

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:-	Members' Training & Development Panel
2.	Date:-	Thursday 15th December 2011
3.	Title:-	Revised Member Development Strategy 2011
4.	Directorate:-	Resources

5. Summary

The Member Development strategy has been reviewed and updated to reflect the current priorities and direction of the Council.

6. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- **Agree the revised Member Development Strategy**
- **Agree whether it is appropriate to set the suggested performance targets relating to Member development.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Updating

The Member Development Strategy (appendix) has been refreshed to reflect the current priorities of the Council and changing government agendas. In particular, the Council Vision and priority outcomes have been updated, together with the business values.

The core programme has been updated to reflect the various roles of Members and the challenges presented in terms of Member skills and knowledge. Development may be provided by a range of means, including local and regional/sub-region provision.

7.2 Targets

The Strategy provides for six monthly review of training programmes by the panel, and it proposed that the panel review attendance and feed back from events in both February and July.

Whilst the Strategy provides for Members to complete their PDPs, in order to prioritise development needs, it currently does not include a target and timeframe in which PDPs should be completed. Members are asked to consider whether it is appropriate to set a target for the proportion of PDPs completed. Where other councils have set a target for this, 70% is the usual proportion and there is a requirement to complete the PDP on an annual basis. (The target for employee PDR completion is 90%).

Members are also asked whether it would be appropriate to set a target for a minimum level of annual development hours for each Elected Member. Other Councils have set targets ranging from 10 hours to 30 hours. The target for employees is 3 days (21 hours for a full time worker). It should be noted that “development” can be delivered in a number of ways, such as training events, conferences, coaching, shadowing etc.

8. Finance

Development provision outlined in the Strategy is provided by a range of means, some of which have attracted regional funding, to enable no-cost provision (other than travel costs). It is unlikely that such funding will be available in the future. Member development is subject to the panels’ approval of spend from the dedicated Member development budget.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Continued provision of development opportunities at the level recently experienced is unlikely to be sustainable going forward, as regional funding

will cease with effect from March 2012. Councils in the region will endeavour to maintain a range of opportunities for Members by working together and sharing provision.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Development of Members enables them to carry out their respective roles and help keep Members updated on national and local policy issues.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix – Member Development Strategy 2011.

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Member Development Strategy 2011

1. Profile of the Council

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council is a Labour controlled Council. It has 63 Councillors, comprising 54 Labour Members, 7 Conservative, 1 Independent and 1 BNP. The Council political management structure is that of a Strong Leader with Cabinet. There are four overview and scrutiny select commissions, with an overarching Management Board. There are also 7 area assemblies which operate at a local level.

2. Why have a Member Development Strategy?

People are key to the Council achieving improvement in its services and being representative of their communities. It is essential that we have the **right people**, with the **right skills** in the **right place** at the **right time** to maintain and improve existing and future services. This needs to be addressed across all of the Council, including Members. The Member Development Strategy aims to ensure members are properly supported and have the appropriate knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.

3. Priorities

Rotherham Council is committed to continuous improvement as a commissioner and provider of services to local people, and as an employer. It recognises that people are its' biggest and most valuable asset and are key to achieving the vision and priorities in the Corporate Plan 2010.

Our Vision for Rotherham is:

“Rotherham is a prosperous place and Rotherham people have choices and opportunities to improve the quality of their lives. Rotherham communities are safe, clean, and green and everyone can enjoy a healthy and active life.”

The most important things that we do are:

- Making sure no community is left behind
- Providing quality education; ensuring people have opportunities to improve skills, learn and get a job
- Ensuring care and protection are available for those people who need it most
- Helping to create safe and healthy communities
- Improving the environment

Additionally, through our business values (The Way We Do Business) the Council will ensure that its resources (including the workforce) are utilised to best effect by:

- Talking and listening to all our customers and treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Supporting and enabling our communities to help themselves, whilst meeting the needs of the most vulnerable
- Getting it right first time, reducing bureaucracy and getting better value for money

- Working with partners to ensure people get the services and support they need as early as possible
- Having the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time.

This is undoubtedly a challenging time for the public sector and business in general. The climate within which we work, with more limited resources, means that inevitably the workforce has to adapt to new ways of working with less resources. Decisions are required about reductions in services, commissioning of services etc.

Government policy changes will also drive changes to the way we work, e.g. Big Society, Localism, management of place, Work Programme and welfare reform, public health and changing health management arrangements, personalisation & choice, skills agenda and development of future business skills, transparency of spending (including pay), reduction in inspections and self-management of performance.

The results of this challenge have provided expectations that Elected Members will:

- Connect more effectively with community advocates, provide a steer for them and represent community needs within the Council and with partner service providers, by setting local action plans and ensuring delivery;
- Set policies, targets and outcomes within the Council that meet community needs and challenge results and progress through both Cabinet and scrutiny functions;
- Perform regulatory functions which ensure that community needs and aspirations are both met and protected;
- Work with a full range of partners to secure positive outcomes for the area and community and challenge performance.
- Undertake broader governance roles in respect of the health of the Borough.

The Member Development Strategy provides for Members of the Council to be equipped with the skills and experience to meet these challenges and secure an excellent performing Council for the benefit of Rotherham as a whole.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Elected Members

All Elected Members are responsible for helping to identify their own development needs and are encouraged to take part in the Personal Development Planning Process.

The Leader of the Council is the nominated Member Development Champion and Chair of the Member Development Training Panel.

4.2 Officers

The importance of Member Development is recognised in the Council through the provision of dedicated Officers within the Commissioning, Policy and Partnerships team, supported by colleagues within Strategic Human Resources.

4.3 Member Development Training Panel

The purpose of the Member Development Training Panel is to provide a cross party Group of Elected Members, who, supported by relevant officers, will formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate Member Development for the Council.

4.4 The Council

The Council is responsible for ensuring adequate resources are available to ensure an effective training and development programme can be delivered, as well as offering practical support and encouragement to all Elected Members.

5. THE PROGRAMME

5.1 Core Development Programme

The Elected Member Development Programme recognises the different roles of Members and the needs that arise with changes at a national, regional, sub regional and local level.

The programme will be based on local priorities as identified in the Council's corporate plan and Members individual skills needs identified in the personal development planning process.

The programme will incorporate a blended approach to Member Development, using a variety of methods of delivery, including e-learning. This will suit the needs of different learners, as well as make learning more accessible to Members.

Based on a review of learning needs, the programme will comprise:

Need	Key areas	Learning methods
ROLE SPECIFIC		
Ward	Case work Understanding how the Council works Emergency Planning Health and Safety E-case work Chairing meetings The role of Councillors as corporate parents Ethical frameworks	Short awareness sessions
Portfolio	Leadership Finance and budgets Understanding area	Formal management and leadership courses
Overview and Scrutiny Select commissions	Chairing meetings Effective questioning Understanding agendas Personalisation Localism Finance Health reforms Performance management and self regulation	Training sessions (including regional workshops). Coaching and mentoring seminars.
Regulatory	Understanding regulation and application Licensing Planning Standards Audit Committee	Advanced workshops.
Partnership	Area assemblies Representation at other Bodies Working in the community	Partnership working/networking Briefings Visits to local groups Tour of Borough

Need	Key areas	Learning methods
ICT and Soft Skills		
E-agenda	Regular contact with the public New forms of media and electronic communications Utilisation of all forms of technology Access to wide audience Accessible to public Prompt response	Workshops on using ICT – basic word processing, e-mail, use of the Internet E-learning eCasework Member’s websites Member’s intranet page Webcasts Targeted resource sites eg: MORE
Individual needs	Work closely with community groups, representatives and agencies, liaise with Members Participate in those decisions and activities reserved to the full Council Champion interests of the local community Raise issues of concern to residents through the scrutiny process.	Personal skills training – assertiveness, communication, persuading, negotiation Speaking in public Coaching / Mentoring

5.2 Induction

A comprehensive induction programme for newly Elected Members is delivered following each local election. The aim of the induction programme is to help new Members familiarise themselves with the authority and their new role and covers three main areas:

- *Getting to know the Council*
- *Getting to know your Area*
- *Getting to know your Role*

The Member Development Training Panel has an input into the content and delivery of the induction programme to ensure that it meets the needs of newly Elected Members and those Members with new roles / responsibilities.

All newly Elected Members receive an induction pack after the election. This provides valuable information on the day to day running of the Council, the support services available, contact details of support staff and a copy of the Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID) Guide for New Councillors.

5.3 Members Handbook

The Members Handbook will provide key information for newly Elected Members and will help to support the induction process.

The Handbook is accessible online via the Members' Homepage Intranet site.

5.4 Political Mentoring

In addition to the induction programme, Members will be supported in their political roles through peer mentoring.

Experienced Councillors from each political group will act as mentors to newly Elected Members and those taking on new roles / responsibilities, providing the skills needed as well as the political, public and organisational expectations placed on Elected Members.

6. EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT

All Elected Members are provided with external development opportunities.

6.1 Conferences / Events

Attendance at national, regional and local conferences and events is encouraged and details are circulated to Members with a specific responsibility on that subject.

6.2 Leadership Academy

The LGID Leadership Academy is a dedicated programme that provides Members with the opportunity to enhance their leadership skills and knowledge quickly in order to meet the challenges of local government.

The Member Development budget supports Members attendance on this programme in agreement with the Member Development Training Panel.

6.3 Regional Mentoring

One-to-One peer member mentoring is offered to group leaders, cabinet and shadow cabinet members who want to develop their role and improve their overall political leadership and personal development.

6.4 Regional Working

A Member Development Officer attends the Regional Member Development Group facilitated by LGID and Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH).

The group is made up of authorities within the Yorkshire and Humber region and provides opportunities to avoid duplication of resources and efforts by looking at what development sessions can be delivered regionally / sub regionally.

6.5 Good Practice Visits

Members are encouraged to learn from others and share their experiences by visiting other authorities that can demonstrate good practice in specific areas.

The aim of these visits is to increase the knowledge, improve the performance and support the Members in their specific roles.

7. Personal Development Planning

A Personal Development Plan is a written plan of commitment by an individual to their development as a Councillor over the coming year. Personal Development Planning provides tangible evidence of the Council and individual commitments to building Elected Member capacity.

All Elected Members are invited to take part in the personal development planning process which is encouraged and supported by the Member Development Training Panel. This process will:

- Provide Members with the opportunity to attend a personal development interview with an Officer to discuss their individual development needs in respect of their roles and responsibilities.
- Produce a group training plan which will identify and prioritise their training and development needs.
- Be informally reviewed to ensure needs have been met.

8. Evaluation

It is essential that all Member Development activities are evaluated to ensure their effectiveness in terms of delivery, quality and value for money.

Evaluation of the Member Development programme will take place in a number of different ways to measure the impact of each activity:

- i) Members are asked to complete evaluation sheets at the end of each session to review the session and assess future impact.
- ii) The Member Development Training Panel reviews the training programme on a 6 monthly basis based on feedback from evaluation forms and Members who attended the course. This provides the mechanism for suggestions for improvements.