

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Environmental Services Portfolio Holder 10 March 2011
AUTHOR/S: Executive Director – Corporate Services / Head of Legal & Democratic Services

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT UPDATE: MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND EVALUATION OF TRAINING

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - (a) Request that the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder recommends the attached Member Development Strategy to Council.
 - (b) Provide the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder with an evaluation of the training organised for Councillors this municipal year.
2. This is not a key decision. The new Member Development Strategy reaffirms the Council's existing policies. This report is coming before the Portfolio Holder as this Council recognises that the member development process should be member-led. This will allow the Portfolio Holder to make any amendments to the Strategy before it is put before Council and to review the training that has been organised for Members for this municipal year.

Recommendations

3. That the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder:
 - (a) Recommends the Member Development Strategy, as attached at Appendix A, to Council.
 - (b) Notes the high standard of training that has been provided to Councillors during the current municipal year, as shown in Appendix B, and makes any suggestions on how further improvements can be made.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. To ensure that the Council remains on target for achieving the Member Development Charter Status during 2011/12.

Background

5. The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder signed up to the Member Development Charter at her meeting on 27 July 2010, thus committing the Council to achieving Charter status.
6. The Chief Executive, Leader of Council and Leader of Opposition signed-up to the objectives of the Charter at Cabinet on 11 November 2010. SMT expressed its support for achieving Member Charter Status at its meeting on 15 December 2010.
7. To achieve Charter status the Council will need to show that the Council's member development programme is member-led. For this reason a multi-party Member

Development Task and Finish Group was set up. This Group has met seven times since August 2010 and has made the following contributions to achieving its goal.

- Each meeting has reviewed the accreditation guidelines for Charter Status, adding details of achievements that the Council has made and making suggestions on how the outstanding targets can best be achieved.
- The Group has amended the Member Development Strategy, which is attached for the Portfolio Holder's approval.
- The Group has made suggestions for the Council's induction training in May 2011.
- The Group has agreed a process for providing all Councillors with one-to-one interviews to discuss their training needs.
- The Group has agreed an exit interview/questionnaire for all retiring members.

Considerations

8. Having an up to date Member Development Strategy is one of the requirements of the Member Development Charter. The existing Strategy was agreed three years ago for 2008-11. It needs to be updated.
9. Member evaluation of the training that the Council provides is also a requisite of the Member Development Charter. Feedback from Councillors on member training is shown at Appendix B. This information is shared with the officer responsible for organising the training.

Options

10. It is recommended that the Strategy be reviewed annually, but the Portfolio Holder may wish to extend this. The last Strategy was in place for three years.

Implications

11.	Financial	No extra costs will be incurred from agreeing the Strategy
	Legal	None
	Staffing	Achieving Charter status will require officer time, but no new officer posts
	Risk Management	
	Equality and Diversity	The Council's Equality and Diversity Officer has been contacted with regard to ensuring that member training is accessible for all Councillors.
	Equality Impact Assessment completed	No An EQIA is not considered to be necessary.
	Climate Change	None

Consultations

12. The Member Development Task and Finish Group have been consulted on the Member Development Strategy and made amendments.

Effect on Strategic Aims

13. Achieving the Member Development Charter will assist the Council in achieving Aim A (iv) "achieving improved customer satisfaction with our services".

Conclusions / Summary

14. For the Council to remain on course for achieving Member Development Charter Status the existing Member Development Strategy, which expires at the end of 2010/11 needs to be updated and the Portfolio Holder responsible for member development needs to regularly review the training that has been provided for Councillors.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Minutes and agendas of the Member Development Task and Finish Group

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