

Southampton City Council

Member Development Strategy

2009 - 2012

Version 1.2
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Member Development Strategy is aimed at providing a long-term view which remains flexible to reflect changing priorities. The key themes identified within this document will be the driving force for the longer term with priorities and actions being regularly reviewed ensuring they continue to reflect current needs.

There is a need for the Council to respond rapidly to change and **'do business better'**, as it strives to be a well-managed organisation delivering excellent and cost effective services that the local communities have helped to shape. This is being done in a context of tightening financial constraints and the need to reflect national priorities into a local setting and make sure the best outcomes for the city are achieved.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and other legislative changes, increased partnership working and citizen's high expectations of Council services place increasing demands and responsibilities on local Councillors. It is therefore of paramount importance that the Council provides effective training, development and support for its Members, and that Members take advantage of it.

2. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Member Development takes a long-term view but needs to remain flexible to reflect changing priorities. The key themes identified within this document will be the driving force for the longer term, with priorities and actions within them reviewed regularly to make sure they continue to reflect the current needs.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 is one of the key drivers of change, and Full Council will take a view on the options which it wishes to consider following public consultation. The decisions made by Council in relation to electoral and other changes are likely to impact on Member learning and development.

Another key driver will be the changing roles of Members, especially in relation to engaging with the public and the duty on local authorities to involve the public. With an increasing emphasis on partnership working, the role of Members is also changing by becoming more strategic and performance based.

Over the last few years, Member development has been an increasing focus in Audit Commission and other inspection regimes, and it is therefore vital to have strategic and robust programmes for Member learning and development.

Changes are also taking place within the Council in relation to organisational development, business planning, service delivery partnerships and business strategies. It is therefore important to link Member Development with Council priorities, including people development strategies, to ensure that Members have the skills and support required to provide strategic leadership for the Council and local communities.

3. PRIORITIES FOR MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The six strategic themes were agreed by Full Council in May 2009. The first of these is potentially the most relevant to Member Development:-

Delivering value for money and efficient services, avoiding excessive taxation, ensuing good City governance, and working with neighbouring authorities, partner agencies and with appropriate strategic partnerships (such as the Partnership for South Hampshire).

The Council strategic themes for the Workforce Strategy were agreed by Cabinet in January 2009 and are as follows:-

- **Developing the Organisation and Delivering Change:** an organisation that embraces change, values continuous improvement, actively develops new ways of working and supports partnerships.
- **Building Leadership and Management Capacity:** Visionary and ambitious leaders who can lead 'beyond the Council' and Managers at all levels in the council who have capability that can deliver successfully through people.
- **Attracting and Retaining Talent:** a place that people are proud to work for and is actively chosen as a 'first option' by potential recruits, where flexibility, adaptability, outstanding contribution and professional expertise and diversity are valued
- **Learning & Developing Skills:** well-developed and qualified workforce with the capacity and capability to raise performance and meet current medium and long term need.
- **Performance and Reward:** a performance management framework and a modern pay and reward system that work together to recognise individual and collective contribution.
- **A Safe & Supportive Working Environment:** Promoting a supportive working environment and a healthy workforce

It is proposed that Member development plans are based on strategic themes. Short-term priorities also need to include need to review and assess the changing roles of Members and develop a skills-based framework to underpin Member development.

4. THE CURRENT POSITION

Member learning and development programmes include the following:-

- Induction Programme: a programme of sessions that commences with Code of Conduct training and a Preparing for Council, with a series of sessions to follow that take account of feedback from previous years and which are tailored to meet the individual needs of new Members.
- Personal Development Planning: All Members are offered 1-1 PDP sessions with a training consultant from South East Employers and/or with the Members' Services Officer. New Members and Members with new roles in particular are encouraged to participate in 1-1 sessions.
- Member Mentoring Scheme: New Members are provided with an officer-mentor when first elected and the mentoring scheme is open to all Members.
- Cabinet Member training: Individual induction programmes are developed by new Cabinet Members in consultation with the Members Services Officer, with Executive Directors and other officers. This can include participation in the IDeA mentoring scheme, 1 in-house sessions with officers, training sessions and seminars.
- Regulatory Panel training: Training for Members on Planning and Rights of Way, Licensing and Employment and Appeals Panel is generally statutory and all Members on regulatory panels are training before the first meeting, although training is ongoing. Planning training also includes training sessions with a barrister as well as sessions with officers.
- Scrutiny training: Scrutiny training is included in the induction programme and some panels organise short training sessions before meetings. Questioning and scrutiny skills were also included as sessions in the Hi Achievers programme.
- Skills training and workshops: A range of skills training and workshops are organised by Members Services and training provided in other services or by partner organisations is promoted to Members. This includes diversity training, personal safety, communication skills and e-learning.
- Standards and Governance: Training sessions on the Code of Conduct are included in induction training, with a refresher session generally held in the autumn and open to all Members. Training is also provided for members of Standards and Governance Committee. A corporate parenting training session is also held annually.
- Member Briefing sessions: A range of Member briefing sessions are held every year by services to keep Members informed about new legislation, policies and initiatives. Training and briefings sessions are also provided by partner organisations and this can include visits to services, police and businesses.

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- IT training: Members are invited to book 1-1 IT training sessions with a qualified trainer and more immediate coaching support is also available from Members' Services.

Members also have training opportunities as Council representatives in external organisations. In addition the political groups provide learning support for new Members, many of whom have "shadowed" individual Cabinet Members during the last year.

In recent years there have been several initiatives aimed at accreditation of Member training, including a BTeC qualification in Councillor development and a post-graduate diploma for Councillors at South Bank University supported by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).

Improvements have been made in monitoring systems and reporting Member attendance at training sessions in the last year, although continuing improvements need to be made to the evaluation of Member training. Additional work needs to be done in promoting Personal Development Planning sessions and following up to ensure training needs have been met.

The Member User Group receive quarterly reports on Member Development and Standards and Governance Committee receive an annual report.

Member learning and development needs to be delivered within limited resources and provide value for money. If additional resources are required then a business case will be made.

5. FUTURE ACTIONS

- Developing a 3-year Member Development Action Plan following consultation and endorsement of the priorities by Standards and Governance Committee and the Member User Group.
- Ongoing actions to review and assess the changing roles of Members and engaging Members in identifying training and support needs.
- Giving all Members a personal invitation to have a 1-1 personal development planning session with South East Employers or a relevant officer, and improving follow-up to ensure training needs are met.
- To include monitoring and review of PDPs in the Action Plan as requested by Standards and Governance Committee.
- Continued partnership working with Eastleigh and other local authorities to ensure efficiencies and value for money.

Member Development Strategy Action Plan 2009-2012

Strategic themes	Objectives	Outcomes	Target Date	Progress	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Developing the organisation and delivering change	To take ongoing actions to review and assess the changing roles of Members in relation to LG&PIH Act and other legislation affecting roles and responsibilities of Members.	Members changing roles, support and training needs to be identified and delivery plans in place.	Mar-11	Consultation through Member workshops on LG&PIH Act. Report was considered by Council 09 and to be considered again Sept 10			
	To continue and enhance partnership working with Eastleigh and other local authorities to ensure efficiencies and value for money	Included in annual reports to S&GC and MUG	April annually	Shared session with Eastleigh and Havant BCs. Worked with PCC/EBC on political awareness training for staff			
	To consider extension and enhancement of portfolio briefings for non-Exec Members	Non-Exec Members satisfied that they are being kept informed of portfolio/service developments	May-11	Working with services to co-ordinate Member briefings			
	To provide enhanced training on corporate and statutory priorities	Included in annual report to S&GC and MUG	April annually	Planning and Safeguarding training being enhanced			
Building leadership and management capacity	To develop 3-year Member Development Action Plan	Action Plan agreed by Member User Group	Oct 2009 and review annually	Plan agreed - to be monitored and reviewed by MUG			

	To provide effective learning and development programmes for new and other Cabinet Members in liaison with Directorates	Knowledgeable and skilled Cabinet Members	May 2010 and review annually	New Cabinet Member L&D liaised with CS Policy Co-ordinator. SEE PDPs and IDeA mentoring			
Attracting and retaining talent	To provide enhanced information for candidates and potential candidates	Effective information on becoming candidate and being a councillor on Southampton Online	May-10	Web content reviewed and in process of being updated.			
	To provide effective and phased training and support to new Councillors	Effective induction programme agreed by MUG	April annually	Programme for 2010-2011 being developed`			
Learning and development skills	To engage Members in identifying training and support needs	Consultation with S&GC and MUG and through PDPs	April annually	Audit and Planning Committees also identifying training needs			
	To give all Members and co-optees a personal invitation to have opportunity for 1-1 PDP planning session in a phased programme	Members with PDPs and list of those who declined	Sep-10	Members being contacted individually with main programme after May 2010 elections			
	To effectively monitor and review PDPs with Members and include in reports	Annual reports include monitoring and review of PDPs	Mar-11	Improved monitoring and review system being developed for May 10			
	Planning training to be included in induction programme and as regular refresher sessions	Annual Induction and Member Development programme includes planning training	April annually	Enhanced planning training in 2010-2011 with new legislation			

	Amend training records to identify how non-attendees receive compulsory training	To be included in Annual reports	April annually	Training via 1-1s being recorded			
	Enhanced training for Members of Employment and Appeals Panel	Annual reports include Panel training	April annually	Pre-meeting sessions			
	To ensure Member Development meets national standards	To be included in annual reports	April annually	Investors in People award includes Member Development. Charter to be considered.			
Performance and reward							
A safe and supportive working environment	To ensure Members are provided with personal safety and other skills and support for safe and secure environment	Included in Induction and Member Development programmes	April annually	Review and include in programme for May 2010			