

From: Dylan Jeffrey, Chairman, Member Development Sub Committee
Ben Watts, General Counsel

To: Member Development Sub Committee – 10th December 2024

Subject: Personal Development Planning (PDP)

Status: Unrestricted

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Member Development Sub Committee requested that Personal Development Planning was further explored as part of the new Member Induction / Development planning for 2025.
- 1.2 As discussed previously, following consultation with a number of colleagues at other Kent District and Borough Councils, this process is not administered in the main due to lack of uptake and due to the resource requirement to effectively utilise such a system. A point that Members will need to consider if wishing to proceed with such a process.

2 Personal Development Planning (PDP)

- 2.1 If conducted and engaged with collectively, effective PDP can be beneficial to both the individual, organisational development planning and succession planning. A well developed document should be able to assist Members with varying levels of experiences and capabilities develop through their time with the County Council.
- 2.2 It is important that the individual engages with the process from beginning to end, with regular review periods but also have the wrap around support to enable the Member to meet their objectives and gain the learning and development that their reflections in the process identify.
- 2.3 Members will be aware that attempts at this process have been made before without a viable level of engagement, however previous surveying has shown that a third of Members would have been willing to undertake such a process. If this is replicated in the new Council, particularly if we see a number of Members potentially without previous councillor experience, such a process may provide some structure and feeling of inclusion.
- 2.4 The Local Government Association under their Local Leadership Framework for Councillors have developed a workshop pack for councils, included in Appendix 1. This document was produced to include suggestions, prompts and further resources to help Members think about the skills that are used as a councillor. The framework was developed with the following in mind:

- **Prospective councillors** –will give prospective councillors a good overview of the ways that councillors can make a difference and the skills that they might need when they get elected.
This will be of use when we circulate information in the pre-induction information. Furthermore, with our new Role Profiles could further enhance future 'Be a Councillor' planning for future elections and aid independent and political groups to prepare themselves/candidates appropriately for what the role entails.
- **New councillors** – will give new councillors a good starting point in their work as local leaders and help them to map out the things they might explore through induction and beyond
- **Experienced councillors** –should be a useful tool for experienced councillors when they are thinking about their further development
- **Executive members, chairs and councillors in other roles** –will also be useful to executive members, chairs and councillors in other roles as they think about their development – many skill sets are relevant across different leadership roles, for example, within a council or within a party.

2.5 The workbook also brings forth, and although contained within our Constitution, an emphasis on the seven principles of public life. The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and External Audit report have put a strong emphasis on Member roles and behaviours and with the introduction of such a companion document for Members could aid improvements.

2.6 The document, when shared digitally also contains useful links to Local Government Association resources to accompany the varying sections and will add further enhancement to the Member Development programme.

2.7 This document will also ensure that when a by-election is called a structured process is in place and will provide a consistent process for Members, a point that was raised by the Committee previously.

3. Using the Framework

3.1 The document makes references to how the organisation and Members can use such a document and it would be beneficial for the committee to provide comment on how they wish to proceed with such a document.

3.2 The current Personal Development Plan, attached as Appendix 2, agreed by the previous Member Development Working Group is attached as a starting point for discussion.

3.3 Committee may wish to provide a view on who should deliver the Personal Development Plan process with Members – this could be individual input, possibly a mentor, with a Group Leader or suitable officer.

4. Resourcing and Management of Personal Development Planning

4.1 Effective PDP will require input not only from the Member but from Group Leaders and organisational support to input to the Member Development forward plan. Consideration should be given to cost/benefit analysis in running such a programme and if progressed regular review of the process should be

undertaken by the Committee to ensure its effectiveness, particularly in light of the Best Value Duty, as well as officer resourcing.

Recommendation(s):

The Member Development Sub Committee is asked to:

- a) Discuss and comment on the report, including appendices.
 - b) Contribute to the development of an effective Personal Development Plan document and delivery method.
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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Local Leadership Framework for Councillors

Appendix 2 – Current Personal Development Plan

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