



Report of the Chief Democratic Services Officer

Member Management Committee

Date: 29 March 2011

Subject: Member Development

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

The Member Development Working Group meets on a regular basis to formulate, progress and monitor Member Development activities. As the municipal year draws to a close, the Group has reflected on achievements over the past year and events planned for the future.

This report provides Member Management Committee with a summary of highlights from the learning programme for 2010-11 and proposals for an improved way of working to ensure that Member Development continues to meet the needs of elected Members in Leeds.

1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on training and development issues relating to elected Members. Specifically, this report contains the following items:

- details of attendance at events and programmes over the course of the year;
- suggestions for specific Member Development projects to take place in 2011-12; and
- proposals to improve the way the Member Development function operates, in order to deal with financial challenges and ensure that Members are equipped to deal with pace of change in local government.

2.0 Background information

2.1 Member Development is a key component of the Council's Annual Corporate Governance Statement, specifically in relation to the principle of *Developing Skills and Capacity*, where the Council states that it will ensure that those charged with the governance of the Council have the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform well.

2.2 The Council was awarded 'Charter Plus' status in June 2010. As an exemplar authority, Leeds is expected to share good practice and become a lead authority in regard to innovative and effective practice. This is resulting in an increase in regional activity (e.g. Leeds' hosting events, supporting a regional network and acting a hub for key learning activities).

2.3 Charter Plus also stipulates that Members must be able to describe how learning and development activities have helped them as individuals to carry out their role, and that Members are able to identify what changes and improvements have taken place as a result of their learning. More effective methods of evaluation are being undertaken in order to demonstrate how learning is providing value for money and demonstrating return on investment.

2.4 The Member Development Working Group leads on all issues relating to Member Development, instigating development sessions, monitoring attendance and evaluating their effectiveness.

3.0 Main Issues

Review of activity – 2010-11

3.1 A comprehensive learning programme for new and existing Members has taken place this year. Highlights included:

- an induction programme for the 11 new Members elected in May. Many events were shared with the other West Yorkshire authorities;
- four scheduled 'learning days', which were used to run the compulsory training events for Planning and Licensing Members;

- a series of regional learning events and conferences, funded by Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH). Topics included:
 - Understanding Shared Services
 - Responding to the Comprehensive Spending Review
 - Understanding Total Place
 - Using Social Media;
- Attendance at Local Government Improvement and Development's Leadership Academy (places for two Members, funded by LGYH);
- Attendance on the Institute of Leadership and Management course, leading to a level 3 qualification (3 Members, funded by LGYH); and
- 'Big topic' seminars, run in-house, on various subjects including the future of health in Leeds.

3.2 A full attendance summary for the 2010-11 period is included at Appendix 1 (please note that there are a number of events still to be held in March: Building Resilient Communities, Local Enterprise Partnerships seminar and the remaining Member Learning Day).

Events planned for 2011-12

3.3 Plans are underway for this year's induction programme. The content is based upon successful activities from last year and incorporates feedback and suggestions from new Members, the Member Development Working Group and Member Management Committee. It is proposed that, as for 2010, a number of activities are shared with the sub-region in order to avoid duplication, share costs and offer networking opportunities.

3.4 Further learning programmes are planned for both new and existing Members. These include:

- **Corporate Parenting** – general sessions aimed at all Members plus specific events for those in children-related roles (e.g. Corporate Carers). This programme will be run by 'Total Respect' – young people (looked-after children from Leeds) who have been trained to train others, in conjunction with Barnardo's. This short course will help Members to understand their role as corporate parents and the experiences and issues faced by young people in care.
- **Safeguarding Adults** – practical workshops based on scenarios Members may encounter in a surgery situation. The courses will provide context and background and allow Members to consider safeguarding issues through the use of case studies and real examples. (A similar programme on Safeguarding Children is also planned for 2011.)
- **Localism Bill** – a regional conference based on the context of the bill and its implications. (LGYH funding will be used to host the event in Leeds.)

- **Institute of Leadership and Management** – subject to funding, further opportunities will be available to send new and existing Members on level 3 and 4 qualifications at Northern College, Barnsley.
- **A series of ‘big-topic’ seminars** to update Members on key legislative changes or developments in local government. The format and timing of these events will be discussed with the relevant portfolio holder. It is suggested that the number of these events is limited to avoid overloading Members’ diaries.

Proposals for the future effectiveness of Member Development

- 3.5 The current Member Development Strategy comes to an end this year and a new Strategy is required for the 2011-15 period. The Strategy will reflect the aims of the new Council Business Plan and City Priority Plans. As a starting point for the production of the Strategy, the Member Development Working Group discussed a number of issues (both future and current) including:
- how the Member Development function will operate on a limited budget;
 - the impact of the withdrawal of regional funding; and
 - how the function can keep Members up to date effectively, given the pace of change in local government.
- 3.6 Members are asked for their views on the ideas and suggestions arising from these discussions, which are summarised in Appendix 2 – Ensuring the Future Effectiveness of Member Development.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 As the role of Members is complex and demanding, dedicated learning and development strategies which support Members and help them to lead the organisation are essential requirements for any Council.
- 4.2 Member development is a key means of building capacity in local government. Good practice is demonstrated by strategic planning on an individual and corporate basis, and can be evidenced by the award of charter marks such as the existing Member Development Charter and Charter Plus.

5.0 Legal And Resource Implications

- 5.1 Any funding required to deliver the 2011-12 programme will be met from the existing Member Development budget. Opportunities to bid for external funding will be explored for Leeds and also on behalf of the sub-region.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Member Management Committee is asked to note the Member development activities and attendance summary for 2010-11 as described in Appendix 1, and consider the proposals for future events and new ways of working as outlined in Appendix 2.

Background Papers

None Used