

MEMBERS' STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020-2021

Executive Summary

1. At its meeting on 27 June 2019, the SPCB agreed that an annual training plan for MSP Staff should be developed. This paper presents the Training Plan for 2020-2021, developed in consultation with the MSPs' Staff Training and Development Forum, for approval by the SPCB. Costs for staff attending training will continue to be met from the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme.

Issues

Provision of training under the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme

2. The Human Resources Office administers the day-to-day operation of the training arrangements on behalf of the SPCB. In performing this role, HR approves applications within defined parameters set by the SPCB. These parameters are set out in the [Scheme guidance](#). On receipt of applications, HR considers whether the training requirement can be met from existing arrangements such as the corporate training programme. HR also ensures that value for money is maintained and that training requests support MSPs in the performance of their parliamentary duties.

3. The delegation arrangements limit MSPs to booking their staff on 'off the shelf' job related training courses delivered by external providers. In accordance with its responsibilities under the Scheme, HR coordinates the delivery of training programmes on behalf of MSPs as employers. Experience to date shows that training events are well attended by staff and there is a low late-cancellation rate. This approach brings down the individual costs of staff attending training events and represents a high return on investment.

MSPs' Staff Training and Development Forum

4. The SPCB asked parliamentary staff to take a more detailed look at the training needs of staff and provide options for consideration on how this service could be improved under the existing provision of the Scheme.

5. To aid the development of an annual training plan, HR officials liaised with Business Managers to set up a cross parliamentary group staff forum to identify common training needs and define a training plan that complemented MSP staff job roles.

6. The SPCB is invited to note that the forum has already brought benefits and improved service delivery to MSPs in their roles as employers. For example, in addition to providing input for the development of the 2020-21

Training Plan, it has been instrumental in conducting the training needs analysis to inform election-related training activities.

2020-21 Training and Development Plan

7. Following extensive consultation and input, the attached Plan captures the identified requirements including activities to support MSPs in meeting their legal obligations. This includes, for example, mental health awareness which serves two purposes:

- in their representative role - MSPs' staff are trained to provide accessible services to constituents who have mental health challenges. This training helps MSPs to meet their duties as a service provider under the Equality Act 2010; and
- in their employer role – it will help MSPs' staff to mitigate the effects of work-related stress in situations where they are working in challenging roles, such as supporting vulnerable constituents to resolve issues often in situations where they are working without direct supervision.

8. The Plan also includes understanding the welfare system in Scotland which is a growing area of constituent casework.

9. The proposed plan intends to deliver MSP staff development in a sustainable way and the SPCB is invited to approve the costed plan for 2020/2021.

Resource Implications

10. The delivery of the Plan will be met from the existing HR staff complement and resources. All costs associated with the delivery of the Plan will continue to be met from provision 3.5 of the Expenses Scheme - Incidental and Ancillary Employment Costs.

Governance

11. The SPCB is under a statutory duty to provide the services which the Parliament requires to function. This includes providing services to MSPs as employers of office staff. The SPCB's role here is as a facilitator for Members, supporting them in their role as employers. That role is clearly distinguishable from, and does not supersede or displace, the obligations of MSPs as employers.

12. The HR office administers the day-to-day operation of the training arrangements on behalf of the SPCB. In performing this role, HR approves applications within defined parameters set by the SPCB.

Communication

13. A Communication and Engagement Plan has been developed following the SPCB's request that HR take a proactive approach to identifying and contacting staff and MSPs to advise them of the opportunities available.

Publication Scheme

14. This paper can be published.

Decision

15. SPCB is invited to approve the Training and Development Plan 2020-2021.

Next Steps

16. Subject to approval, HR will:

- a) action the delivery of the plan; and
- b) provide regular updates to the SPCB through the Chief Executive's Report as previously agreed.

**Human Resources Office
December 2019**

Annex A – MSPs’ Staff Training and Development Plan 2020-2021

Training Programme	Outline of training course	Duration of training	Training delivery cost: per delegate attending
All Staff Induction	In-house with a combination of face-to-face training and online resources. This covers, details of the services provided by the parliamentary offices and how MSPs’ staff can make best use of their services to support their employing MSP. It also includes completion of legal training such as H&S, Fire Safety, Equalities and GDPR.	2 x half days	No cost
Management Training	New and existing managers will be invited to complete in-house training. This combines online and face to face workshops, relevant to their role and in line with the delegation arrangements with their employing MSP. The modules available covers recruiting staff, managing attendance and performance and dealing with conduct issues.	3 x half days	Minimum 6 at £191 per person and maximum 12 at £96 per person
Job related training	We will continue to offer staff job related training, including online and face-to-face delivery that is relevant their job roles. This covers speechwriting; media handling (including social media skills); mental health awareness; supporting vulnerable people; understanding social security benefits in Scotland; and managing casework.	2 x half days per topic	<p>Speechwriting (minimum 6 at £155 per person; maximum 8 at £116 per person)</p> <p>Media handling, including social media (minimum 6 at £173 per person; maximum 10 at £104 per person)</p> <p>Mental health awareness (minimum 6 at £167 per person; maximum of 16 at £63 per person)</p> <p>Conversations with vulnerable people and suicide prevention (minimum 10 at £225 per person; maximum 25 at £90 per person)</p>

Annex A – MSPs’ Staff Training and Development Plan 2020-2021

Training Programme	Outline of training course	Duration of training	Training delivery cost: per delegate attending
			<p>Understanding social security benefits in Scotland (minimum 8 at £151 per person; maximum 25 at £50 per person)</p> <p>Managing casework (minimum 6 at £150 per person; maximum 12 at £75 per person)</p>
IT training	We will continue to offer IT training to support staff in their use of parliamentary systems that are relevant to their roles. This covers Excel, Word, OneNote, SharePoint, Outlook, and Dynamics training.	2 x half days per topic	Minimum 6 at £70 per person and maximum 12 at £35 per person
Preparing for the 2021 Election	We will offer face-to-face recruitment training to staff who are facing redundancy or at risk of redundancy. This will include supporting them to produce a CV and tips on interview techniques to secure their next role.	2 x half days	Minimum 4 at £125 per person and maximum 8 at £63 per person