

From: Ben Watts, General Counsel  
To: Selection and Member Services Committee, 28 October 2021  
Subject: Member Induction Survey  
Status: Unrestricted

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## **1. Introduction**

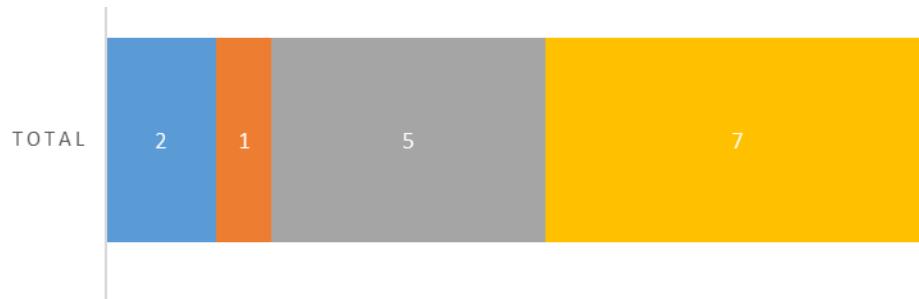
- a) Following engagement with Members of this Committee, Members were emailed with a link to the Members Induction Survey on 15 September 2021. The survey closed at noon on 1 October 2021.
- b) 15 Members responded. 12 were newly elected to KCC in May 2021, meaning just over a third of the new Member cohort took part. They were the main target of the survey, and this is a good proportion to work from. There was a response from a Member from each area of Kent apart from Dartford.

## **2. Survey Findings: Virtual Prospective Councillor Event**

- a) The first set of questions concerned the Virtual Prospective Councillor event in December 2020. Four respondents had attended this event, all of whom are new Members. While this is a small sample, the average rating of the event was 4 out of 5. The comments received on the event focused on the need to provide a directory of acronyms and clearer information on structures at KCC, with another comment being that the time commitment involved in being a Member has been greater than the event implied.
- b) Few additional comments were given on the next block of questions over the information provided by borough/city/district councils about the elections process. Relating to specific councils, no general conclusions can be made but can be taken up with the specific council for future elections.

## **3. Survey Findings: Induction Day**

- a) The next few questions covered the induction day where Members had the opportunity to sign their acceptance of office, have their photograph taken and complete other necessary paperwork. All 15 respondents attended. Members were asked to grade the day out of 5, and the average score was a little over 4. The spread of responses was as follows (the numbers in the colour blocks show the number of Members giving each grade indicated by the key, so here 7 Members gave a grade of 5):



Overall, how would you rate the day? ▾

■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

- b) Members were asked about the positive aspects of the day and the key themes were:

- The day was well-organised.
- An efficient use of time.
- Useful IT support provided.
- Good to meet other Members and Officers.

- c) On suggested improvements for the future, the following were the key themes:

- Opportunity to meet Leader/Cabinet, other Group Leaders, senior officers.
- Chance to get to know other Members.
- More about structures of KCC, wider induction content.
- Tour of the building.
- Date communicated to all candidates with more notice.
- More hands-on IT training.

#### **4. Survey Findings: Information for Members**

- a) The next couple of questions asked about the information that was available to Members. Out of 5, an average score of 3.8 was given for the questions of how easy it has been for Members to find the information they need to carry out their role. The spread of responses is as follows:



How easy has it been to find the information you need to carry out your role? ▾

■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

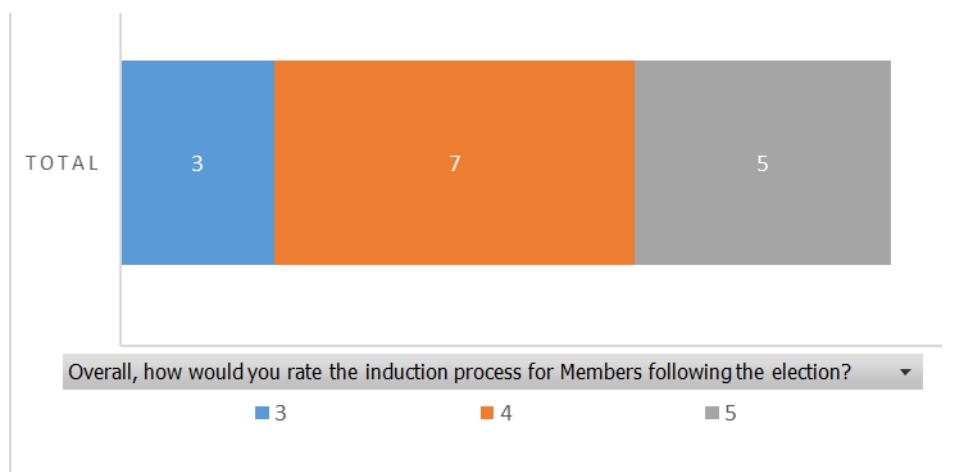
b) Members were asked to give comments on how access to relevant information could be changed or improved for future induction periods. The key themes here were:

- Officer contact sheet.
- KCC structure information.
- Regular meetings between Members and Members Hub.
- Ease of intranet/internet site navigation / search facility.

c) Members were then asked about attending other induction sessions. Few specific examples were given but nearly all survey respondents had attended several. When asked to comment on these, the consensus was that they were useful and informative. Members were appreciative of the efforts of Officers delivering the training. The ability to watch back some of the training was also commented on positively. There were a few Member comments on there being some duplication and needing more detail in places. The comment was also made that having a clear schedule more in advance would have been appreciated.

## 5. Survey Findings: Overall View

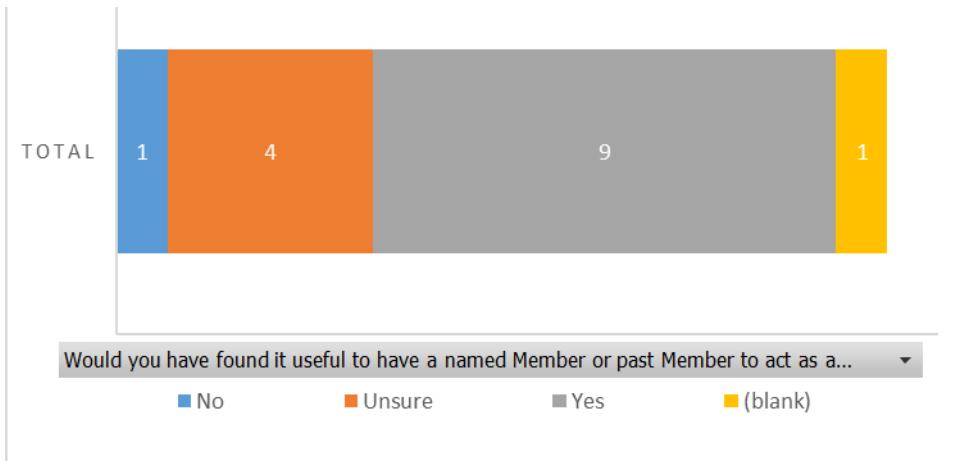
a) When asked to give an overall grade to the induction process for Members following the election, the average was a little over 4. The spread of responses was:



Throughout the survey, including the space for 'any other comments' at the end of it, Members commented that they understood that Coronavirus put constraints on what could be achieved and what induction was provided and that they were generally happy with it

## 6. Survey Findings: Future Induction Periods

- a) The last few questions focussed on ways to improve induction periods in the future.
- b) A specific question was asked about whether Members would have found it useful to have a named Member or past Member to act as a point of contact for questions or advice when first joining KCC as a Member. The spread of responses was as follows:



- c) One Member commented that they were mentoring another Member already.
- d) On broader suggestions for future inductions, the key themes were:
  - KCC structures - Key roles and responsibilities.
  - Staff contact lists.
  - Separate sessions for 'twin-hatters' and those new to role of elected representative.
  - County overviews followed by borough/district specific sessions (e.g., highways).
  - Chance to meet with Members and Officers less formally.
  - Overview of future Member development, inc. how to get booked onto courses.
  - Hear from Members with KCC experience about carrying out the role.
  - Hands-on / bespoke IT training.

## **7. Recommendation**

The Selection and Member Services Committee is asked to:

- a) Consider and note the report; and
- b) Request that the Member Development Sub-Committee take the report's findings into account when considering future induction periods.

## **8. Background Documents**

None.

## **9. Report Author and Relevant Director**

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