

By: Leader of the Council
Leader of the Labour Group
Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

To: County Council – 11 December 2008

Subject: Member Development Policy

Introduction

1. Following the County Council meeting on 6 September 2007 we signed a commitment to the South East Employers Member Development Charter. It is hoped that the Charter will be achieved by April 2009 in time for the new County Council which will be elected in May 2009.

Informal Member Group: Member Development

2. (1) To take forward the preparation for the Member Development Charter the Selection Committee agreed to the establishment of an Informal Member Group. The Informal Member Group, Mrs P A V Stockell (Chairman), Mr R J A Parry, Ms A Harrison and Mrs T Dean, is overseeing the work being led by Ms C Ingleton, Learning and Development Manager and Mr P D Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager.

(2) An initial self assessment against the criteria for the Charter and the evidence the County Council already can draw on of the evidence identified has been considered by the Informal Member Group: Member Development. This self assessment is in effect the strategy to achieve accreditation for the Charter. The Informal Member Group: Member Development are Member Champions and have the role of keeping Members of their political group involved, engaged and committed to the process. The role of the 'Frontline Councillor' is key to the success of the County Council. As an initial step the Informal Member Group have prepared a Member Development Policy which has been considered by the Selection and Member Services Committee

(3) A copy of the draft Member Development Policy is attached as an appendix to this report. The County Council are invited to approve the Policy for incorporation in the County Council's Constitution.

Recommendation

3. The County Council are asked to approve the Member Development Policy for incorporation in the County Council's Constitution.

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**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT
POLICY STATEMENT**

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INTRODUCTION

This Policy Statement is a key part of our commitment to providing development opportunities for Elected Members to enable them to effectively fulfil their role/s, now and in the future.

To demonstrate this commitment we have signed up to the South East Charter for Elected Member Development with the intention of attaining the Charter by April 2009.

This document has been developed by the cross-party Informal Member Group on Member Development as part of our action plan to achieve the Charter.

PRINCIPLES/STANDARDS

The Council is committed to:

- Developing elected Members to assist them fulfil their responsibilities to the local community, provide clear leadership and contribute to the achievement of the Council's aims and objectives.
- Equality of opportunity and access to training and development for all Members.
- Performance assessment for Members through an annual review of activity and ongoing development needs analysis.
- Ensuring adequate resources are available to meet Members' knowledge, training and development requirements.
- Working in partnership with other local authorities in the development and delivery of training for Members where appropriate.
- Using varied and innovative methods of delivering training and development that make the best use of technology and meet the personal needs of Members.
- Defining general and specific mandatory training and development requirements relating to the role/s of Members.
- Evaluating the impact and added value of training and development activity at an individual and organisational level.

PURPOSE OF ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of elected Member Development is to ensure Members have the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to effectively undertake their role.

We will achieve this through a programme that:

- Develops Members' knowledge and awareness of local and national issues and legislation

- Develops Members' skills and behaviours across a range of areas including personal development; leadership, political and communication skills and ICT
- Provides opportunities to network with each other, other local authorities and partners
- Provides internal and external mentoring support.

INDUCTION

A comprehensive induction will be provided for all Members following County Councils elections and bi-elections. The programme will be developed in conjunction with the Informal Member Group on Member Development and include:

- Knowledge based learning
- Skill based learning
- Community issues including leadership, planning and public engagement
- Regulatory functions
- Scrutiny

Mentors will be provided to support all County Councillors who have been elected for the first time.

MANAGEMENT

Each party will nominate a Member to be the 'Member development' champion for the group and a Member of the Informal Member Group on Member Development. The Council will nominate officers as members of the IMG.

Reporting to the Selection and Member Services Committee the Informal Member Group on Member Development will have responsibility for approving the annual development programme and providing a steer for future requirements (see Appendix 1 for full Terms of Reference).

EVALUATION

All training and development events for members will be evaluated through individual feedback, achievement of planned outcomes and the overall contribution to the achievement of the council's aims and objectives.

Regular reports will be presented to the Informal Member Group on Member Development to enable the information to inform future planning of programmes and events. An annual report will be presented to County Council.

Members Training and Development Group

Terms of Reference

1. To champion and promote the development of Members
2. To regularly review the Member Training and Development Strategy to ensure its relevance.
3. To agree the Members training and development plan annually including induction programmes in appropriate years.
4. To monitor and evaluate the development programme for Members on an annual basis.
5. To support and encourage Members in working towards and maintaining the Charter for Member Development and Investors in People.
6. To report to the Council annually on progress of Member development.