



GA.27 11/12
Governance and Audit Committee
19 December 2011

Subject: Member Development Plan

Report by:

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Purpose / Summary:

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) That Members review the draft Member Development Plan and the progress to date and make appropriate suggestions for improvement**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None directly resulting from this report

Financial : None directly resulting from this report

Staffing : None directly resulting from this report

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

*NB: A full impact assessment **HAS TO BE** attached if the report relates to any new or revised policy or revision to service delivery/introduction of new services.*

Risk Assessment : Failure to deliver on the member development plan will have an adverse impact on the quality decisions and strategy of the Council

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities : None directly resulting from this report

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is clear that in order to meet the challenges currently presented to Local Government and in particular West Lindsey District Council all officers and members need to have the right skills and knowledge to carry out their duties. In order to achieve this West Lindsey District Council is developing an Organisational Development Plan.
- 1.2 As part of the Organisational Development Plan it is clear that development is required for members and therefore work has started on a Member Development plan to help members to meet the challenges. A draft of the plan is attached at appendix 1

2. Development of the plan

- 2.1 The plan has been developed to take into account the priorities of the council as agreed in the Corporate Plan and with the support of the members of the Member Forum.

At the member forum on 4th October a workshop took place and members considered their roles and the training and development required in order to carry them out. This was a very productive meeting and it is anticipated that these issues will be considered in more detail at future Member Forum events.

Attendance at the Member forum is available to all members. In order to make progress it is helpful for a good cross section of members with different levels of experience and from different political groups to participate in the debates

3. Areas for Development

There is a large range of potential areas for development. The plan breaks these down into 3 main areas.

- **Corporate Training Needs**
- **Role of Members**
- **Specialised Role Needs and Related Factors**

Each of these areas are dealt with in more detail in the plan

4. Identifying areas for development

The needs of each member will differ depending on their role, experience and existing skills. It is therefore important for individual members to engage with process of creating a Personal Development Plan and take personal responsibility for self improvement.

It recognised that this kind of self assessment will be new for some members and therefore support will be given by officers to ensure that the member can take full advantage the opportunities for development

5. Meeting the development needs

The Member Development plan lists a number of methods for meeting development needs. Which methods used will depend on the Member and their preferred learning style as well as the area for development. A number of methods are detailed in the plan but this is by no mean exhaustive and more work will be carried out on the potential methods

Seminars will continue to be part of the package but they will not be the only method used.

6. Ongoing Commitment

The new 4 year terms of West Lindsey councillors will give the opportunity for long term development of all members. It will also provide the opportunity to get accreditation for the development program and therefore it is planned that the Council should apply for Member Charter Status.

Member Development Plan

(DRAFT)

Member Training and Development Plan

Introduction from the Leader and the Chief Executive

Everyone needs to have the right training to do their job if they are going to be able to perform their duties efficiently. In the demanding and fast changing environment of local government, councillors more than ever before, have a responsibility to make sure they get the training they need to serve their constituents.

It doesn't matter whether you are :

- a newly elected councillor
- a long-serving Member of the council or
- in a new position on a regulatory committee such as Licensing or Planning.

Whatever your role within the council, you need to be trained and developed to help you do the things you need to do more efficiently and more effectively.

This Member Development Plan has been put together

- to ensure that you have the opportunities to develop and
- to provide you with the professional skills you need to carry out your role as an elected representative.

You owe it to yourself, the people you represent and the council itself to take advantage of the Member Development Plan. The plan will ensure that you are fully equipped to serve the needs of the wider community of West Lindsey. All members are asked to sign a declaration of commitment to Member Training and Development. We hope that after making this commitment, you will also take the opportunity to attend the sessions on offer.

Councillor Burt Keimach
Leader of the Council

Manjeet Gill
Chief Executive

West Lindsey District Council Statement of Intent

In 2011, West Lindsey District Council took the decision to sign up to the East Midlands Regional Councillor Development Programme. The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) and the Leader of the Council signed the following declaration of commitment. This forms the foundation of West Lindsey District Council's Member Training and Development Programme.

Declaration of Commitment to Member Training and Development

West Lindsey District Council is intent on meeting the needs of its community. We are committed to the training and development of our elected Members and understand the need for continuous improvement.

We will fully support our Members and help them to play their vital role in modernising local government.

By signing up to the principles of the Charter, We commit the authority to work towards expressing our commitment in practice by implementing the six points of the Charter.

- having a statement of intent
- ensuring that all Members are made aware of training and development opportunities
- having a process to identify individual development needs, which involves Members
- having an officer allocated to assist Members and groups in identifying needs and providing information on resources
- having a plan to meet the training and development needs of elected Members
- implementing the plan.

Councillor Burt Keimach
Leader of the Council

Manjeet Gill
Chief Executive

Members Declaration of Commitment

A Commitment

I commit to the Member Training and Development Programme at West Lindsey District Council. I believe that training and personal development will not only allow me to contribute effectively to the council's Corporate Plan, but it will also provide me with professional skills to carry out my role as an elected representative.

Signed :

Date :

1. Introduction

West Lindsey District Council's Elected Members seek to serve the communities they represent and the District as a whole to the best of their ability. To do this, the Council has committed itself to ensuring that all Members are supported in developing the necessary skills required to perform their duties effectively.

It is the role of elected members to develop relevant policies, to represent the needs and interests of the whole district and the communities and to be an advocate for their community.

Members have a responsibility to contribute towards the good governance of the area and to encourage public participation and involvement in decision making.

It is also the duty of members to respond to constituency local queries impartially and fairly, to be involved in decision making and maintain the highest standards of ethics and conduct.

To support this aim this plan has been developed and sets out the vision and aims of Member Development, the values to which the Council will adhere and how development will be identified, delivered and managed. It is consistent with the Council's overall vision as set out in the Corporate Plan.

This represents a considerable commitment by the Council. However, the wide range of responsibilities faced by Elected Members require this level of commitment and it is essential if we are to achieve the future priorities within the Corporate Plan.

Corporate Plan Five Key Themes:

- (a) an accessible and connected District
- (b) a green district where people want to work, live and visit
- (c) a prosperous and enterprising District
- (d) active, health and safe citizens and communities
- (e) the Entrepreneurial Council.

2. Context

People who are elected as Members will have their own political views and core social values. They will receive political leadership and support from their political group.

This Plan is about the dedicated support that will be given to Elected Members to help them fulfil their roles and contribute to the success and objectives of the Council.

This Plan also recognises that Elected Members are volunteers. It strives to help them seek a balance between their demanding roles inside and outside the Council.

3. Vision, Values and Behaviours

The vision for the Member Development Plan is that all Elected Members have all the necessary skills to perform effectively in their current or potential future roles for the council and to contribute to the delivery of the Five Themes of the Corporate Plan.

- an accessible and connected District
- a green District where people want to work, live and invest
- a prosperous and enterprising District
- active, health and safe citizens and communities
- the Entrepreneurial Council.

To help achieve this vision the key values that underpin the strategy are :
(following the staff/member workshops that took place last year)

We Focus on Communities and Customers First, we will:

- listen, understand and respond to all our community and customer needs
- deliver community and customer needs
- help communities and customers to help themselves
- have effective networks with our partners and communities
- supply information and deliver services that customers can rely on and trust.

We are Creative and Business Smart, we will

- know what our priorities are
- give solutions that improve income or streamline overhead costs
- understand our finances and costs
- encourage brave ideas, seize opportunities and take managed risks
- work efficiently and concentrate on the things that make a difference
- see mistakes as opportunities to learn, develop and grow

We are a “Can-do” Council, we will

- think positively
- be adaptable and flexible in all that we do
- understand and evaluate the risks
- sort out and own problems and solutions
- embrace new ideas, put them into action and make changes
- embrace new technology to help us with new ways of working

We are One Council, we will

- get everyone involved in making informed decisions
- respect each other
- work together for the benefit of all
- value and make use of the skills of all staff, partners, councillors and the community
- be open, honest and trust each other
- all take responsibility in managing health and safety risks

We Communicate Effectively, we will

- aim to use language that is understood by everyone
- use consistent messages
- check that people understand the messages
- actively seek constructive comments and feedback from the community, partners, councillors and staff
- provide clear and constructive feedback.

4. Aims

The plan has the following aims:

1. To create a clear framework for the development of Elected Members based upon their individual needs and the needs of the Council as a whole.
2. To ensure all Elected Members have the skills that are at a level that is at least suitable for their roles and responsibilities.
3. To ensure Elected Members have the skills and knowledge necessary to lead the delivery of high quality public services for West Lindsey District Council through the new ways of working.
4. To ensure that Elected Members feel confident to undertake their roles.

5. To ensure that all Elected Members are fully aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities, legal requirements and matters of probity.
6. To support the continued development of Elected Members and help prepare them for roles that they may fulfil in the future.
7. To ensure a consistency of approach to Elected Member development.

5. Overall Management and Monitoring of the Plan

Focussed and relevant activities must be undertaken and managed if this plan is to be successful. To do this it is vital that Elected Members are an integral part of the management of the development programme. To ensure this happens the Member Forum will advise the Council on all matters of Member development. The Member Forum will be supported at officer level by Elaine Pepper, Human Resources Manager and Alan Robinson, Head of Service for Democratic Services.

The forum will have the following responsibilities:

1. Regularly review the plan to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of Elected Members and the Council.
2. Approve the methods of identifying and assessing Elected Member development needs.
3. Identify factors either within or outside the Council that may create training needs such as changes to service delivery mechanisms or legislation.
4. Identify the appropriate training required as relevant to the various roles undertaken by Elected Members.
5. Identify which Elected Members may have the skills and knowledge to act in a role as trainer or facilitator for other Elected Members and provide the support required to undertake this role.
6. Recommend suitable and cost-effective development programmes.
7. Monitor how training and development is being carried out, and its effectiveness.
8. Monitor Elected Member involvement in the training and development provided and take relevant action, as required, to improve attendance.

9. Monitor the use of and resources required to support the Elected Member development plan including identifying sources of external funding and potential for partnership working/shared training delivery.
10. Produce annual report on member development for Governance and Audit Committee.

6. How Member development needs will be identified

Member development needs will be identified through four main functions:

a. Corporate Training Needs

The Council will monitor its objectives, performance and external environment to identify factors that may give rise to development requirements. Such factors may include changes in corporate priorities, new legal requirements, developments in local government services, changes in local government structures or funding. e.g. localism, local council tax, comprehensive spending reviews.

b. Role of Members

It is vital that development activities and strategy relate directly to the role that Members have to fulfil. To ensure this is the case the council has established the Role Descriptions for all Elected Members. The Member Forum will ensure that there is a programme of development that ensures all Elected members have the skills to fulfil the role outlined. Each newly Elected Member will be provided with an induction relevant to their role.

c. Specialised Role Needs and Related Factors

Many Members will have additional roles that they currently fulfil or are likely to fulfil in the future. Many of these roles require specialist focused training.

These roles include:

- Supporting new Members
- Chair Meetings
- Leadership, for example Leader of the Council, or Leader of a Political Group
- Statutory Board training – Appeals, Licensing, Planning, Code of Conduct

- Scrutiny and Review (Challenge and Improve Committee)
- Audit and Governance
- Selection Panels

Some of these specialised additional roles and responsibilities will define any mandatory training requirements.

d. Identifying personal development needs

The use of a, b and c will define generic training needs linked to corporate aims or Elected Member roles. However, for a truly effective training needs analysis, resulting in suitable development needs for individuals be identified and provided, an element of analysis of self is required. Elected Members are strongly encouraged to take part and define their Personal Development Plans – PDPs – by:

1. undertaking a self analysis mapped against the Member Development Framework provided.
2. Considering other relevant skills – presentation skills, effective reading, public speaking and so on.
3. Discussing outcomes with the Head of Service for Democratic Services/Human Resources Manager or nominated representatives.
4. Undertake learning and reviewing impact, updating PDPs as required.

Based on the combined analysis outlined above an overall Member Development Programme will be put together each year to focus on the priority skills identified. If and when changes to Member functions come about, such as new Local Government Legislation, they will be included in the Member Development Programme.

7. How Member development needs will be met

Firstly and most importantly if we can facilitate training jointly with officers, partners or other authorities we will. In order to support the diverse development needs of Elected Members and learning styles and range of individual circumstances, development needs will be met from a range of options. In some cases these can be delivered through the Council's own internal resources. Where necessary, however, the council will identify and buy in specialist providers with proven track records of effectiveness and value for money. If enough members need the training it will be facilitated at West Lindsey District Council premises.

Potential development delivery methods may include:

- Training courses
- Informal in house briefings and workshops
- External conference and seminars
- Written learning materials
- Peer mentors
- E-learning packages
- Visits to other councils or relevant partners
- Shadowing opportunities
- Sharing of knowledge amongst other Elected Members
- Research or preparation for speech delivery or scrutiny for example, with potentially preparation of case studies for others to benefit from.

Elected Members will be encouraged to be involved in the development of fellow Members where appropriate by leading workshops, disseminating expert knowledge and offering mentoring. The delivery of these activities will also be considered as contributing towards Member's own continued professional development and can be a method of achieving items on their personal development Plan.

8. Resources

Each year the Council will identify the resources that can be devoted to Elected Member Development. These will be set out clearly in a statement to the Member Forum. These resources will include:

- financial budget and any other support available
- Member support staff within the Democratic Services/HR Teams
- Places available/sponsored through external funding on specific programmes (for example Leadership Academy)
- Relevant opportunities for learning through seminars, conferences or visits hosted by partners.

9. Ongoing Commitment

It is the Council's intention to commit to achieving Member Charter Status. This strategy has been developed with the longer term development of Elected Members in mind, and will be subject to regular review linked to the accreditation of Member Charter Status.

