

Protocol for Member Training on Planning Matters

(This protocol was approved at Full Council on 8 April 2008 and came into effect thereafter)

1. All Members of the County Council will be required to undertake training on planning matters.
2. To facilitate training, a minimum of 4 no. training events will be organised by Officers within each Council year (May to April).
3. In Council election years, a minimum of 6 no. training events will be organised by Officers within each Council Year (May to April).
4. Members will be required to attend at least 2 no. of these organised training events in any Council year (May to April).
5. All newly elected members will be required to attend the 2 no. events organised after the commencement of the new Council and before the first Planning Committee of that new Council year.
6. Existing Members with a shortfall of training in a previous Council year may attend the 2 no. events as specified within paragraph 5 above.
7. It will be necessary for Members who have not attended formally arranged training events to submit their alternative training proposals to the Head of Planning and Public Protection for authorization by the Lead Member for Policy, Communications and Improvements. Alternative sources of training could include:-
 - (i) Attendance at an event organised by the WLGA, another local Authority or an external provider.
 - (ii) Distance learning using an approved planning based website which have training modules e.g. The Planning Advisory Service – www.pas.gov.uk, the Royal Town Planning Institute – www.planningmatters.co.uk
8. Members attendance for training will be monitored by the Head of Planning and Public Protection who will report on a six monthly basis to the Environment Scrutiny Committee. Reports will normally be at the end of the Council year (March/April) and after six months of the Council year (Nov/Dec).
9. Prior to the final 2 no. training events in any one Council year individual letters will be sent to Members outlining their training records for that year with a reminder of the agreed protocol and the forthcoming training events.

10. Members will need to have fulfilled the training requirement for the Council year by the 30th April in any one year. Members who fail to fulfill the training requirements by this date would be prohibited from voting on any planning related matters at Planning Committee and Full Council during the following Council year until either of the following have occurred:
 - a) They have attended two organised training events in the following Council year or attended alternative events as agreed by the Head of Planning and Public Protection and the lead Member for Policy, Communications and Improvement.
 - b) They have been authorised to continue to make decisions on planning matters having been reported to Corporate Governance Committee.
11. For clarity Members who have not fulfilled the training requirement for the Council year (i.e. by 30th April) will in the following Council year be able to discuss/debate planning related matters in Planning Committee/Full Council but will have their right to vote on that particular matter removed until either of 10(a) or 10(b) above have been fulfilled/complied with.