

By: Gary Cooke, Cabinet Member for Corporate & Democratic Services  
To: County Council – 19 September 2013  
Subject: Member Development Policy Statement

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Summary: This report invites the County Council to adopt the Member Development Policy Statement.

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## **1. Introduction**

(1) 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) A mid term review of the County Council's performance against the Charter Plus standard was conducted last month and the South East Employers Organisation, the awarding authority, was happy that the County Council is continuing to meet the Charter Plus Standard.

(3) Underpinning the Charter is the Member Development Policy Statement and the commitment of the Leaders of the political groups and the two independent members to member development

## **2. Member Development Policy Statement**

(1) The Selection and Member Services Committee met on 4 September 2013 to consider the refreshed Member Development Policy Statement attached to this report as an appendix which they commend to the County Council for adoption.

(2) The Selection and Member Services Committee have agreed to re-constitute the Member Development Steering Group which will ensure that the principles and aspirations within the member Development Policy Statement is delivered.

(3) The Steering Group will also have the task of developing a programme of development opportunities to support elected Members in the "Facing the Challenge Programme.

## **3. Recommendation**

The County Council is recommended to adopt the Member Development Policy Statement attached to this report.

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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.

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.