

By: Eric Hotson, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services
John Lynch, Head of Democratic Services

To: Selection and Member Services Committee – 21 June 2017

Subject: Member Development

Summary: This report invites the Committee to re-constitute The Member Development Steering Group, approve the Member Development Policy and consider whether it should be recommended to the County Council for approval and note that assessment for Member Development Charter Plus status will take place on 28 September 2017.

1. Introduction

The County Council has a very good track record in supporting all Members and providing every opportunity for personal development in assisting the member to discharge their role as a councillor.

2. Member Development Policy

- (1) Attached as Appendix 1 is the Member Development Policy which was considered by the former Member Development Steering Group at its meeting on 20 September 2016.
- (2) The Committee is asked to approve the Policy and consider whether it should be recommended to the County Council for approval.

3. Member Development Steering Group

- (1) The establishment of a cross party Member Development Steering Group to advise the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services and this Committee on member development has served the Council well for a number of years.
- (2) It is therefore recommended that a cross party Member Development Steering Group is established comprising a group of Members drawn from all the political groups where Members have expressed or shown an interest in member development

4. Member Development Charter Plus – Re- accreditation

- (1) Prior to the election the former Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services approved the County Council seeking re-accreditation for the Member Development Charter Plus award. The County Council will be assessed for Charter Plus by an Assessment Team who will be here for one day on Thursday 28 September 2017. The Member Development Steering

Group for the former County Council has led on this process on behalf of the Council reporting periodically to this Committee.

- (2) If the assessment is successful the award of Member Development Charter Plus Statues will be for a three year period until September 2020

3. Member Development and Induction

- (1) The Committee will be pleased to note that the feedback from both new and returning Members of the County Council on the induction programme developed by this Committee following the election of the new County Council has been very positive.
- (2) The programme reflected the views of Members of the former County Council expressed in one to one discussions on their experience with regards to induction and member development when they first joined the County Council.
- (3) Members have been very engaged in the briefing and development opportunities made available to them in the first six weeks of this new Council and attendance at these events has been very good.

4. E Induction Programme and Member KNet Area

- (1) Prior to the election, the Member Development Steering Group also refreshed the e-induction programme for Members covering the core issues Members need to be aware of to perform their role.
- (2) This is available in the KNet Member which was also refreshed by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services following the advice of the Member Development Steering Group.

5. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- (a) Agree the Member Development Policy and determine whether it should be recommended to the County Council for approval;
- (b) Reconstitute the cross party Member Development Steering Group;
- (c) Note that the County Council will be re-assessed for the Member Development Charter Plus on Thursday 28 September 2017

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13 June 2017

Background Documents: None

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT
POLICY STATEMENT

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 essential 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
- The role of the elected Member as a corporate parent
- 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 informs 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.