

# MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

<b>Title</b>	<b>MEMBER DEVELOPMENT POLICY</b>	
<b>Creator</b>	Author(s)	Sylvia Reynolds, Head of Democratic Services
	Consulted	Constitution and Members' Development Committee, Monitoring Officer, Mayor
	Department	Legal and Governance
	Service area	Democratic Services
	Head of Service	Sylvia Reynolds
	Director	Charlotte Benjamin
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<b>Subject</b>	Corporate Governance	

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## Description

*This policy highlights the*

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<b>C</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Reviser</b>
2	29/6/20	Change in posts titles Senior Member Development framework reviewed	Sylvia Reynolds

## **Introduction**

Middlesbrough Council is committed to supporting the ongoing development of all Members in order to enable them to perform effectively in their current role, and to develop so that they can meet future challenges.

Members require an understanding of the on-going and emerging issues facing the community as well as the knowledge and skills to instil confidence through open and intelligent discussions/debates resulting in informed decision making.

## **Aims & Objectives of the Member Development Policy**

The key aims and objectives of the Member Development Policy are to:

- support the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities
- respond to the ongoing organisational change within the Council
- respond to councillors development priorities identified within the annual survey and Personal Development Plans in order to meet Members' individual development needs
- establish a culture whereby continuous elected Member Development is seen as a key component to the success of the organisation;

This Policy in addressing those requirements, also acknowledges that Members already possess a range of skills. Further aims of this policy are therefore to seek opportunities where the benefits of such skills might be shared (e.g. mentoring) and to identify and address skills gaps.

## **SKILLS FRAMEWORK & MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

A Competency Skills Framework based on the LGA political skills framework and an annual Member Development Programme is used to support this policy, enabling members to identify and develop their leadership skills to enable them to meet the challenges, opportunities and risks associated with the role of an elected member.

The Framework includes a range of generic competencies required by all Councillors and separate sections for specific roles on the Council.

## **HOW WILL THIS BE DELIVERED?**

### **Development Opportunities for all Members**

#### **Member Induction**

The Council will provide a comprehensive induction package for incoming councillors. However, induction sessions will be open to all councillors so that those who are re-elected can refresh their knowledge and share their experience with those who have been newly elected.

## **Annual Members Development Survey**

There will be an annual survey of councillors and senior managers which they will identify the training and development priorities they believe should be considered for the following year. Councillors will be advised of other suitable opportunities for training that arise throughout the year.

### **Attending required training or development events**

Members will be required to undertake training in respect of certain roles and in order to serve on certain Committees. This is aimed at protecting members and the Council from prospective challenge to legislative decision making.

This training programme is organised on an annual basis, following the AGM, when committee membership is confirmed. Ad hoc one-to-one training will be provided for any subsequent changes to committees.

These include Planning & Development Committee, Licensing Committee and Sub-Committees, Standards Committee, Staff Appeals Committee, Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee, Teesside Pension Fund Committee, Teesside Pension Board and Family Placement Panel. This training is to be undertaken on an annual basis.

### **In Year Ad Hoc Opportunities- Member Development Programme**

A Member Development Programme provides a range of different opportunities for attendance at a range of learning events. These will include conferences, seminars, training courses, briefings, workshops, forums, e-learning activities, webinars and workbooks.

Any Member can request events/ topics to be included in the Programme. Whenever there is sufficient interest from Members in respect of a topic, or where the topic is considered by the Constitution and Members' Development Committee to be of sufficient importance, all efforts will be made to accommodate these requests.

All Members are invited to undertake a self-assessment / Personal Development Plan, which will enable Democratic Services to identify events that may meet the individual's needs and / or the role of the Member, and the broader requirements of the Council.

All members will be **required** to attend the following member development events;

- a. Member Codes of Conduct
- b. Health and Safety
- c. Data Protection (GDPR)
- d. Diversity and Equality

The Council recognises that attendance at external training and development events and conferences can assist the work and development both of individual Councillors, and of the Council, by bringing new knowledge and ideas into the

Authority. Attendance at external event are subject to certain criteria identified in the framework

### **Development Opportunities for the Executive and other Senior Members**

A senior Members' Delivery Framework (i.e. Executive Members, Chair/Vice Chair of the Council, Chairs and Vice Chairs of committees and panels) is also provided to assist in identifying any development needs of Senior Members in undertaking their respective roles and would cover such things as:

- Service Information and Induction
- changes to Member Portfolio's;
- introduction of new legislation;
- development of new/revised policies; and
- specific skills/knowledge requires of the position held.

#### **A) Executive Members**

All Executive Members are **required** to commit to undertaking the following;

- An induction and overview of their service area and their respective responsibilities (portfolio/delegations)
- A Personal Development Plan
- Attendance at a Charing Skills Course;
- Attendance at an appropriate leadership course
- Making themselves aware of:
  - Any audit/legislative requirements for their area of responsibility;
  - Performance and risk associated with their portfolio
  - Decision making processes of the Council (Including Scrutiny and Officer delegated decision making);
  - Media / Social media skills

Other **Senior Members** are **required** to attend:

- A Charing Skills Course;
- Any audit/legislative requirements tailored to need/relevance to role

### **The Expectations and Responsibilities of Members**

The Programme is a key part of the Council's commitment to Member Development and training is a shared responsibility between the Council and individual Members.

In order to aid the successful delivery of the Programme, it is important that Councillors seek to fulfil their responsibilities through the following:

- a. Engaging in the Council's Member Induction Programme;
- b. Attending required training or development events – failure to attend required training may result in a Member not being able to participate in the decision making/voting process.
- c. Providing relevant feedback and evaluation on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the training. This should be done as honestly and as constructively as possible, so that any necessary changes can be made accordingly to future events / programmes.
- d. Sharing Learning Experiences - When Members attend external training and development events, in some cases, Members may be asked to provide a briefing session to other Members in order to pass on any information/ learning acquired.

## **Support for Councillors**

Member Development is supported politically through the Constitution and Members' Development Committee. The Member Development Policy and programme is managed and supported via Democratic Services, where a record of members attendance is maintained and a small budget is available to support the programme.

Members will be invited by Democratic Services or the Service Area planning the event, to attend internal events and briefing sessions that either appear in the programme or are added to the programme throughout the year.

Authorisation to attend any external development event sits with the Head of Democratic Services.

Members wishing to attend external events **must** therefore contact the Head of Democratic Services, **before** booking any event. Many events become fully booked very early, and so Members should give as much notice as possible of events that they wish to attend.

## **Annual Report**

An annual report will be submitted to the Constitution and Members' Development Committee which will contain feedback on the Member Development Programme, Member failed attendance; together with any proposals to review the Programme

## **Equalities and Access**

The Council will ensure that the diverse needs of all Councillors are taken into account, and that all Councillors have an equal opportunity to develop, and fully partake in Council business. For example, by providing training opportunities at different times of the day, by providing childcare allowances for those who may potentially miss out on various opportunities for development, and by responding to requests from Councillors for different types of training and information.

We will ensure that the Council meets the requirements of the Equality Act and complies with its own Equality Policy and Strategy. We will ensure processes are in

place for Councillors to properly evaluate the impact of decisions on its services, policies and procedures on different sections of the community.