



The strategy in detail

Induction Programme

It is important that prospective Members of Council understand the Council's commitment to, and arrangements for, training and developing its Members. In order to encourage commitment to the programme, new Members will be given advance notification of the dates planned for training and development activities so that they can plan their diaries accordingly.

Upon election, all new Members will be expected to participate in the induction programme. In order to provide a seamless programme of events, a common structure and format will be adopted and the programme will be co-ordinated centrally. This will ensure that each session has clear objectives, picks up on recurring themes and is fully integrated in the programme.

In cases where a Member is unable to complete one of the modules, arrangements will be offered for a personal briefing. Similarly, if a Member is elected at a by-election part way through the year a series of individual briefings will be offered. Any Members elected at by-elections will also be invited to participate in the following year's full induction programme.

Key induction modules (for example, briefings on the Code of Conduct) will be repeated throughout the year, so that Members have the opportunity to take part in any courses they may have missed. Where appropriate, induction modules will also be made available to existing Members, so that they refresh and update their skills over the course of their political careers.

In addition to this induction programme, which is provided for all Members of Council, the different political groups will make their own arrangements for providing induction and ongoing support, including mentoring if required, to their own Members.

Core Skills

Members need to demonstrate competence in the following five areas in order to carry out their roles effectively:

1. Leading the community

Community leadership is at the heart of the modern councillor's role. Recent emphasis on democratic participation encourages Members to contribute to neighbourhood management and the development of sustainable communities. Areas of focus for the development of this skill include:

- engaging and empowering the community
- community cohesion
- communication and public relations
- councillors as corporate parents.

2. Partnership working

There is a greater onus on Members to work closely with partner agencies such as the police, NHS and voluntary sector in order to deliver the requirements of the Leeds Strategic Plan. The success of joint initiatives is dependent on skills such as facilitation, conflict resolution and negotiating. Where appropriate, development of this skill area will involve joint activities with partner agencies.

3. Managing yourself

Councillors must juggle a number of conflicting priorities, and good organisational skills will enable them to cope well with the pressure of their role. Support is available to help them develop in the following areas:

- dealing with casework
- managing time
- using ICT
- managing meetings
- public speaking and presentation
- media and PR.

4. Governing the City

This competency comprises the regulatory and corporate governance responsibilities of all councillors. It includes areas such as managing risk, decision- and policy-making, local government finance and performance management. Members must also take personal responsibility by understanding, and adhering to the Code of Conduct in all areas of their public life, and development in this area is compulsory.

5. Leadership

This skill incorporates interpersonal skills, such as communication and chairing and may be taken to a higher level for those Members who aspire to move into senior roles within their political group. Development options include:

- mentoring
- coaching
- external programmes used to support political leadership development (such as IDeA Leadership Academy).

In addition, political leadership may be addressed in conjunction with the Council's 'top team'. This is likely to comprise joint events with top management that support team building and emphasise transformational leadership.

The core skills will be reviewed on an annual basis in order to ensure that they accurately reflect the changing roles of councillors, and are flexible enough to meet any changes in legislation or governance.

Role Specific Skills

These are skills related to specific roles on the Council. Members are encouraged to undertake specialist training when appointed to a role in order to ensure that they can discharge their duties effectively.

To support the development of councillors' roles, the Council has produced a generic role description for all Members; this is included at Appendix 2. The role description describes the elements of the role that are common to all Members and, in addition, recognises that individual Members will also be assigned particular functions such as Executive, Scrutiny, Deputy Executive Member or Regulatory responsibilities. These specific roles enable Members to develop expertise in a wide range of policy and service areas, whilst at the same time creating the need for a broad spectrum of high quality training and development support.

The identified roles which this programme supports are:

Area Committee Chair
Area Committee Member
Company Director/Trustee representing the Council
Corporate Governance and Audit Committee Member
Deputy Executive Member
Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor
Regulatory Panel Member – Licensing*
Regulatory Panel Member – Planning*
Scrutiny Board Chair
Scrutiny Board Member
Standards Committee Member

Members appointed to joint authorities, such as the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority, will also be offered learning and development opportunities specific to these roles.

* Planning and Licensing training is compulsory for any Member appointed to those panels.

Personal Development

In order to identify individual learning and development needs, all Members are encouraged to undertake an annual review of their learning, performance and achievement. The actual process for achieving this may alter slightly from one political group to another, but will usually involve a focussed discussion between individual Members and their deputy Group Whip. Members are encouraged to use the Member Development Framework (see page 8) to help identify any skills gaps in the core skills areas. During personal development discussions, Members may also wish to consider future aspirations and identify training options to help them attain their goals. For example, a Member who wishes to become an Executive or Deputy Executive Member in the future could identify leadership development as a learning need.

The learning and development needs identified through Personal Development discussions will result in the creation of an individual Personal Development Plan (PDP) for each Member. All PDP data will be collated by the Member Development Officer in order to inform the Annual Learning and Development Plan, as well as being used to meet specific individual needs.