

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

APPOINTMENTS, STANDARDS AND APPEALS COMMITTEE

14 OCTOBER 2024

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT – DRAFT PLAN

Report of the Acting Clerk to the Authority

1. ISSUE

- 1.1. It is necessary to fully refresh the Member Development Plan, which has not been substantially updated since 2013. The plan outlines the compulsory and optional training and development that will be provided to members, and how skills and development will be monitored.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. THAT Committee approve the draft Member Development Plan 2024-2027 (**Appendix 1**), to be implemented starting October 2024.
- 2.2. THAT Committee members provide any relevant thoughts or suggestions to build on the plan.

3. TIMELINE

- 3.1. The last substantive update to the Authority Member Development Plan occurred in 2013, and expectations and relevant guidance has changed significantly in the intervening period.
- 3.2. The new plan, including specified training sessions, will be implemented as soon as practicable following the agreement of the Appointments, Standards and Appeals committee.

- 3.3. It is proposed that the new plan be for a specific period of three years, to be fully reviewed in 2027, but kept under annual view during this period.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1. As a joint authority, all Fire Authority members will already be subject to their “home” authority’s member development process. As a result, the WMFRA Member Development Plan is designed to supplement this and offer additional insight and expertise relating to Fire Authority specific skills and understanding.
- 4.2. Article 2, Section 2.2.1 paragraph h) states that members are required “to ensure they have appropriate skills and understanding to undertake their role by actively engaging in training and development to respond to the growing complexities and demands on fire and rescue services, to enable them to carry out their role to their full potential and to assist the Service in making West Midlands safer, as set out in the Member Development Strategy.”
- 4.3. The new Member Development Plan sets out an annual programme of compulsory and voluntary training opportunities for all members and for specific committee members, as well as additional resources members can access and utilise in their own time.
- 4.4. It additionally sets out how member skills and development will be monitored, and how Authority leaders will support members with their development.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. No Initial Equality Impact Assessment is required in relation to this report.

- 5.2. In-house Equity, Diversity and Inclusion training will form part of the Member Development Plan, to be delivered annually to all members.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. While specific training is not legally mandated, Authority members are required to maintain certain understanding and capabilities, including maintenance of conduct and standards, audit, scrutiny and oversight.
- 6.2. As covered within the Background section of this report, members also have a Constitutional requirement to engage with Member Development.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. It is expected that the provision of additional external training will include costs of approximately £5,000 to £10,000 per annum, depending on the number of new members and member take up. Training and development is already planned for within the existing Democratic Services budget.

8. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. There are no environmental implications from this report.

9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- [Archived Member Development Strategy – 2013](#)
- [LGA Guidance – Planning your councillor development programme](#)
- [WMFRA Constitution – June 2024](#)

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