

## **POLICY FOR MEMBERS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

### **1. Background**

The Member Development Panel agreed that following the all-out elections of 2004, all Members would be asked to undertake an interview to assess their training and development needs.

The model adopted was one developed by Syniad (IDeA in Wales) and North West Employers Organisation. (see Appendices A & B)

### **2. Member Development Framework**

The first part of the model comprises a **Member Development Framework** which broadly outlined the skills and knowledge required by Councillors to perform their different roles:

- **Role Description** - this describes the different roles or areas of individual responsibility that a Councillor might have. Section A refers to the period after selection and before election. Sections B to H to the activities that all members will undertake. Sections H to N refer to specific roles such as overview and scrutiny or member of the executive.
- **Knowledge Required** - this describes the information that Councillors would need to know or understand to carry out the role.
- **Role Skills** - this refers to the set of skills associated with the role description.
- **The Effective Member Is Able to** - gives examples of how a member might demonstrate effective performance.
- **Possible Method of Acquisition** - suggests how the new skills or knowledge might be developed, ranging from guided reading, through training, to receiving coaching or mentoring.
- **Time Scale** - indicates the level of urgency for development, such as on induction, within the first year, or when the individual member expresses a need.

The skills and knowledge are then developed through 13 different areas:

#### **a. General**

- As a candidate
- As a new member
- All members
- As a ward representative
- As a party representative
- As a decision maker
- Policy & strategy
- Community network

#### **b. Specific Roles**

- Full council role
- Scrutiny member
- As a Chair

- As a member of a statutory committee
- Executive member
- Leaders

### **3. Personal Development Plan**

The second part of the model comprises a confidential **Elected Member Personal Development Plan**. This is a form which the Member completes with the Member Development Officer (or another officer) and is used to assess the competencies which members already have and those which may require further development. Members also give information about prior learning, whether formal or informal and their future plans for what they hope to achieve during their term of office.

From this information development activities are identified which need to be undertaken in order to support the Member in his/her role. These form the basis for the plan of development and training for the member

The plan is then signed by the Member and the officer to acknowledge that this has been an agreed process and outcome. A copy of the plan will be given to the Member to keep in their own personal development file. A copy will also be kept by the Member development Officer who will use it to feed into the member development plans for the year.

The PDPs retained by the Member Development Officer will not be available to view by any other Member of the council except with the agreement of the owner of the PDP.

### **3. Frequency of Review**

It is important that the PDPs are seen as living documents and not something to be achieved and then put aside. For this reason the following timetable will be followed:

- a. All newly elected members will be offered a personal development interview within one month of election – this will apply to those who are re-elected as well as those elected for the first time.
- b. All members taking on a new role eg chair of a scrutiny panel, cabinet portfolio etc will be offered a personal development interview to look at any new development needs which may have arisen from the new responsibilities undertaken.
- c. Each year the Member Development Officer will look through all the PDPs to check whether any need to be refreshed due to changing priorities or to goals having been achieved. Any PDP which appears to be out of date will indicate that a personal development interview should be offered.