

DRAFT



MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2008 - 2009

Introduction

Dear Colleague

The Member Development Working Group reviewed last year's Member Development Strategy (2007-2008), and was satisfied that the Strategy was generally up to date and relevant to the forthcoming year, 2008 – 2009. Therefore, the only changes that Council has made to this year's Strategy have been to update the Member Development Programme contained in Appendix 2 of the Strategy, and to make minor amendments that acknowledge the fact that the Council has now been awarded both the I&DeA Charter for Member Development, and has achieved Investors In People status for elected Members.

In March a number of Members attended the I&DeA Member Development Charter Award Ceremony at the Sage, Gateshead. Although the Council was awarded the Charter last year, the award ceremony took a little longer to organise. The Charter award has been placed in one of the display cases in the Erimus Room.

Following the May 2007 elections, a comprehensive induction course was put on for the 11 newly elected Members. The two new Members who were returned at the March By Elections earlier this year have also received a one-to-one induction session. The Member Development Working Group has agreed that in order to build on the success of the induction process, 'post induction' sessions should be offered to newly elected Members some 9 to 12 months after being elected. By this time, new Members have a clearer idea of what they need to know to fulfil the role of Ward Councillor. The Working Group has asked officers to contact Members elected last year and investigate any 'post induction' requirements that they might have, so that appropriate development opportunities can be provided.

A Certificate for Elected Members has been developed by Sunderland University. Successful completion of the one year course, which includes three taught weekend sessions, leads to a University Certificate. The Member Development Working Group agreed that the Council should support any Member who is interested in undertaking the course.

Finally, we still need to improve on the number of Members who have Personal Development Plans (PDPs). I would again urge all Members to contact the Member Resources Team and book a PDP interview as soon as possible. We are also looking at making PDP assessments available on-line for those Members who might prefer this method of assessment. I shall be asking officers to provide further information as soon as it is available.

Councillor Steve Bloundele
Chair of Middlesbrough Council
May 2008

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT

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

A Member Development Strategy will be produced each year. This Strategy will have clear links to the Council's Key Strategic Themes, the roles and function of Councillors, and will address the main changes affecting the Council's priorities.

All Councillors will be given the opportunity to have a learning and development plan which values and recognises the skills, knowledge and experience they bring with them; identifies current learning and development needs; and offers a diversity of ways to meet these needs.

An all party Member Development Working Group will ensure that Members are fully responsible for the review and development of the Member Development Policy, Strategy, and annual programme of training and development events.

The Chair of the Council will have the responsibility for ensuring that the Policy Statement is fully implemented, and will have the role of Councillor Learning and Development Champion.

The Members' Office will ensure the provision of nominated officers to work with the Councillor Champion and to support the Member Development activities of the Council.

There will be an identified annual budget, which will be sufficient to offer reasonable levels of training and development for all Members of the Council.

There will be clear links to the Council's People Strategy.

The Member Development Strategy will be communicated annually throughout the Council, and to the Standards Committee.

Middlesbrough Member Development Strategy 2008-2009

1 Introduction

Middlesbrough Council is committed to a policy of Member Development and Training. In 2000, the Council signed up to the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA) Member Development Charter. In 2007, the Council achieved the I&DeA/NEREO North East Charter for Elected Members. Middlesbrough also became the first Council in the North East to gain IIP (the Investors in People Award) for elected Members following the introduction of the new criteria.

Elected 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.

The Development Programme for Elected Members will provide a range of different opportunities for attendance at a range of learning events. These will include conferences, seminars, training courses, briefings, workshops and forums.

The purpose of the Member Development Programme is to increase elected Members' personal skills base in areas related to their activities as a representative for their Ward, along with any other roles that they have within Middlesbrough Council, and to enable them to gain a better understanding of issues facing local Government in general.

2 Aims & Objectives of the Member Development Strategy

The Council's key strategic themes are

- 1) Supporting children and learning
- 2) Promoting healthier communities and effective social care for adults
- 3) Creating safer and stronger communities
- 4) Transforming our local environment
- 5) Meeting local transport needs more efficiently
- 6) Promoting the economic vitality of Middlesbrough
- 7) Ensuring that the Council is 'fit for the purpose'

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

- establish a culture whereby continuous elected Member Development is seen as a key component to the success of the organisation.
- identify individual and common learning and development needs and ensure that the Members' training programme consistently addresses Members' individual development needs, and the Council's key strategic themes
- provide elected Members with the opportunity to access events and activities that are appropriate to their roles and responsibilities, recognising the importance of their roles within the Council, within their constituency and when serving on Outside Bodies.
- enable Members to be fully conversant with the Council's key strategic themes, in order that their activities as a Councillor are consistent with Council priorities
- ensure that the ongoing requirements of the I&DeA / NEREO Member Development Charter are met

- ensure that the ongoing requirements of IIP requirements are met.

3 Member Development Programme

The Member Development Programme is a key part of the Member Development Strategy. It is a shared responsibility between the Council and individual Members.

The responsibilities of the Council

The Council will meet its responsibilities by making the following available to all Members:

Induction Programme

All newly Elected Members will be offered a comprehensive Induction Programme which will cover the basic areas of knowledge necessary to newly elected Councillors.

In general the Induction Programme will provide information on

- ⇒ how the Council works
- ⇒ the legal requirements, roles and responsibilities of Members
- ⇒ Codes of Conduct, Protocols, and requirements in respect of ethics and probity
- ⇒ the services the Council delivers

Induction sessions will also be open to re-elected members whose experience and knowledge can be passed on to new Members.

Development Opportunities and Attendance at events

A schedule of planned activities is attached at Appendix 2. These activities are aimed at meeting

- issues identified in Members' Personal Development Plans (see Section 5)
- common needs of the Council and its Councillors
- organisational priorities

There will be a number of specific and relevant briefings, seminars and workshops that will be provided to inform Members in respect of local and national issues. There will also be a range of other events that Members may wish to nominate themselves or other Members to attend, or be invited to attend by officers/ service areas: these events might include external conferences.

Budget

There will be a discrete Member Development Budget. The budget for 2008-2009 is £41,519

Member Development Framework

The Council will put in place and maintain a framework that meets the ongoing requirements of the NEREO/I&DeA Member Development Charter, and the IIP requirements that apply to Members.

The responsibilities of Members

Councillors will fulfil their responsibilities by undertaking the following:

Induction Programme

All newly elected Members will be expected to engage in the Induction Programme that the Council provides.

Minimum level of developmental activities

All elected Members will be expected to maintain their skills and knowledge by undertaking a minimum of five professional development activities each year. This is an undertaking expected of the NEREO/ I&DeA Member Development Charter that the Council has signed. These development activities should relate to the duties, roles and responsibilities of elected Members.

Attending required training or development events

Members will be required to undertake training or attend briefings in respect of certain roles. Attendance at a training or development event is essential before Members can serve on certain Committees, such as Licensing Committee, and Planning & Development Committee. Members will also be required to attend briefings, or undertake training, before sitting on certain other bodies including Standards Committee, Complaints & Appeals Committee, Staff Appeals Committee, Teesside Pension Fund, and Family Placement Panel.

Newly elected Chairs and Vice-Chairs will also be required to attend Chairs' training sessions following the Council AGM (or appointment if not appointed at the AGM)

Personal Development Plans

Members will be required to complete a Personal Development Plan in order to attend external training and development events. This is to ensure that such events properly meet the identified development needs and / or the role of the Member, and the broader requirements of the Council.

External Training Events and Conferences

The NEREO/ I&DeA Member Development Charter requires that the Members Development Strategy promotes the dissemination of learning.

When Members attend external training and development events, they will be required to provide a short written report as a minimum, along with any handouts (etc) to the Members' Resources Team, which can then be distributed to all Members. In some cases, Members will be asked to provide a briefing session to other Members in order to pass on any information/ learning that has been acquired.

NEREO/I&DeA Member Development Charter

Members will be expected to undertake those actions that are required to ensure that Charter status is granted.

4 Seeking advice on the Member Development Programme

Members can speak to any of the key contacts named at Section 12 at the end of this Strategy document regarding their individual development needs.

Any Member can also request other 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 Member Development Working Group to be of sufficient importance, all efforts will be made to accommodate these requests.

5 Personal Development Planning

A key element of the Member Development Strategy is Personal Development Planning. Each elected Member will be offered the opportunity to complete an annual Personal Development Plan which will record all development activities undertaken and which will assist in the identification of training and development needs.

All Members will be invited to attend a one-to-one question and answer session with a Human Resources Officer. This will help to evaluate individual performance as an elected Member, and to identify any current or future training needs and preferred training styles.

In addition to identifying personal development needs, this work will assist the Council in identifying 'gaps' in the broader Member Development Programme.

6 Executive Members' Performance Framework

The Executive Members' Performance Framework will assist in identifying any development needs of Executive Members upon taking up post, following any changes to the Executive Member's Portfolio, or following the introduction of new legislation, policy or service delivery developments.

Arrangements are in place to ensure that the Executive Members' Performance Framework will inform the Members Development Programme.

7 The role of the Chair of Council and the Members' Development Working Group.

The responsibilities of the Chair of Council are set out in the Constitution of the Council as follows:

- To undertake the role of Member Development champion.
- To chair the Member Development Working Group.
- To have responsibility for the Member Development Policy, Strategy and the Annual Member Development Programme.
- To ensure that an appropriate level of Member development activities are in place, as required by the I&DeA Member Development Charter.
- To encourage Members to undertake appropriate levels of training and development activities in order that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles as elected Members of the Council.

The Terms of reference of the Members' Development Working Group are attached at Appendix 3

8 Attendance at Training and Development Events

Attendance at Internal Events

Members will be invited by the Senior Resources Officer, or the Service Area planning the event, to attend internal events and briefing sessions that appear in the Programme, or that are added to the Programme throughout the year.

Attendance at External Events

Attendance at external training and development events and conferences¹ can assist the work and development both of individual Councillors, and of the Council, by bringing new knowledge and ideas into the authority, and through the process of networking outside the Council.

However, in order to ensure that attendance at external training and development events represents the best use of the Council's resources, it is necessary to have clear criteria for determining who should attend which conferences and other external events. These criteria, along with the approval process, are set out in Appendix 4 attached.

9 Evaluation – Internal and External Training & Development Events

Members will be asked to complete a training evaluation form at the end of any development event attended. This should be done as honestly and as constructively as

¹ This does not include annual conferences of bodies of which the Council is a member, or to which the Council is affiliated, as such conferences do not come within the Member Development Programme

possible, so that any necessary changes can be made accordingly to future events / programmes. Member might wish to keep a copy of these with their Personal Development Plans, and will want to include details of events attended in their Annual Reports.

If Members have any strong concerns that they feel unable to share on an evaluation form, they should discuss these with any of the Key Contacts (below)

10 The Role of Standards Committee

The Council's Standards Committee has a legal requirement to oversee the training and development of Members in respect of the Code of Conduct. This role is extended so that the Standards Committee in Middlesbrough has an oversight of all Member development matters. In order to achieve this, all amendments and updates to the Member Development Strategy will be referred to the Standards Committee for comment and approval. In addition, information reports shall be presented to the Standards Committee on a regular basis relating to the Member Development Programme, and attendance of Members at training and development events.

The Member Development Working Group will report to the Standards Committee.

11 The North East Charter for Member Development and the Investors in People (IIP) Award

The main Charter requirements are outlined at Appendix 1 to this Strategy.

Both the Charter and the IIP Award involve periodic re-assessment and re-appraisal of the Council's performance and commitment to Member Development.

The Council has undertaken to continue to provide the level of support to Members that is required to maintain the Council's current status in relation to the Charter and IIP.

12 Key Contacts

Chris Davies	Members' Office Manager	Tel 729704
Sylvia Reynolds	Senior Resources Officer	Tel 729697
Nigel Sayer	Executive Office Manager	Tel 729031

**I&DeA MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CHARTER:
SUMMARY OF THE REQUIRED MILESTONES & STANDARDS**

COMMITMENT TO MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

- Top political and managerial leadership commitment to the development of elected members
- Policy statement in respect of Member development
- Equality of opportunity and access to learning and development
- Budget
- Officer resource report
- Dissemination of learning by Members

STRATEGIC APPROACH TO MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

- Member led strategy
- Linkage to Council Corporate Plan
- Members roles clearly set out
- Process for identification and need at individual and Council wide level
- Structured and timely approach to promoting development opportunities
- Appropriately learn with external partners
- Strategy for induction
- Addresses political leadership and team development of Members
- Mechanisms for evaluation and informing future plans

MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN IN PLACE

- Addresses development priorities
- Identifies what development activities should achieve
- Sets out how, when, where and who is responsible for Member development
- Takes account of access to development opportunities
- Linkage between individual plans and the Council's corporate and other plans
- Representative elective Members consulted

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IS EFFECTIVE IN BUILDING CAPACITY

- Members learn and develop effectively
- Learning is shared with other elected Members and where appropriate with officers and stakeholders
- Investment in learning and development is evaluated in terms of benefits and impact
- Identifies (and implements) improvement to learning and development activities

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROMOTES WORK LIFE BALANCE AND CITIZENSHIP

- Assists those with family responsibilities
- Reviews how Council business is conducted to allow for equality of access to key political decision making mechanisms
- Holds events for the community to encourage people to become community leaders

DRAFT MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2008/2009

TOPIC	PROVIDER	REASON	NOTES	KEY STRATEGIC THEMES
Erimus Quarterly Briefing	Erimus		Held 10 th April 2008	2,3
Community Leadership, Partnership & Engagement	Julia Wright	Identified by Members	Held 15 th April 2008	3,4,6
Telecare	Internal	New service developments	Held 16 th April 2008	2
Working Better Together Seminar	Internal	Quarterly Briefings	Held 22 nd April 2008	7
Chairing Skills	Internal	For Scrutiny Members	To Be Held 28 th & 29 th May 2008	7
Public Speaking & Presentation Skills	NEREO		To Be Held 10 th June 2008	7
Questioning & Challenging	Internal	For Scrutiny Members	To Be Held 12 th June 2008	7
Community Leadership, Partnership & Engagement	NEREO		Scheduled For 2 nd July 2008	3,4,6
Erimus Quarterly Briefing	Erimus		Scheduled For 10 th July 2008	2,3
Working Better Together Seminar	Internal	Quarterly Briefings	Scheduled For 16 th July 2008	7
Engaging with Young People & Local Democracy Week	Internal		Scheduled For 6 th August 2008	1
Working Better Together Seminar	Internal	Quarterly Briefings	Scheduled For 15 th October 2008	7
Working Better Together Seminar	Internal	Quarterly Briefings	Scheduled For 21 st January 2009	7
Putting People First – A Shared Vision of Commitment to the Transformation of Adult Social Care 2008-2001	Internal	Identified by Service Area	TBA	2

Appendix 2

TOPIC	PROVIDER	REASON	NOTES	KEY STRATEGIC THEMES
Social Care: Individual Budgets	Internal	Identified by Service Area	TBA	2
Mental Capacity Act 2005	Internal	Identified by Service Area	TBA	2
Mental Health Act 2007	Internal	Identified by Service Area	TBA	2
Older Person's Residential Care Quality Assessments	Internal	Identified by Service Area	TBA	2
Links to Decision Making Process	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	7
Quasi Judicial Panels	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	7
Member Protocols/Conventions	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	7
Chairing Skills (For All Members)	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	7
Listening, Questioning & Communication	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	7
Personal Safety & Handling Aggression	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	7
Tackling Difficult Conversations	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	7
Community Funding	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	3,4,7
Ethics & Probity	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	7
Advocacy	Internal	Identified by Members	TBA	7
Local Development Framework Process	Internal	Identified by Service Area	To Be Held in the Autumn	3,4,7
Primary Strategy for Change	Internal	Identified by Service Area	To Be Held After June	7

TOPIC	PROVIDER	REASON	NOTES	KEY STRATEGIC THEMES
Building Schools for the Future (Update)	Internal	Identified by Service Area	TBA	1
Children's Plan – Government's Long Term Plan	Internal	Identified by Service Area	TBA	1
Care Matters – New Legislation for Children In Care	Internal	Identified by Service Area	TBA	1
Licensing	Internal	Identified by Service Area	TBA	3,7
Councillor.Info	External		TBA	7
Budget Consultation	Internal		TBA	7
Diversity & Multicultural Awareness	Internal		TBA	7
IT Training (Word, Lotus Notes et etc)	Internal		Ongoing with Members	7
Annual Reports	Internal		TBA	7

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Member Development Working Group

Membership:

Chair: Chair of the Council
Members: Deputy Mayor, all Group Leaders
Officers: Members' Office Manager, Members' Resources Team Manager,
Executive Office Manager

Terms of Reference

The Member Development Working Group is an informal Working Group comprising Members and Officers of the Council. The Group is Chaired by the Chair of the Council, who has the role of Member Development Champion.

The Member Development Working Group is responsible for

- 1 developing and reviewing the Member Development Strategy
- 2 developing, monitoring and reviewing the annual Member Development Programme
- 3 providing strong leadership and guidance to officers in respect of all Member Development issues
- 4 promoting best practice in respect of Member Development amongst all elected Members of the Council
- 5 encouraging the highest level of participation by all Members in the Member Development Programme, in respect of the Strategy, and in relation to Personal Development Plans (PDPs)
- 6 ensuring that the Council reaches and maintains the required level of skills, competences and practices to achieve I&DeA Charter status, and IIP status in connection with elected Members

The Member Development Working Group will report to the Standards Committee.

Criteria and process for approving attendance at an external training or development event.

Approval Criteria

The criteria for attending external training and development events, including conferences, are as follows:

Criteria 1

Members are required to have completed a PDP before attendance at an external training or development event can be considered, and one of the following three points apply:.

- 1 The event directly relates to the priorities and work of the Council, and to the role of the Member requesting to attend, OR
- 2 The event directly addresses new legislation, new “best practice” requirements, or other innovation, OR
- 3 The event meets the personal development needs of the individual Member.

Other factors will also be taken into account, which will include 'best value' (e.g. consideration of the delegate fee, travel and accommodation costs, location and duration of the event), the budget available, and (in the case of external events) the provider.

Approval Process

Authorisation to attend any external development event must be approved by the Members' Office Manager (Chris Davies).

Members wishing to attend such events should contact the Members' Office Manager, or in his absence the Senior Resources Officer (Sylvia Reynolds), 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.

Promoting the Dissemination of Learning

Promoting the Dissemination of Learning is a requirement of the NEREO / I&DeA Member Development Charter. Attendance at external events is a valuable way of acquiring information about a wide range of issues including new and innovative practice, new legislation, and other regional and national developments.

It will therefore be expected that, wherever appropriate, Members who attend external events will lodge with the Members' Library any course information, handouts, etc. In addition, any Member attending external events must be prepared to provide a short written report as a minimum requirement, and where appropriate to provide briefing sessions to other Members in order to pass on information or learning that has been acquired..