

Member Development Strategy

> 2014/15

APPENDIX A



› Introduction

The Welsh Local Government landscape is changing at a tremendous rate. While the current and immediate future economic conditions are placing an immense strain on councillors, officers and the services that are provided: legal requirements from Welsh and UK government and local initiatives to find new ways of working and increase efficiency and effectiveness, are making it more important than ever for elected members to take the lead and help shape the future of local communities.

Councillors by their very nature have strong leadership instincts and must continuously develop those skills to ensure they are able to meet the challenges, opportunities and risks that come with public office. Developing new leadership and other skills to meet this challenge is vital and it is through shared learning that Councillors can and will maximise the opportunity to provide genuine local leadership.

This Strategy will meet our legal obligations to support how leading practice to enable members to fully own our status as a world class quality of life capital city for Wales.

› 1. The aims and context

The aims of this strategy are:

- To ensure that there is support in place for every Member, to enable them to acquire and develop knowledge and a full range of skills to support their communities;
- To clearly define the Democratic Services Committees responsibilities to Member Development;
- To clearly define officers responsibilities in relation to Member Development
- To identify adequate resources to meet the objectives of the development programme;
- To achieve Member Development Charter Status by June 2014.

In fulfilling these aims the following principles will be followed:

- Provide a Member-led planned approach to Member Development to identify, agree and deliver development needs
- Involve Members in their development, from planning the Member Development Programme through to delivery and evaluation
- Support individual Member Development needs, valuing and recognising the skills and experiences that Members already have or need to acquire;
- Ensure that the member development programme has relevance and quality of delivery;
- Deliver development in innovative ways to make the best use of the resources available;

The Member Development Strategy has been developed using detailed feedback from the all Member Survey in January 2014, and through discussions at the Task & Finish Group set up by the Democratic Services Committee.

Roles and responsibilities

The Democratic Services Committee

The Democratic Services Committee is made up of Members who are ambassadors for member development working with all Members to identify their needs and encouraging Members to attend various development sessions on offer. The Committee has set up a Task Group to steer this work. The Terms of Reference for the Member Development Task Group can be found as Appendix 1 to this document.

The Group will:

- Ensure that all new Members receive a comprehensive induction programme;
- Identify the development needs of Members;
- Provide direction and guidance to officers in respect of all member development issues;
- Promote best practice amongst all Members;
- Encourage participation at member development sessions;
- Develop the Member Development Strategy to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and continues to support the Council's strategies and the needs of Members;
- Support the Council's commitment to the WLGA Member Development Charter.

› 1. The aims and context

Officer Support

The County Clerk is the officer with overall responsibility for Member Development, she will arrange with the Head of Democratic Services to:

- (a) Provide dedicated officer support for all member development activities;
- (b) Ensure that all Members are made aware of all development opportunities through appropriate publicity and promotion;
- (c) Devise and deliver a comprehensive induction programme for new Members;
- (d) Deliver a comprehensive annual development programme for all Members;
- (e) Provide administrative support, and evaluation of Members needs;
- (f) Undertake Personal Development Planning (PDP) with Members, including maintaining plans;
- (g) Record instances of member development attendance to support Members when compiling their annual report;
- (h) Advise and support the Member Development Task Group;
- (i) Lead and support the work towards achieving the WLGA Member Development Charter;
- (j) Research and provide feedback on development opportunities;
- (k) Research alternative learning provision and its feasibility with Members (e-learning, DVDs etc);
- (l) Liaise with officers with regard to member development activities;
- (m) Consider opportunities for joint working;
- (n) Maintain and update the Member Development pages of the intranet Member Zone;
- (o) With the Member Development Task Group review the Member Development Strategy and Member Development Budget on an annual basis;

Individual Members

Whilst the Council will offer practical support, encouragement and resources, as appropriate, for training and development, we encourage each individual Member to take responsibility for their own development needs and will be recommending that a new responsibility is added to Article 2 of the Constitution - Member of the Council as follows:

Members of the Council shall be responsible for the following duties and responsibilities

(vii) To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's services, management arrangements, functions/duties and constraints, and to develop good working relationships with relevant officers of the authority.

(viii) To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the other organisations and services which serve the County.

(xiii) To identify individual learning and development needs and participate fully in training opportunities provided.

› 2. Member Development at City of Cardiff Council

Member Development at Cardiff County Council is split into themes:

- Frontline Councillor (including community engagement/leadership)
- Corporate Governance and legislation
- The Networked Councillor making effective use of ICT and Social Media
- Overview and Scrutiny
- Personal Skill Development eg chairing skills
- Induction Programme

Member Induction

The Induction programme is essential for all new Members of the Council. The overall aim is to make new Members feel welcome and to “fast track” them into their role so that they can effectively support their communities and undertake Council roles and responsibilities from the commencement of their term of office.

The mentoring programme, which received cross party support at the Democratic services Committee, will be available for all new and returning members to engage in. The induction process for new Members was developed for the Council elections in 2012. An Induction Pack including the Members Handbook was given to all Members elected. This included details of the full training programme and appropriate officer contact details. The induction programme lasted three months.

A simpler version of the Induction Programme has been developed for Councillors elected mid term following a By Election. Three new Councillors were returned in 2013/14 and all have participated in the Individual Induction Programme. All Members have been offered a mentor as part of the Council's Cross-Party Mentoring Scheme which will be embedded in the Induction Programme for the new cohort of Members following the next Council elections.

Member Development Sessions

Members have the opportunity to attend a range of member development sessions annually including briefings, seminars and workshops. The overall aim is to ensure Members feel that they can continue to develop their knowledge on specialised subjects. Member development sessions are held regularly throughout the year usually once a month. They will wherever possible be scheduled to take place on a Monday afternoon or close to meetings which involve a significant Member attendance. Specific sessions, where it is important for Members of a particular Committee to attend, will be held as part of, or following, the meeting wherever possible. Copies of all Member Development Session presentations are available on the Members intranet pages.

Delivery Techniques

A number of methods will be utilised in delivering Member Development, these will include:

- In-house briefings, workshops and seminars run by senior managers and specialist officers
- Skills sessions
- External conferences and seminars
- Peer coaching and mentoring
- Visits to other authorities and meetings
- E-Learning packages
- DVDs, CDs and other electronic media
- Training with partner organisations and agencies
- Personal Development Plans/discussions

Enabling Members to find the time to undertake learning and development activities will be a key priority. To do this it is proposed that: Formal sessions will where possible, be programmed in advance to ensure that they do not clash with the committee meeting cycle. Limited activities will take place during peak holiday periods;

› 2. Member Development at City of Cardiff Council

Personal Development Review (PDR)

Personal development reviews should be seen as a means to help Members update their knowledge and learn new skills to help them to be more effective in supporting their communities. In personal development planning, Members should have regard to their future aspirations as well as their current position. A personal development review questionnaire (PDR) and a confidential, individual meeting will be offered to all Members; it is then up to them to decide how they wish to take this forward.

Members will be able to select from the following individuals in arranging a PDR. Training and support will be made available to persons willing to undertake this role:

- Elected members within the members' Political Group
- Elected members within another Political Group
- Members of the Democratic Services committee
- Council officers including the County Clerk and Monitoring Officer, Deputy Monitoring Officer, Head of Democratic Services and the Senior Democratic Services Officer responsible for member development
- WLG officer or nominee

The personal development reviews will inform into the Annual Member Development Programme, and the process will be reviewed by the Member Development Working Group.

Equality of Access

When developing this strategy and the annual programmes, access to all Members is an important factor. Members have very busy diaries and a wide range of public commitments to balance alongside their personal lives. Because of this the majority of member sessions will take place during the day to coincide with other Council meetings, and to ensure that all Members have sufficient opportunities to attend the Member Development Steering Group undertake to:-

- Repeat key sessions throughout the year;
- Provide advance notice of sessions where possible
- Repeat key induction sessions at different times of the day and different days of the week;
- Restrict sessions to weekdays only;
- Provide opportunities for Members to obtain copies of the materials used during the session and notes taken;
- Develop and improve through evaluation and feedback from Members;
- Trial different methods of learning;
- Provide regular briefings on key issues;

In addition to discussions that take place as part of the induction process and the Member evaluation of individual sessions, Members will be given the opportunity to provide comment on scheduling of meetings through the personal development planning process.

› 3. Evaluation

It is important that all development activities are evaluated to ensure that the Member sessions meet Member's needs and identify future opportunities and all external courses/training provided will be analysed to establish their relevance and effectiveness.

Members will be encouraged to complete a short evaluation form, providing feedback on all development sessions organised by Democratic Services.

We will arrange for regular training needs analysis surveys to be provided to all Members to ask for an evaluation of the whole programme, and what they would like to see incorporated in the future, and how they would like to see it structured.

On a six monthly basis, the Member Development Steering Group will assess and evaluate Member Development. The Group will also review the strategy and update it, taking Member feedback, latest developments and best practice into account.

› 4. WLGA Member Development Charter

Elected members today face increasing challenges. Throughout Wales, authorities are striving to provide the best possible support for members to enable them to meet these challenges. This takes the form of skill and knowledge development, support facilities and support services. The WLGA has a long history of working with authorities to help them develop these activities. To provide structure to the national programme of support, the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development was developed collaboratively by the Association, members representing each of the political groups and member support officers from each authority.

The Charter aims to provide a broad framework for local planning, self-assessment, action and review together with networking and comparison amongst authorities and the sharing of good and innovative practice.

The WLGA Charter has a number of objectives:-

1. Being fully committed to developing Elected members in order to achieve the Council's aims and objectives;
2. Adopting a Member led strategic approach to Elected Member Development;
3. Seeing that learning and development is effective in building capacity (of Elected members in undertaking their roles and duties);
4. Addressing wider development matters to support Elected Members;

Commitment to the WLGA Member Development Charter was agreed at full Council in December 2013.

› 5. Contact Details

For further information please contact Paula Speed
in Democratic Services

› Appendix 1: Member Development Steering Group Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Group will oversee, monitor, review and evaluate Member Development at City of Cardiff Council.

Membership

The Member Development Steering Group will include a cross section of Councillors from the Democratic Services Committee.

The Officers:

County Clerk & Monitoring Officer
Interim Head of Democratic Services
Senior Member Support Officer
Additional officers will be approached to attend as necessary.

Meeting Frequency

The Steering Group will meet quarterly

Terms of Reference – Member Development Steering Group

1. To develop and review the Member Development Strategy at City of Cardiff Council.
2. To identify the development needs of Members of Cardiff Council.
3. To develop, monitor, evaluate and review the Annual Member Development Programme.
4. To promote improved community leadership through Member Development.
5. To provide direction and guidance to officers in respect of all Member Development issues and activities.
6. To communicate with Members of the Council on issues of Member Development.
7. To promote best practice in respect of Member Development amongst all Elected Members of the Council.

8. To encourage the highest level of participation and engagement by all Members in the Member Development Programme.

9. To lead and oversee City of Cardiff Council's commitment to the WLGA Member Development Charter with a view to achieving Charter Status.

› Appendix 2: Example Framework Pro forma for a Personal Development Review

Please complete this pro forma and bring it to the meeting, this form is confidential to you and the person who is conducting your review except for the final sheet which will be used by member support officers for your personal development plan and to prioritise activities for the Authority's training programme.

1. What are my current roles and responsibilities? (e.g. the council executive/cabinet portfolio, overview and scrutiny member, chair, member of a statutory committee such as planning, licensing etc. In the community, ward member/community leader)

**2. What specific tasks to I need to achieve this year?
What do I plan to do? By when?**

3. What do I need to know about and be able to do to undertake my role and deliver my plans? (Your role description, person specification and the member development framework/ questionnaire may help you here)

4. What aspects of my role am I confident in?

5. Where am I less confident?

6. What might prevent me from undertaking my role effectively? (consider any personal, organisational or political issues which might be a barrier to success)

7. What learning and development have I undertaken this year?

8. What have I learned and been able to achieve as a result of this learning and development?

9. What additional learning and development would be useful, use the table below.

Areas that I would like to develop are:	Preferred method of development (e.g. visits to other authorities, peer networking, practical workshops, e learning etc.)
Skills (e.g. meeting management, questioning techniques, media interviews,	
Knowledge (e.g. the code of conduct, equalities, the planning process, local policy etc.)	

My learning and development needs for this year (please discuss this section of your pro forma with your member support officer, it will be used to create development plans and training programmes)

Area for Development	How	Priority
<i>example How to Chair scrutiny meetings effectively</i>	<i>I`d like to observe meetings in other authorities A workshop on chairing skills would be handy I`d like to receive some written guidance for scrutiny chairs</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>example Understanding of the planning system to answer constituents enquiries</i>	<i>A workshop on all the planning basics would be useful A meeting with planning officers on specific issues raised by people in my community about planning permission</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>example Local Government Finance, how do I contribute to the budget setting process?</i>	<i>I`d like to have discussions with finance officers and some mentoring from Cabinet member for Finance and Resources as this is an area I`d like to move into.</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>example Training in the use of social media</i>	<i>A meeting with someone who can explain how to use Twitter safely to publicise what I do and encourage the public to contact me.</i>	<i>4</i>

My evaluation of the training I have already received

Training undertaken	What difference has this made to the way I work as a member
<i>example Council induction programme on the work of the council and who's who.</i>	<i>Has given me a good refresher of how the council operates which has enabled me to explain this to people attending my surgeries and know who the appropriate officers are to speak to. It also highlighted areas where I need further training.</i>
<i>example media skills training</i>	<i>Helped me represent the council more effectively at a radio interview last week</i>
<i>example attended the Leadership Academy</i>	<i>Helped me understand my own leadership style and how it differs from other I am now working more effectively with other Cabinet members I also had help on a personal leadership challenge.</i>