



**City of Westminster**

# Standards Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>12 March 2014</b>
<b>Classification:</b>	<b>For General Release</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Member Induction Programme</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Cabinet Secretariat</b>
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Policy Context:</b>	<b>Supporting Local Democracy</b>
<b>Financial Summary:</b>	<b>The cost of the induction programme</b>
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## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report outlines the proposed plans for the induction of new Councillors following the City Council elections on Thursday May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Standards Committee notes the proposals outlined in this report for the induction of newly-elected Members, for further detailed development by the Cabinet Secretariat, working with the Committee and Governance Services team and
- 2.2 That all Members be advised that the Standards Committee regards the attendance of all members at the session on the Members Code of Conduct as compulsory. Accordingly, further sessions will be arranged as necessary.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The City Council elections will be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May, with 60 Councillors elected to represent the 20 wards of Westminster. The votes will be counted and the results announced the following day on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May.
- 3.2 The Cabinet Secretariat, working with the Committee and Governance Services team, is preparing an induction programme following the elections.

The intention of the programme is to help newly-elected Councillors prepare for their new role at Westminster and outline the support and facilities available to them, while also fulfilling specific legal requirements relating to their acceptance of their new post. The induction programme will also, however, be open to re-elected Members in full or in part should they wish to take it up.

- 3.3 The proposed approach to deliver a successful Member induction process, and the timescales involved, are outlined below. The Committee's views on and approval of the proposals is sought.

#### 4. Outline Chronology

- 4.1 An outline chronology of the key milestones connected with the May 2014 elections, and the subsequent induction programme, is as follows:

<b>Pre-Elections</b>	
Mon 14 Apr	Notice of election published
Mon 28 Apr	Statement of Persons nominated
<b>Election Period</b>	
Thurs 22 May	ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE
Fri 23 May	Votes counted and RESULTS ANNOUNCED
<b>Post-Election Period</b>	
Mon 26 May (Bank Holiday)	New Councillors come into office
Thurs 29 May	<i>(eve) Member Induction Sessions at City Hall</i> [TWO OF THESE]
Mon 2 Jun (tbc)	<i>(eve) Member Induction Sessions at City Hall</i> [THREE SLOTS]
Tues 3 Jun (tbc)	<i>(eve) Member Induction Sessions at City Hall</i> [TO BE USED]
Weds 4 Jun	Meeting of Full Council – Installation of new Lord Mayor
Sat 7 Jun (tbc)	<i>(am) Member Induction Sessions at City Hall</i> [BACK-UP SLOT]
June/July (tbc)	<i>Subject-specific Induction Sections, e.g. Compulsory Code of Conduct session; Licensing Committees; Planning Committees etc.</i>

#### 5. The Induction Programme

- 5.1 It is proposed that the induction programme for newly-elected Councillors should be three-pronged, in terms both of format and timing:

- **New Member Material:** provided in electronic or hard copy formats as appropriate to content; given directly to Members on the announcement of the election results on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May (or as soon as possible thereafter)
- **WCC/Departmental Introductory Workshops:** provided during the fortnight between Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May and the first post-election meeting of full Council on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June
- **Technical/Subject-Specific Workshops:** provided during the period after full Council on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June and before the summer Council recess; arranged either on a compulsory basis (e.g. Code of Conduct) or

targeted according to the roles new Members are asked to fulfil (e.g. on Licensing or Planning Committees).

## 5.2 (A) *New Member Material*

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Statement of Persons Nominated for the elections will be published. The Head of Committee and Governance Services will at this point write to all prospective new Councillors with a copy of the Code of Conduct.

On the afternoon of the election count and results (Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May), the Cabinet Secretariat team will be present and will provide all 60 elected Councillors (whether elected for the first time or re-elected), with a Members' pack including the following:

- A copy of a 2014 Members' Handbook
- The most up-to-date version of the Council Directory
- Information about the timetable of Induction Sessions (for Councillors to return with an indication of preferences)
- Information about Members' Allowances
- Register of Interests submission to complete
- Parking Permit applications
- Link to Constitution including Codes of Conduct and Governance

## 5.3 (B) *Introductory Workshops*

Two induction sessions will be held at City Hall on the evenings of either Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> May, Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> or Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, with the option of a third session on the morning of Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June as a back-up in case of over-subscription.

The sessions will be open to all Councillors, but will primarily be aimed at newly-elected Members and will offer a chance to hear from key Council Officers about the work of their Departments and/or the services and support offered by the Council.

Workshops available at the induction sessions will include: the work of the Council's SEB Directorates and Support Units, Governance and Member-Led Decision-Making including the committee structure and Policy and Scrutiny function, an overview of Tri-Borough and Cabinet Secretariat support provided to Members.

SEB Directors and relevant Managers and Officers across the organisation will chair and facilitate each of the workshops.

It is proposed that, at each session, Members can attend up to three workshops, affording them an introduction to up to six key themes or business areas over the course of the two evenings (increased to nine, if demand is such that the back-up of the Saturday morning session is used).

## 5.4 (C) *Compulsory/Technical Workshop Sessions*

All new Members will be obliged to attend a mandatory session given by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services Services, covering Councillors' responsibilities to abide by the Code of Conduct and Governance. It is suggested that the Standards Committee make attendance at this session mandatory for all Members. A separate session on Member level decision making will be included. See 5.3 above.

A number of more technical sessions will be organised over June and July, once new Members' Committee roles are clearer, covering, for example, the work of the Planning and Licensing Committees and other quasi-judicial panels.

## **6. Additional Logistics**

- 6.1 At some point between the election results being announced on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May and the first meeting of Council on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June, all 60 Members will be required to sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Chief Executive. The timetable for this will be confirmed in due course.
- 6.2 In addition to the Induction Programme work outlined above, the Cabinet Secretariat will be responsible for ensuring that all logistical arrangements are in place with regards the arrival of new Members, including, for example, updating the City Council's website, arranging security passes for new Councillors, and ensuring IT services are available from the moment that new Members join the Council.
- 6.3 The team will also put in place arrangements for a tour of the key Member facilities on offer at City Hall including, for example, the meeting space on the 17<sup>th</sup> floor, the Lord Mayor's Parlour, the Leader and Deputy Leaders' offices, the Chief Executive's office and the Members' Room on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor.
- 6.4 After the election, the details of each of the 60 Councillors will be collated into a Members' Directory, to be distributed to all Members.
- 6.5 As part of the Cabinet Secretariat team's own introduction to new Councillors, the relevant Member Services Officer will make contact with new Members within the first few days and will provide them with key contact details, including planning contacts, environmental health officers, housing options contacts and the relevant wardens and community protection officers for their Ward, and offer to organise a Ward walk, either with Councillor colleagues or relevant officers.
- 6.6 A reception will also be hosted by the Lord Mayor shortly after the election to welcome all newly-elected Members, the date and format of which will be confirmed in due course.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 Combined, the above programme of events offers newly-elected Councillors the opportunity, within the first few days and weeks of their election, to be introduced to their new surroundings as Members at Westminster City Council, as well as to the work of the Council's various Departments and services.
- 7.2 The induction programme will be finalised in full consultation with the party Whips to ensure that they are content with what is proposed for delivery and that it dovetails with plans that parties may have in terms of their induction and welcome of new Members.
- 7.3 The above programme will also ensure that all logistical arrangements are efficiently put in place for the arrival of new Councillors, as well as fulfilling legal requirements of both the Council and Members in relation to their election as representatives of the City of Westminster.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The cost of the induction programme will be met from existing budgeted resources.

## **9. Legal Implications**

- 9.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report. Members are required to make a Declaration of Acceptance of Office before undertaking formal duties. Provision for this has been included in the draft programme. The legal aspects of the requirements relating to the disclosure and registration of Members interests will be covered in the session conducted by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

**If you have any queries about this report  
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