

PAPER E

Purpose : For Decision

Committee: **FULL COUNCIL**

Date : **21 MARCH 2007**

Title : **ADOPTION OF ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT POLICY**
REPORT OF THE ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP

PURPOSE

1. To consider the adoption of an Elected Member Development Policy this sets out the agreed approach for all aspects of Elected Member Development. It will provide the basis upon which all decisions regarding investments in Member learning and development will be made and also makes explicit the guiding principles upon which such activities are to be delivered.

BACKGROUND

2. The Council's corporate plan sets out a challenging agenda for performance improvement so that it will succeed in becoming an excellent rated local authority. With this in mind there is a need to ensure that *all* elected Members are afforded appropriate access to professional learning and development opportunities that help the Council in our pursuit of excellence.
3. To help achieve this it is suggested that the Council secures accreditation against the nationally recognised Elected Member Development Charter, which sets out the standards of good practice in all aspects of member learning and development. This was commenced when on 26 April 2006 the Isle of Wight Council's Group Leaders and Chief Executive signed up to work towards achieving the South East Charter for Elected Member Development. A cross-party Elected Member Development Group was then established and has produced the suggested Elected Member Development Policy as attached at Appendix 1. The Members on the Elected Member Development Group are Councillors Adams, Gardiner, Miller, Pugh, Tuson & Wells.
4. Formal agreement of this policy by the Council will enable an application for formal accreditation by the South East Employers so as to achieve the "Charter Mark".

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

5. The cost of obtaining the 'Charter' mark is £1000 plus expenses, for the help and advice we have received from South East Employers. This has already been paid from the 2005 / 2006 budget. The cost of training and attendance at conferences for Members will be met from the agreed annual budget allocation.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6. None.

OPTIONS

7. The Council can:
- (i) Adopt the Elected Member Development Policy;
 - (ii) Not adopt the Elected Member Development Policy.

EVALUATION/RISK MANAGEMENT

8. If the Elected Member Development Policy is not adopted the Isle of Wight Council will be unable to achieve the South East Charter for Elected Member Development.
9. Adoption of the Policy, and then its implementation, will increase the development of Elected Members and ensure that they are fully equipped to deal with the various complexities of Council Business. Thus reducing any risks that might arise without such development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. THAT the Isle of Wight Council adopt the Elected Member Development Policy.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

South East Charter for Elected Member Development “Commitment Pack”.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix 1 - Elected Member Development Policy (Version 1.0)

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MEMBERS OF THE
ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP

APPENDIX 1



Elected Member Development Policy

AUTHORS: ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP

ISSUE DATE:

VERSION: 1.0

1. Introduction

This policy document sets out the agreed approach for all aspects of Elected Member Development. It provides the basis upon which all decisions regarding investments in learning and development will be made and also makes explicit the guiding principles upon which learning and development activities are to be delivered.

2. Statement of Intent

The Council's change management plan sets out a challenging agenda for performance improvement. We are confident that these far reaching actions will enable us to succeed in becoming an excellent rated local authority.

The investments we make in developing and supporting our workforce will be a critical element in achieving whole organisation change and it is recognised that it is equally as imperative to invest accordingly in our elected members and to support them in their roles as community leaders and representatives. With this in mind it is our expressed intention to ensure that *all* elected members are afforded appropriate access to professional learning and development opportunities that help us in our pursuit of excellence.

To help us achieve this, we aim to secure accreditation against the nationally recognised Elected Member Development Charter, which sets out the standards of good practice in all aspects member learning and development. This requires us to demonstrate that we:

- Take a strategic approach to member development by aligning Council priorities to all member development activities
- Engage in personal development planning to help identify and plan for professional development needs
- Provide a planned learning and development programme for members to access according to identified needs
- Take action to share and disseminate learning gained as widely as possible
- Evaluate all our investments in learning and development to make sure we achieve value for money, quality of experience and performance improvements.
- Have an inclusive approach to member development

The approved elected member development strategy provides the framework within which this can be achieved. The delivery of this strategy rests with the Member Development Champions Group.

3. Guiding Principles for Member Development

- All Elected Members will have access to appropriate opportunities to support their on-going professional development during the lifetime of their period of office.
- All Elected Members will be expected to participate in an annual review of their development needs and this will serve as the gateway to access available resources for learning and development. Members who do not hold a current personal development plan will not have automatic access to allocated funding.

- The annual cycle for learning and development will be as follows:
 - May of each year – completion of personal development reviews
 - July of each year – completion of training needs analysis
 - August of each year – completion of training plan
 - August of each year – annual review of learning to cabinet
 - November of each year – training calendar published
- It is the responsibility of all political group leaders to encourage and promote learning and development as a means to continuously increase their knowledge and skills as Elected Members, but it is the responsibility of individual elected members to make their learning and development needs known by participating in the preparation of annual personal development plans and to attend training when it is arranged for them.

4. **Priorities for Learning & Development Investments**

- In order to support Members effectively in their role as community leaders, financial sponsorship will be awarded to 2 members each year for participation in the national Leadership Academy programme. Applications to the programme will be considered and prioritised according to position held and identified personal development needs. Priority places will be allocated as follows:
 - Cabinet Members
 - Cabinet Secretaries
 - Policy Commissioners
 - Potential future leaders, identified through the PDP process and approved by the Group Leader.
- To support the on-going development of strategic professional and political leadership there will be a minimum of two cabinet/Director Away Days to be provided each year. The aim of these activities will be to foster closer working relationships, support strategic planning and determining future strategic direction.
- Specific development needs arising from agreed personal development plans will be used to prepare an annual learning and development plan. The Elected Member Development Group will make recommendations as to the allocation of available resources according to agreed priority development needs using the formula detailed below:
 - Priority 1 – Those development needs that support the achievement of Council priorities
 - Priority 2 – Those development needs that support specific political leadership challenges
- Each elected member will have access to a personal development allowance to allow flexibility to respond to their specific development needs through participation in conferences, external networks and other learning and development activities. To receive such an allowance individual elected members will be required to have a current personal development plan. The total conference budget, minus the cost of agreed annual conferences, will be divided equally by all 48 Members and multiplied by the number of Members in each political group. The allocation of funds will be agreed by each Group Leader.

- There are a number of annual conferences that are recognised as essential to maintaining professional networks and ensuring that the Council is up to date with current and future developments. Financial sponsorship is therefore made available for no more than 4 Members, in consultation with the Leader and/or Cabinet Member, to an agreed set of annual conferences as follows:
 - LGA Annual Conference
 - CIPFA Conference
 - Fire Service Conference
 - Children's Services Conference
 - Adult Services Conference
 - Housing Conference
- Authorisation for attendance at other conferences / workshops will rest with the Group Leaders for approval. In the case of Group Leaders, approval will rest with the Elected Member Development Group.

5. Learning Support

There is a dedicated member support officer who is responsible for the co-ordination of all aspects of member learning and development. Responsibilities include:

- Producing an annual learning and development plan
- Co-ordinating and managing application processes for Members to access learning and development activities
- Co-ordinating the personal development planning process for Members each year, making sure that every Member has the opportunity for a development review meeting
- Monitoring the Member development budget and approving expenditure
- Keeping records of attendance on learning and development activities and making sure these are entered onto the corporate database
- Preparing an annual review of learning and development that has taken place and undertaking the evaluation necessary to demonstrate the effectiveness of all investments

Contact Details for the Member Development Support Officer are as follows:

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