

6 Financial Implications

Any costs associated with Members attending training in the Code of Conduct can be met from existing budgets.

7 Legal Comment

Attendance at Code of Conduct training is not compulsory but is recommended as good practice. The expected changes to the Code of Conduct mean that it is important that Members are offered regular training.

8 Equality Impact Assessment

An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached to this report.

9 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

10 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	*
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial		Staff	
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*



Directorate	Executive	Department/ Section	Corporate Services
Name of officers completing (minimum of 2)	Sharon Lloyd Alan Taylor	Job title	Corporate Services Manager Chief Fire Officer
Name of Policy/Service/Activity to be assessed	Code of Conduct training proposals	Date of assessment	17 February 2009
New or existing policy	N/A		

1) Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/service/activity (referred to as policy in document) and also consider the following:

- What are the key performance indicators?
- Who is intended to benefit or be affected by it? (is this positive or negative)
- What outcomes do you want to achieve from this policy?

Strategic aims 3 and 5, corporate objectives 10, 11, 14, 18 and 19

Members of the Fire Authority, Independent Members of its Standards Committee and officers involved in Fire Authority matters. This is beneficial.

Improved attendance at training sessions and better working knowledge of the Code of Conduct, which in turn should ensure that Members adhere to the Code, uphold the highest standard of ethics and no allegations of breach of the Code are made against them.

1 a) Who implements this activity?

Training in the Code is organised by officers of Telford & Wrekin Council and co-ordinated and monitored by the Corporate Services Section of Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.

2) How does your current policy meet the needs around age, disability, race, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation and caring responsibilities?

The proposals regarding future training are likely to improve accessibility for all concerned, as they increase the opportunity for attendance in terms of timings and venues.

Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? E.g. physical or other.

No - any venues chosen will have facilities for people with disabilities.

2a) Where do you think improvements could be made?

The format of training is reviewed annually and feedback from those, for whom it is intended, taken into account.

<p>2b) Have issues of equality been identified in this area of service delivery by SFRS?</p>	<p>One factor, which may result in poor attendance at previous sessions is the limited number available and that they take place at only one venue, which affects people with other commitments, such as caring responsibilities. By offering a wider selection of dates and venues it is hoped that such people will be able to attend.</p>		
<p>3) Have we had any specific feedback or complaints on this area?</p> <p>Is there evidence that this has come from any of these specific groups: race, gender, disability, religion/belief, age, sexual orientation, caring responsibilities?</p>	<p>All those attending training are given feedback forms to complete afterwards and wherever practical their comments are taken into account when organising future training.</p> <p>No</p>		
<p>3a) Do we have any feedback from managers or frontline staff on this policy?</p>	<p>Yes – as in 3). All officers attending are given a feedback form.</p>		
<p>3b) Is there any feedback from voluntary/community organisations?</p>	<p>N/A – the training is for Members and officers only.</p>		
<p>3c) Is there any research / models of practice that may inform SFRS view?</p>	<p>As in 3) above</p>		
<p>4) Detail the Actions / Improvement areas you have identified, or the need for further research. (These must be put onto the Action and Improvements Form FB 367 for consideration by Steering Group)</p> <p>If you have found considerable actions or research this will require you to proceed to a full assessment.</p>	<p>None – the training provision is continually reviewed and improved to take into account feedback received from attendees.</p>		
<p>5) Should the policy now proceed to a full impact assessment?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Please detail N/A</p>

**I am satisfied that this policy has been successfully impact assessed.
I understand the Impact Assessment of this policy is a statutory obligation and that, as owners of this policy, we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this process.**

Line Manager	Alan Taylor	Date	18 February 2009
Please note that this impact assessment will be scrutinised by the Equality and Diversity Officer.			