

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

COUNCIL

23 MAY 2007

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with a draft strategy for the training and development of elected members

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 For Council to approve the elected Member development strategy.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 As part of the "Member Development" strand of the Staffordshire Plus Improvement Partnership (SPIP) a Members skill audit was conducted, the findings of which were used to develop a training plan for elected Members. This training plan runs from November 2006 through to March 2008 and is being delivered by the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA.)
- 3.2 There is no direct cost to the Council for any training offered through SPIP and I&DeA and some of the events will be running at Cannock, therefore Members will not have to travel far to attend. An Elected Member Development Strategy is attached as annex 1 to this report and contains a description of development events available to Members. The strategy incorporates events available through the Staffordshire Plus Improvement Partnership as well as some activities available in-house or using external suppliers. There will be costs associated with participation in the I&DeA 'buddying' scheme, the I&DeA Leadership Academy Award, away days and any development activities sourced through external suppliers.
- 3.3 As well as the I&DeA training, there are also other listed training events that Elected Members can take advantage of to fulfil their 5 compulsory training days.
- 3.4 As elections will affect Members in May, I&DeA has 'suspended' the training until early June.
- 3.5 What SPIP is and the training on offer will be part of new Member induction package.

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Section 1

Background

The Staffordshire Plus Improvement Partnership is funded by the DCLG and aims to deliver training and development activities across a number of project strands such as management development, customer care and Elected Member development.

Councillor Butler attends the Member Focus Steering Group meetings in relation to the Member development project. Councillor Freeman and Councillor Whitehouse have already participated in the Scrutiny Chairs Role Monitoring Sets.

Section 2

Details of Matters to be Considered

There are a number of proposals within the strategy document that will require active participation and involvement of Members – particular in respect of continuing identification of training and development needs and in overseeing the member development programme.

It has been suggested at a Steering Group Meeting that Members are involved with their own development. Would consideration be given to the formation of a cross-party Member Development Working Group.

Section 3

Contributions to CHASE

Section 4

Section 17 Implications

No implications have been identified arising from this report

Section 5

Human Rights Act Implications

There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from this report.

Section 6

Data Protection Act Implications

There are no identified implications in respect of the Data Protection Act arising from this report.

Section 7

Risk Management Implications

A structured programme of development for Members will assist in ensuring the Council is able to effectively manage risks facing it.

Section 8

Legal Implications

A programme of Member training and development on wide ranging matters and issues will inevitably assist Members in not only their discharging their obligations and duties as Members of this Council, but also as representatives of their respective wards.

Members will inevitably benefit from a good understanding of the key structures and frameworks within the Council and beyond. This will involve an understanding a appreciation of legal issues, duties and responsibilities, which will assist the Council in discharging its obligations fully and limit potential challenges to the Council.

Section 9

Financial Implications

Any potential cost incurred as a result of ensuring Elected Members can carry out their roles effectively will be met from the following;

- **SPIP** - There will be no cost to the Council for any courses that are offered by Staffordshire Plus Improvements Partnership (SPIP), as this is fully funded by the DCLG Capacity Building Fund.
- **CCDC** – Any courses run by this Council, whether it is held internally or externally, will be funded from existing budgets.
- **External Supplier** – Full cost of funding these courses can be met from within existing budgets.

Section 10

Human Resource Implications

The training officer will be responsible for organising and co-ordinating attendance on the development events described in the Elected Member Development Strategy.

Section 11

Conclusions

Background Papers

Annexes

Annex 1: Elected Member Development Strategy

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Cannock Chase Council is committed to the development of its elected members in order to enable continuous improvement in the quality of service to the community and in support of the principles of the Investors in People standard.

Training and Development Objectives

1. To establish a culture whereby continuous elected member development is seen as a key component to the success of the organisation.
2. To equip elected members with the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver high quality services which are valued by their customers.
3. To ensure that all elected members are trained to a level at least appropriate to their roles and responsibilities, recognising the importance of their roles within the Council, their constituency and on outside bodies.

These objectives will be achieved by ensuring that:

1. Access to training and development activities is guided by a commitment to the Council's equality and diversity policies.
2. The training strategy derives from, and contributes to delivery of the Council's vision and values and achievement of the corporate objectives and priorities.
3. A working group of elected members will maintain an overview of the Council's elected member development strategy and annual learning and development plans.
4. Training activities are provided in response to identified organisational, individual and statutory needs.
5. All training opportunities will be monitored to ensure that they achieve value for money and are of benefit to individuals and the Council as a whole.

Elected Member Training and Development Strategy

The aim of this strategy is to inform elected members of the training and development opportunities available to them and which will enable them to carry out their roles effectively.

1. Establishing Priorities

- 1.1 A draft annual learning and development plan will be drawn up based on inputs from several sources. These will include requests from political groups, the outputs from an annual self-assessed skills audit questionnaire, which will record all development activities undertaken, and assist in the identification of

future training and development needs of elected members, suggestions from individual elected members and officers, new legislation, government initiatives, local initiatives, partnership working and external sources.

2. Member Development Working Group

2.1 The Member Development Working Group is a cross-party member working group supported by officers. The membership will be determined by appointment at Annual Council each municipal year.

2.2 The Working Group will meet on a quarterly basis. The terms of reference of the Group are as follows:

- To review the elected member development strategy.
- To approve the annual elected member learning and development plan.
- To ensure that elected member training and development opportunities are clearly related to Cannock Chase Council's corporate objectives and priorities.
- To engage all elected members in the process.
- To establish a mechanism to evaluate the overall effectiveness of elected member development.

2.3 This Working Group is invaluable to the ongoing success and effectiveness of elected member learning and development. The purpose of the Group is to ensure that all elected members are encouraged to take personal responsibility for their learning and development and actively engage in any appropriate training opportunities.

2.4 The Group needs to ensure that the training and development opportunities afforded to members meet the corporate objectives and priorities of the Council. To ensure compliance with this, all departments of the Council will liaise with the Member Development Working Group on any learning and training programme they wish to offer to elected members.

2.5 Due to the diverse roles that members undertake taken together with their personal and business commitments time is often a critical factor. Elected members are, therefore, encouraged to feedback to the Group any ideas or suggestions they have which would ensure that all circumstances are taken into account when planning training and development opportunities for members.

3. Induction

3.1 All newly elected members should complete an induction process which would encompass the basic areas of knowledge necessary and which includes attendance on an organised induction course and completion of an induction booklet.

3.2 All newly elected members will also be offered support through the Buddy System (Induction) Mentoring set of the I&DeA Councillor Mentoring Programme following their election to the Council for the first time. Councillors

who have been re-elected to office will be offered support via one of the other Mentoring sets as appropriate.

- 3.3 The induction sessions will also be open to re-elected members whose experience and knowledge will be invaluable to new members.

4. Personal Development Activity

- 4.1 Training and development programmes for personal development will be made available for elected members and will be offered as a partnership between the individual and the Council.
- 4.2 Each elected member will have the opportunity to participate in continuous professional development activities each year, designed to assist them in their role within the Council.
- 4.3 Each elected member will be afforded the opportunity to achieve IT competence relevant to their role within in the Council.

5. Role Training and Development Opportunities

- 5.1 Members of the Cabinet will have the opportunity to participate in a programme of study such as the I&DeA Leadership Academy Award or participate in the Leader and Executive Mentoring Programme.
- 5.2 All Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees will be expected to attend a Chairing Skill Course and the where possible will be afforded the opportunity to participate in a programme of study such as the I&DeA Leadership Academy Award or participate in the Skills or One to One Mentoring Programme.
- 5.3 All elected members are expected to maintain their skills and knowledge by undertaking a minimum of five days continuous professional development activities each year. These activities should relate to the roles and responsibilities of elected members as set out within the annual elected member learning and development plan.
- 5.4 Elected members are encouraged to participate in those training and development activities that are arranged for elected members on a one off basis throughout the municipal year to update them in respect of evolving local and national issues.

Further information on the types of development activities available to elected members can be found on annex 1.

Member Development Programme

The Member Development Strategy makes a commitment to the following:

1. Induction for new members
2. Ongoing training and development activities for members

Induction for New Members

Induction for new members will involve the following activities, which have been designed in line with the Members Charter;

Activity	Content
Completion of an induction course	<p>Understanding of the direction and objectives of the council</p> <p>Understanding of the Council's accountability and responsibility</p> <p>Understanding of the 'buddying' scheme</p>
Completion of an induction booklet	Initial assessment of individual learning needs.
Pairing with a 'buddy' under the I&DeA mentoring programme (Cost £3100 for 10 members)	
<p>Introductory Modules – Solace enterprises*</p> <p>*not yet confirmed - currently under investigation</p>	<p>Module 1 – what makes a good councillor? Overview of the different types of Council, overview of roles and responsibilities, Council decision making and appointments to committees</p> <p>Module 2 – The ward councillor, the member of the council, the partnership and representational role and appointments to outside bodies.</p> <p>Module 3 – relationships between councillors and employees, relationships with other public services and regional and national bodies, the regulatory and inspection framework and dealing with complaints</p> <p>Module 4 – rules of meetings, code of conduct etc</p>

Ongoing Member Development Activities

A number of activities/learning options will be available to Members dependent upon the assessment of individual learning needs identified during the induction stage.

Activity	Content Overview	Delivered by:
Finance	How the national policy context affects the budget setting process	SPIP
Resource management and efficiency	To understand what is meant by resource management and efficiency and to understand the role of Members in driving efficiency improvements	SPIP
Budget processes	Gives and overview of budget setting processes within the council.	CCDC
Effective meetings	To understand what makes an effective meeting. To understand the roles taken within meetings and develop the skills needed for effective meetings	SPIP
Frontline Members	A workshop enabling Members across Staffordshire to meet and share experiences and develop skills.	SPIP
Project Management	To understand what a project is, understand governance and approval arrangements, the importance of the business case, critical success factors and Member and officer roles in the oversight of projects	SPIP(no cost)/External supplier (£350)
Communication skills	To explore aspects of strategic communications such as understanding the business case for effective communications. To understand public relations and branding, understand success factors for external communications and manage media relations	SPIP
Local leadership	To understand how Councillors lead their local community and neighbourhoods. To understand the concepts of community engagement and partnership working and how to raise the political credibility of Councillors and of the Council	SPIP (no cost)/external supplier (£750)
Ethics	To understand the importance of ethics in public life. To understand the code of conduct and the role of Standards Committees. To understand the role of the Standards Board for England in the ethical framework	SPIP
IT training	Outlook, Intranet, Internet, Excel, Word etc	CCDC

Freedom of Information and Data Protection	<p>Identify personal data/data controller/data subject.</p> <p>Understand the procedure for processing information. Understand the principles of dealing with sensitive personal data and understand the rights of the data subject.</p> <p>To understand the Freedom of Information Act and why it was introduced, the right of access any person has to a public authority for information, what information it applies to, how requests are made, replying to requests for information and exemptions to compliance</p>	CCDC
Managing Performance	To understand why performance management is important, how performance management works, how it can be used to provide better services, how members can be involved in performance management and the challenges members face in meeting the needs and aspirations of communities	SPIP
Diversity and Equality in Local Services	To understand the key equality and diversity issues faced by local authorities in meeting the needs of their communities, understand the current legislative framework and the role of members in driving forward the equality and diversity agenda. Understand the Equality Standard for Local Government	SPIP
Human Rights Act	Gives an overview of the rights and responsibilities within the Act	CCDC
Influencing skills	To understand how people make decisions and the factors that are taken into account when decisions are made, force field analysis, persuasion techniques	SPIP
Risk Management	Covers the meaning of Risk Management, Risk Management in the work environment, CCDC's Risk Management Policy & Strategy, your role in Risk Management	CCDC

Targeted Development Activities

Target Audience	Activity	Overview	Delivered by
Chairs and Vice Chairs	Effective Chairing	To understand what it is to chair meetings with members officers or the public. To	SPIP

		understand the role of the chair and the practicalities of managing meetings. To develop the skills that good chairs display	
Chairs and Vice Chairs	Media Training		External supplier (£990)
Chairs and Vice Chairs	I&DeA Leadership Academy Award		External supplier (cost to be confirmed)
Scrutiny members	Scrutiny now and in the future (overview)	To understand how scrutiny has developed and examine challenges and opportunities for the future. To understand the current context, policy development and performance, accountability, the powers attached to the scrutiny function and future developments.	SPIP (no cost)/external supplier (£750)
Scrutiny Members	Scrutiny: Looking at the right things at the right time	Developing and managing a programme of work, agreeing selection and rejection criteria, identifying priorities and linking scrutiny with priorities of the Council	SPIP
Leading Members	Member/Officer relations	To understand how members and officers can work effectively together – looking at the different drivers for members and officers, the complementary nature of these roles and how to sustain effective working	SPIP
Cabinet Members	Away Day(s)	Planning priorities for the future	CCDC (possibly with support from I&DeA). Approx £680 per day.
Shadow cabinet	Away Day(s)	Planning priorities for the future	CCDC (possibly with support from I&DeA) Approx £680 per day
All members	Planning/Licensing	To understand the changes in the planning system and to	SPIP/CCDC

who want to participate in Committees re planning and licensing		help participants understand their role and how to engage in the process.	
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If any member is interested in participating in any of these learning events they should contact Jan Turner on x4420.