

**TITLE OF REPORT:**           **Audit and Standards Committee – Training and Induction**

**REPORT OF:**                 **Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate  
Services and Governance**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report sets out proposals for induction and training plans for the Audit and Standards Committee.

### **Background**

2. The Audit and Standards Committee considered a report at its last meeting held on 4 March 2019 on proposals for developing training and induction for the Committee.
3. The Committee agreed that a CIPFA knowledge and skills assessment form should be circulated to all members of the Committee to help develop a training development plan for the committee. A copy of the form is attached at Appendix 1. It was also agreed that an outline development plan attached at Appendix 2 should be circulated with this form.
4. The form and outline development plan were circulated to all members. Of the replies received, one member indicated that he had not acquired the relevant knowledge for the core aspects outlined in the knowledge and skills assessment form. It is considered that the proposals outlined below will address this training need.
5. No comments were received on the outline development plan.

### **Proposals**

#### ***Induction***

6. At present all newly elected councillors undertake an induction programme which consists of them meeting all Strategic Directors. As part of this programme they receive a hard copy of the Council's Code of Conduct and related guidance following their election. It is proposed that they will also receive a hard copy of the Local Code of Governance in their induction packs. These will also be provided to independent members following their appointment.
7. In addition, all newly appointed members of the Audit and Standards Committee, including councillors and independent members, will receive an induction meeting from officers from Corporate Services and Governance and Corporate Resources prior to their first attendance at the Committee.
8. The induction meeting will cover the role and remit of the Committee, the role descriptor for members of the Committee, any training needs they need to fulfil their roles, and an overview of the governance structures of the authority and decision making processes.

### ***Training***

9. All councillors are expected to undertake training on Ethics and Probity once in their four-year term following their election. Regular training sessions have been arranged on this topic and it is proposed that they continue to be arranged throughout 2019/20.
10. It is proposed that the potential training areas outlined in Appendix 2 should be developed into a training programme to be rolled out throughout the year to not only committee members but also to all members of the Council. Some of this training could be in the form of sessions at the end of committee meetings facilitated by Council officers or Mazars. The training programme will be flexible and other topics can be added, as and when necessary.
11. Officers will identify training opportunities for members of the Committee to attend national and regional events, as appropriate. Any member attending such an event would be expected to give feedback and share any learning materials with the Committee to maximise learning and development opportunities.
12. The Chair and Vice Chair are invited to meetings of the North East Governance Forum, hosted by Mazars, which along with presentations and discussions on topical issues, provides networking and member development opportunities. These meetings are attended by Audit Committee Chairs / Vice Chairs from other North East Councils, along with their Chief Internal Auditors.

### **Recommendation**

13. The Committee is asked to endorse the approach to induction and training set out above and to receive the training programme at its next meeting.

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