

From: Alex King – Deputy Leader  
Mary Cooper – Member Liaison Manager

To: County Council – 14 October 2010

Subject: South East Employers' Member Development Charter

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Details of requirements to maintain Charter Status

For Decision

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## **Introduction**

1. As you are all aware Kent County Council was awarded the South East Employers' (SEE) Member Development Charter on 22 September 2010 after 3 years' hard work ensuring that the training and development for Members is of the highest standard and fit for purpose in challenging times.

Kent County Council will keep the Charter Status for 3 years during which SEE will visit us after 18 months to ensure standards are being maintained, and the Council will be re-assessed at the end of the 3 year period.

## **Way Forward**

2. A full written report is awaited from SEE, setting out what they see as our strengths and areas for further development. In the meantime, informal feedback has been provided by SEE on specific areas where we still need to improve or can assist Members with their learning and development needs, and these are set out below:

- Introduce a cabinet/portfolio holder question time for all non executive members.
- Provide pre-election events to encourage a wider cross section of people to consider standing for Council.
- Develop a structured programme of development on an annual basis linked to the corporate and strategic priorities. This programme to be led by the Member Development Informal Member Group (IMG) and to be reflective of corporate priorities and the outcomes of the Personal Development Plan (PDP) process.
- A target of 70% uptake of PDPs should be targeted, with informal discussions between the Group Leaders and the Members to inform the PDP and development programme.
- Undertake development based around place to recognise district boundaries and to engage the District and Borough Councils, health and other key partner organisations.
- Maintain the Member Development budget so as to respond to the new priorities of decentralisation, localism and the Big Society.
- Provide all Members with the comprehensive skills and knowledge to be able to respond to the new local government agenda, e.g. facilitation, enabling, brokering skills and commissioning.

- Provide Members with the skills and support to respond to the personalisation agenda.
- Further embed the culture of development. This requires a reassertion of the importance of development from the political leadership of the council.
- Roll out the 360 degree Elected Member Skills Portal.

When these improvements are firmly in place it is hoped that the County Council will be in a position to apply for Charter Plus Status, which is a higher level award than the Charter.

### **3. Recommendation**

The Council is requested to support and agree to take forward the suggested areas for improvement and ask the Member Development IMG to prepare and implement a detailed action plan for further improvement once the formal Charter report is received from SEE.

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