

By: Gary Cooke, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services

To: Selection and Member Services Committee – 4 September 2013

Subject: Member Development

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Summary: This report informs the Committee of the mid term review by the South East Employers Organisation since the County Council was awarded the Member Development Charter Plus in September 2011. It invites the Committee to re-establish a Member Development Steering Group and recommend a refreshed Member Development Policy Statement to the County Council for adoption.

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## **1. Introduction**

The County Council was the first County Council in England to be awarded the Member Development Charter Plus for its commitment to Member Development in September 2011. This Charter is awarded for a three year period.

## **2. Member Development Charter Plus – Mid Term Review**

(1) The South East Employers (SEE) organisation undertook a mid term review on Thursday 8 August of the progress made by the County Council to the Charter Plus Standard. In addition to myself, the former Chairman of the Member Development Steering Group Mr Andrew Bowles and Paul Wickenden, Democratic Services Manager (Members) were interviewed.

(2) The interviewees drew attention to the very successful Member induction programme following the election, the creation of a Member area on KNet and the e induction programme. The Team spoke about an on-going Member Development programme reflecting the Transformation programme and the anticipated need to change the Member profile. They acknowledged the ongoing process of members participating in the Personal Development Plan an 360 degree profile processes

(3) The outcome of the mid term review was communicated to the County Council by SEE's Development Director on 9 August in the following terms:-

*"I am pleased to confirm that the Council continues to meet the standard of the Charter Plus and a full re- assessment will be required in September 2014 with a re-commitment due in April 2014.*

*Following the elections and the successful new member induction programme I would like to suggest the following actions:*

- *The Member Development Group (MDG) to schedule a series of meetings, agree terms of reference and determine its work programme*
- *The MDG to identify the key development priorities to support members to achieve the Transformation programme and a development programme to be put together to respond accordingly*
- *New role profiles to be developed to reflect the changing role of the councillor*
- *Personal Development Plans (PDPs) to be offered to all Members with a target of 70% take up and completion*
- *The MDG to consider the future approach to 360 degree feedback to support development.*

*Congratulations on your continuing progress.”*

### **3. Member Development Policy Statement and Member Development Steering Group**

(1) Attached as **Appendix 1** is a copy of the Member Development Policy Statement. This has been amended to reflect the way forward for the County Council in line with the recommendations from SEE. With four political Groups and two independent members it is important that there is a strong commitment to Member development. The Committee is invited to comment on the revised Member Development Policy Statement and recommend it to the County Council on 19 September 2013 for adoption.

(2) The Committee is also asked to consider the re-establishment of a Member Development Steering Group who will oversee the day to day development and operational activity periodically reporting progress to this Committee. The former Member Development Steering Group was chaired by Andrew Bowles as a Deputy Cabinet Member to the Cabinet Member which had the remit for Members’ Services. Other Members included the Leaders of the Liberal Democrat Group, the Leader of the Labour Group, the Chairman of this Committee, the independent member and a range of other members who were passionate about Member development. The establishment of a Steering Group is not subject to the proportionality rules.

(3) The Committee’s views are sought on the re-establishment of a Member Development Steering Group and its proposed membership.

### **4. Transformation Programme**

(1) As the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Members’ Services and Learning and Development the priority is to ensure that the ongoing member development activity is equipping us as elected members to support the communities we represent whilst delivering the Transformation Programme.

(2) The County Council will consider a paper on the Transformation Programme at its meeting on 19 September. I propose to bring a paper to the

next meeting of this committee to set out a programme of events and development opportunities for the elected members in response to the Transformation programme.

## **5. Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to:

- (a) note the outcome of the mid term review against the Member Development Charter Plus standard;
- (b) re-establish a cross party Member Development Steering Group;
- (c) consider and recommend the Member Development Policy Statement to the County Council for adoption; and
- (d) agree that a report on the events and Member development opportunities for members to respond to the challenges of the Transformation Programme be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee

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*Background Documents: none*

Appendix 1

**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.

The Council has attained the South East Charter Plus for Elected Member Development and is fully committed to the principles of the Charter.

The Member Development Steering Group is committed to working with elected Members and partners to enshrine the principles of the Member Development Charter Plus.

## **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.
- 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 and other organisations 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 Council elections and by-elections. The programme will be developed in conjunction with the Member Development Steering Group and include:

- Knowledge based learning
- Skill based learning
- E learning
- Community issues including leadership, planning and public engagement
- Regulatory functions
- Scrutiny
- Dedicated half day member briefings

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

## **MANAGEMENT**

Each political group will nominate Members to act as 'Member development' champions for the group and serve on the Member Development Steering Group. The Council will nominate officers as members of the Member Development Steering Group

Reporting to the Selection and Member Services Committee the Member Development Steering Group will have responsibility for approving the annual development programme and providing a steer for future requirements (see Annex 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.

The completion by Members of Personal Development Plans and the 360 degree feedback process will inform the preparation of the Member Development Programme and Briefing programmes.

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



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## **Member Development Steering 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 maintaining the Member Development Charter Plus
6. To report to the Council annually on progress of Member development.