



## **Local Government Yorkshire and Humber Regional Member Development Project October 2009 to March 2011**

### **Key Achievements**

#### **Introduction:**

The Regional Member Development project has been running for almost 18 months. The aim of this report is to provide a snap shot of key achievements to date together with details of the final programme of events due to commence in May through until June/July 2011.

#### **Summary:**

LGYH secured RIEP funding to run a 12 month programme of activities to support the development of councillors at a regional level, to assist Councils to achieve Charter and Charter Plus standard, to support the scrutiny function in councils and to support member development officers in their roles.

The project received additional funding to further enhance member development activity across the Yorkshire & Humber Authorities up to the end of March 2011, with agreement to roll out some of the events into the summer of 2011 in order to support new councillors during their first term in office.

#### **Background:**

We have built on the support that LGYH previously offered to councils in providing good opportunities for councillors to develop their knowledge and skills. We have continued to help to strengthening the role of councillors and develop the network of officers, particularly in the current climate where demands placed on and expectations of councillors have never been greater.

It was important that we focused on activities and events that helped to improve good political and managerial leadership. A cohesive, co-ordinated, innovative and structured approach to supporting councillors and members of the Police Authorities, Fire and Rescue Authorities and other joint authorities (including independent members). Our approach was to build capacity and support sustainable improvements by underpinning councillors' abilities to carry out the wide range of duties demanded of the role.

## **Elected Member Development**

- **Be a Councillor Campaign:** Successful delivery of Yorkshire & Humber 'Be a Councillor Campaign' widening the Councillor base and engaging more effectively with young people. Better links to the national website.
- **Member Induction Programme:** West Yorkshire shared induction programme was piloted May to June 2010 with demonstrable efficiencies achieved and a further joint programme being planned for 2011.
- Produced a comprehensive Officers Guide to Induction and shared across the region.
- **Accredited Councillor Qualification:** Supported 10 Councillor's from across the region to complete ILM level 3 in Leadership & Management for new Elected Members.
- Supported 19 Councilors' from across the region to complete the LGID Leadership Academy. Delegates completed positive evaluations and detailed the impact on their role.
- **Member Website:** Commissioned and developing an on line website - designed to be a complete resource for a Councillor's journey, from "So you want to be a Councillor?" to the transferable skills of "Life after being a councillor". Website to go live mid May 2011
- **Joint Regional Programme of events:** A broad range of events have been delivered with Authorities hosting sessions with the aim of reaching the widest participants from across the region – the following topics been delivered to date:
  - a) Unlocking your Spending Potential – Responding to the Spending Review.
  - b) Shared Services – Working Together for Collaborative Gain
  - c) Social Media – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Councillor
  - d) Persuading and Influencing People
  - e) Effective Casework
- **Regional Induction Programme May to July 2011**
  - a) Chairing Skills for Scrutiny
  - b) Making a Difference in Scrutiny
  - c) Introduction to Planning
  - d) Introduction to Licensing
  - e) Introduction to Finance
  - f) Regional Induction Event - Sub regional issues – LEPS – Big Society – Localism Bill etc
  - g) Scrutiny Conference
  - h) Casework & Safeguarding

- i) Media Training
- j) Localism event
- k) Speaking in the Chamber
- l) The role of the Civic Head & Team

### **Scrutiny Support**

- **Member Scrutiny Network:** Rotherham council on behalf of LGYH has facilitated the setting up of a member scrutiny network. Terms of reference have been developed and two network meetings have taken place. A Scrutiny conference is being held in Rotherham in June 2011 looking at self-regulation and the changing role of scrutiny.

### **Organisational Development**

- Charter/Charter Plus: LGYH has provided training for 11 councillors and 11 officers to become assessors for the Charter and Charter Plus. This will provide sustainability for the framework in the future as well as providing a development opportunity and sharing of best practice for councillors and officers.
- LGYH has provided funding for 14 authorities to go for re-assessment of the Charter, of these, 3 have achieved Charter Plus status. Further funding has been provided to York who achieved Charter status for the first time in September 2010.

Police & Fire Authorities and Districts have been given dedicated support to encourage them on their journey towards achieving the Charter.

### **Member Development Officer Support**

- **Northern Member Development Officer Conference:** This was held in York in October 2010 in partnership with North East and North West Regional Employers Organisation, 63 delegates attended what was a very successful and informative day. Excellent presentations on topics such as measuring impact and outcomes of member development, sharing toolkits, good practice and case studies. Evidence of informal peer mentoring and active networking took place. A further MDO conference is being planned for October 2011.
- **Member Development Network:** Meetings have been held quarterly and well attended, they have been the source of productive ideas, needs analysis, collaborative approaches to programme planning and have ensured effective engagement in relation to determining the regional timetable of events.
- An accredited Train the Trainer/Coaching course has been commissioned for Member Development Offices to commence mid March through until June 2011. This will enable officers to deliver support, training and coaching for councillors in house – a more sustainable option into the future.

### **Member Development into the future:**

- The overall aim of this project was to embed member development within local authorities and to offer a sustainable approach to continued commitment. The achievements outlined in this document demonstrate that a broad programme of activities and initiatives have been delivered successfully with positive outcomes as evidenced through evaluations and feedback.. LGYH co-ordinated these events in consultation with Member Development Officers from across the region and was designed to be relevant and timely in relation to the changing circumstances around government spending and changes in national policy, legislation, and local issues.
- Member Development Officers have had the opportunity to develop their own skills through direct support and peer mentoring in order to be able to deliver training for Councillors in-house, providing a much more sustainable option for authorities to continue to provide this valuable service into the future.