Dear Bob,

THE ROLE OF THE MAGISTRACY

I understand that as part of your inquiry into the magistracy you are interested in training. I wonder if this would help?

Appraisal system, competence and personal development

The new appraisal forms identify competences expected of all magistrates. The revised scheme was agreed by the working group after a pilot which also sought feedback from all training committees. This ensures consistency for magistrates and appraisers, and informed decisions by Training, Approvals, Authorisations and Appraisals Committees (TAAACs). As important, the narrative captures examples of good practice, feedback to the appraisee and any training and development needs with which the TAAAC could help.

Post-court reviews are fundamental to the personal development process and encouraged for every single court sitting as a chance to reflect on individual and collective performance. Feedback is encouraged. Magistrates are expected to make a note of any training or development needs and any consequential actions. These are referred to the deputy justices’ clerk/TAAAC.

Continuous learning and development sits in the appraisal forms. All new magistrates as part of induction are encouraged to use it, keep a development plan, and feed in to appraisal discussions. All new magistrates have an experienced mentor for the first year of sitting.
Funding

Designed and published by the College, the majority of magistrate training is funded by HMCTS and delivered locally. Funding does NOT come from the Judicial Office budget. The shift of training provision to HMCTS accommodation has reduced costs. Over time budget arrangements in HMCTS have changed, precluding a true comparator of costs from year to year.

A few courses delivered directly by the College (bench, family panel, and Training, Authorisations, Approvals and Appraisals Committee chairmen - essentially the training for bench officers/leadership magistrates) are on the same basis as salaried judiciary. Funding is within the College funding scheme and separate from the £26 ph referred to by the committee.

General

The College supports blended training, eLearning supplementing face-to-face training by HMCTS legal advisers using College training materials. The outcome is a more flexible, timely and readily available resource.

I hope this helps. The College will do what we can to answer any questions.

Yours,

Anne

LADY JUSTICE RAFFERTY DBE
CHAIRMAN OF THE JUDICIAL COLLEGE