

Rossendale Borough Council

September 2005

**Building the capacity of elected members –
Personal development planning and training needs analysis**

A report from the Improvement and Development Agency for local government

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Recommendations	4
Background and context	5
Elected member personal development planning	5
Addressing development needs	8
Developing a strategic approach to member development	14
- <i>Monitoring and evaluation</i>	16
- <i>Supporting take up of member training and development</i>	17
- <i>Reviewing elected member PDPs</i>	18
Conclusion and next steps	19

Appendices

Appendix A	Summary of development needs (training needs analysis)
Appendix B	Draft PDP twelve month review form
Appendix C	Member development - good practice guidelines

Executive Summary

Rossendale Borough Council is clearly committed to elected member training and development. The authority has recognised that members have a pivotal role in implementing the council's strategic aims and priorities, and in making sure that individually, and collectively, they work effectively and efficiently to improve the quality of life for the people of Rossendale.

It is recognised that members are responsible for running multi-million pound, complex organisations in a changing social environment. This places great demands on them to continuously update their knowledge and learn new skills, and in recognition of this the council has ensured member development remains a key priority in its Improvement Plan.

The council is keen and committed to provide the support and advice needed to develop the requisite skills and knowledge needed by councillors in the 21st century, enabling them to become modern members and effectively undertake the roles and responsibilities demanded by the modernisation of local government. With this in mind, a cross-party Member Development Working Group has recently been established, and a process of personal development planning introduced following assistance from the IDeA.

This report provides the council with an analysis of the learning and development needs identified by the personal development plans. It also draws on other sources of information such as feedback from the previous member development activity provided by the IDeA, observation of meetings of the cabinet and scrutiny, and discussions with both members and officers. We have also drawn on IDeA's knowledge and experience of member development in other authorities, and used the behavioural indicators in the National Skills Framework for Elected Members as a benchmark to identify potential development needs.

The fact that 31 out of 36 elected members participated in the personal development process indicates that most councillors wish to enhance their personal knowledge and skills. The high participation rate was noted as very positive, given that ultimately the process is a voluntary one, and compares favourably to other authorities that have undertaken this type of work.

It is important to stress that while member development is a joint responsibility between the individual member and the council, a personal development plan requires the individual's commitment to continuous development, and that the responsibility for following up on identified needs rests predominately with the individual member.

Recommendations

The personal development planning process has identified the following areas where the authority is now in a position to respond:

- The adoption of an all-party Elected Member Development Policy with an emphasis on councillors taking personal responsibility for fulfilling their learning needs
- An annual programme of development activities to address the priority needs identified
- Delivery of the annual programme, including an approach to monitoring and evaluating member development, and consideration of how member attendance might be improved, having regard for the constraints on members' time.
- The provision of a range of other development activities, based on individual learning styles, for example, one-to-one discussions, briefing sessions, mentoring/coaching, member buddying, good practice visits, case studies, sharing good practice/learning, computer-based training, newsletters, away days and group work
- A review of the Personal Development Plans in 12 months' time in terms of: the progress made by individual members, and their achievements in furthering the council's strategic objectives and meeting aspirations of constituents.
- A more strategic approach to member development by pursuing accreditation to the North West Charter for Elected Member Development
- A review the support arrangements for members, ensuring that they are fit for purpose.

It is acknowledged that the authority has already begun to implement some of the above actions.

Background and context

1. The IDeA is currently supporting Rossendale Borough Council to build the capacity of elected members and help the authority move to a position where councillors value member development and consider it an important part of their commitment to continuously improve and develop the way that they carry out their roles and responsibilities.
2. As part of this support, assistance was provided to design and implement a system of the Personal Development Planning for elected members. This report suggests a way forward for elected member development following this process. It provides an analysis of needs identified, recommended development activities and suggested action that will help to further improve the authority's approach to elected member development.
3. The report also draws on other sources of information such as feedback from the previous member development activity provided by the IDeA, observation of meetings of the cabinet and scrutiny, and discussions with both members and officers. It also takes account of IDeA's knowledge and experience of member development in other authorities, and the behavioural indicators in the National Skills Framework for Elected Members as a benchmark to identify potential development needs.
4. It is important that our findings and recommendations provide the authority with a sustainable and strategic approach to elected member development. We have worked on the basis that elected member training and development is a joint responsibility between the individual member, regardless of their political party, and the council.
5. It is also important that member development activities help to reinforce the key member roles and responsibilities expected of members at Rossendale in accordance with the new constitution and political governance arrangements being introduced on 1st October 2005.
6. The suggestions and recommendations made in this report about ways of meeting the development needs identified have been made within the context of these developments, and the authority's current internal capacity and resources.

Elected member personal development planning

7. Elected member personal development planning should be seen as a means to help members update their knowledge and learn new skills to help them be more effective in taking forward Rossendale's improvement agenda, and ensuring the delivery of the council's strategic aims and priorities.
8. It is important that members are supported in this way, as the role of members has changed significantly in recent years. Although members retain their core representational role for their local constituents, they now

also have a range of other responsibilities and roles – as decision-makers, in scrutiny, as community leaders and working in partnership with a wide range of other organisations.

9. Personal Development Plans (PDPs) for members provide tangible evidence of individual and council commitment to building elected member capacity. Having a PDP shows that individual members accept personal responsibility for their continuous professional development.

10. The key features of the council's personal development planning system are:

- Council objectives are seen as the driver of activities
- Committee roles provide a focus for identifying needs
- Personal achievements provide an opportunity for reflection
- Planned action and outcomes are the focus for making a difference
- Identified benefits from previous training and personal development planning help evaluate investment
- Training and development is designed to support continuous improvement

11. The PDPs were conducted within the context of the council's priorities, which included:

- Housing stock transfer
- Customer services
- Revenues and benefits
- Street scene and liveability
- Rawtenstall Town Centre
- Finance/risk management
- Member development/political arrangements
- Human resources

12. Elected member personal development planning is ultimately a voluntary process. A reflection of the commitment by members in Rossendale to their development is illustrated by the fact that 31 out of 36 members completed PDPs. The members who engaged in the process reflected all parties, roles (both executive and non-executive) and parts of the District.

13. It is important to stress that a PDP requires individual commitment to continuous development, and that the responsibility for following up on identified needs rests predominantly with the individual member. Whilst the council should look to provide appropriate development activities addressing council, role and individual needs, it should be the individual member who ensures that they attend and participate.

14. Based on the responses from the PDPs an analysis has been made on the training and development needs of elected members in Rossendale, see Appendix A. The categories, using the political skills framework, include the following:

- Executive and leadership development
- Scrutiny and challenge
- Community leadership
- Regulatory and functional areas
- Managing performance
- Modernisation and understanding new policy and procedures
- Business management skills
- IT Training

15. One of the areas not specifically highlighted within the PDPs was finance, suggesting that members do not consider this a development need. Clearly, this will be an important issue not least within the context of efficiency gains and budget review requirements within the Comprehensive Performance Assessment regime. The authority will need to ensure that finance and risk management is included in its' member development programme, particularly as it is a priority of the council.

Review of Learning Styles

16. As part of the personal development planning process, members were requested to complete a learning styles questionnaire. It is evident from the questionnaire that the learning styles of members primarily fall into the two categories of "Reflector" and "Theorist".

17. In terms of delivering development and training, the styles are quite different:

A **Reflector** – will need time to think and consider all possible angles and implications before making a decision/ moving forward. They tend to adopt a low profile, but when they act they have considered the past as well as the future.

Effective training for this individual would offer reflection time on past experience and the opportunity to consider the impact of new training /development on what they are doing or trying to achieve. This might include:

- One-to-one discussion and feedback
- Mentor relationships
- Informative training with opportunity for discussion and looking at past experience
- Sharing good practice and learning from others
- Opportunities for reflection.

A **Theorist** will take a step-by-step approach and will rationalise all the information they are given. They have an analytical mind and will want to make sense and logic of the information placed before them. They also like to have 'enough' information to make a rational response and may favour more information than the reflector.

Effective training would present them with logical, thought-provoking information that can be applied in a rational way to what they are doing or trying to achieve. This might include:

- Good base-line information
- Clear presentation of where information has come from and the context for recommendations
- A combination of information and practical applications – case studies
- Learning from the experiences/ sharing good practice from others
- Brainstorming
- Question and answer sessions

18. In terms of future training and development, a range and balance of different approaches needs to be developed to ensure engagement of all members. This can be done by using a selection of approaches from each category when designing individual training sessions.

Addressing identified needs

Executive and leadership development

19. Whilst not explicitly featuring as a priority development need within PDPs, we are suggesting that the need for leadership development is an ongoing requirement, particularly given the move to formally adopt a Cabinet model from 1st October 2005.

20. The authority has recently recruited several new senior officers meaning that there will be some significant changes in the composition of the authority's "top team". This change, in addition to the challenge of leading the council's improvement agenda, suggests there would be benefit in offering development opportunities to executive members. Joint events with senior officers should continue but there is also scope for introducing cabinet development days, and mentoring support from peer members from other authorities who have faced similar challenges and changes. Learning from neighbouring councils with a focus on Lancashire-wide leadership issues should also be a feature of the development.

21. The authority should consider the following member development activities:

- Supporting cabinet members to attend national leadership programmes which enable sharing 'what works' while considering implications for their own context.

- Encouraging members to participate in regional leadership programmes such as the East Lancashire Leadership Programme.
- Continuation of member peer support/mentoring for leaders and cabinet members.
- Further cabinet and senior management development 'away days' - focussing on enhancing political and organisational leadership, developing the roles and relationships of members and officers, and also to provide an opportunity to pause, reflect and determine action that will address the key challenges ahead.

22. The authority may also wish to consider the following areas for development:

- "Portfolio plans" - an individual plan of action drawn up by the portfolio holder and relevant director/senior manager, largely informed by the council's corporate plan. This would help individual portfolio holders to communicate their priorities and actions, and provide a framework within which overview and scrutiny could hold executive members to account.
- Develop job/role descriptions setting out the key roles and responsibilities of the leader, deputy leader and portfolio holders.

Scrutiny and challenge

23. Overview and scrutiny is still a relatively new concept for local government and one that nationally is taking time to establish. It calls for new ways of working and requires a different set of skills than that of the old committee system. Both the personal development planning process and observations of meetings suggest that the full potential of scrutiny is not yet being realised at Rossendale.

24. In addition, overview and scrutiny evaluation workshops undertaken with scrutiny support staff, members and the management team in June, suggest that this is an important area for development, both in terms of members' ability and confidence to undertake effective scrutiny, and also in ensuring that the authority is able to provide effective support to members.

25. For overview and scrutiny to add value to the corporate planning and performance of the council, and win the commitment of backbenchers it is important that:

- Decision makers and appropriate officers fully appreciate the contribution it can make to informed decision taking and robust policy development
- Scrutiny chairs, and vice chairs, have the wider range of chairing skills needed including the need for a transparent and independent relationship with the cabinet

- All scrutiny members have the required skills, knowledge and approach to carry out their roles
26. The executive and scrutiny roles can be viewed as two sides of the same coin, and it is recommended that in providing development activities, there is a focus on the relationship and interface between both functions. This is especially important as the authority moves to formally adopt a cabinet model of governance and looks to develop the working relationship between the cabinet and scrutiny, particularly in the context of policy development and performance management.
27. From 1st October there will be two overview and scrutiny committees, instead of one. Consequently there will be more members undertaking a scrutiny role and it is important that members are provided with appropriate development activities to support them in these new and developing roles.
28. There are a range of development activities that the authority should consider, including:
- Joint cabinet and scrutiny workshop sessions to explore how the working relationship can be developed. It could also usefully consider the flow of information, how the executive is held to account, how the cabinet uses overview and scrutiny, and how overview and scrutiny could be used to build consensus on key issues. An initial workshop has been arranged for 6th October.
 - Practical coaching sessions to further develop the skills used in the overview and scrutiny process – in particularly questioning skills. As well as providing skills development sessions, there are benefits from structured direct coaching of the committee and post-meeting feedback, advice and challenge. It is suggested that a member with experience from another authority could be involved in the delivery of the sessions.
 - The IDeA has introduced a Leadership Academy programme on overview and scrutiny, and it may be that the authority considers offering leading overview and scrutiny members the opportunity to participate in this.
 - Continued participation in the Lancashire Scrutiny Partners Forum – as a useful way of exchanging knowledge and practice with other councils.
 - Further developing the council's Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit to include brief case studies capturing the learning from successful pieces of scrutiny work.

Community leadership

29. Under the modernisation agenda, community leadership takes on a new dimension and members need to realise that more can be done to take full

advantage of their roles in their immediate locality and in the district as a whole.

30. From the PDPs, many members appear to be looking for guidance and support in this area. The importance of engaging communities in shaping services and policy is recognised by many members, and has been acknowledged previously by the authority as an area for development.
31. The authority should consider a formal member development module focussing on increasing understanding and awareness of the local leadership role of members, reflecting on key messages in recent central government discussion papers (for example, Vibrant Local Leadership) and covering the skills required for ward representation including effective casework and community engagement.
32. The authority may also wish to consider commissioning a community leadership fitness check to help build local community leadership capacity to enable councillors to represent and champion a range of communities.
33. An annual "state of the District" debate at full council to focus on key issues faced by the area and the communities within it, could usefully be introduced.

Regulatory and functional areas

34. For those members involved in statutory functions the need to keep updated is a recurring theme. We suggest that members on these committees are encouraged to seek updates within their designated field. It is important to continue the compulsory/accredited training for licensing and planning functions. Updates could be achieved by specialist advice from appropriate regulatory bodies, attendance on specific courses, and visiting other authorities.
35. The authority should consider:
 - Continuing the compulsory training for all members of Development Control and Licensing Committees
 - Encouraging members to access and use external sources of information to keep abreast of best practice regarding development control and planning policy – for example the Planning Advisory Service www.idea.gov.uk/pas

Understanding new policy and procedures

36. From the PDP process, meeting observation and discussions with officers and members, there is evidence to suggest that not all members feel at ease with their "modernised" roles and responsibilities. This is understandable given the current transition from pilot executive arrangements to formal adoption of the cabinet model.

37. Whilst member structures have been modernised, there are instances where members continue to expect to work in a traditional committee style. Some non-executive members feel that they are unable to influence key decisions being made, or contribute effectively to policy development. There is scope to improve the understanding of how the various member roles and responsibilities within the new political arrangements interact.

38. There is a need for increased understanding of how members input to the policy development of the authority in their various roles (full council, executive, scrutiny, ward councillor) . Part of this is about raising the awareness and understanding of the channels of communication and information flow between officers and members, and amongst members.

39. In terms of development activities, the authority should consider:

- Workshops for members and officers raising awareness and understanding about the new constitution
- Regular briefing sessions and written communication to all members updating them on important strategic developments (for example, housing stock transfer).
- Encouraging members to access and use external sources of information to keep abreast of best practice (for example, IDeA Councillor magazine, IDeA Knowledge and information provided by NW Employers), partly by ensuring copies of publications and links to appropriate websites are provided in a members room/library and electronically on the council's intranet where appropriate.
- Developing role descriptions for members.

Managing performance

40. Understanding their part in performance management is also critical in helping members ensure that services focus on what matters to local people and that officers and decision-makers are accountable. It is therefore critical that members understand their various roles in Rossendale's performance management framework, including in the cabinet, scrutiny and full council, and see performance management as more than the monitoring of performance indicators.

41. The authority should consider providing a formal development module aimed at all members focussing on the performance management role of members. This could take the form of an externally facilitated workshop, for example, based on IDeA's Local Leadership Academy module on performance management, to allow both external challenge and examples of practice from other authorities.

IT training and support

42. There was significant interest from the PDPs in additional IT support. Members appear to have a big appetite for IT training, particularly geared towards meeting their individual needs.
43. The authority should consider IT “drop-in” sessions, to enable members to tackle problems or concerns on a one-to-one basis with an officer. A regular IT problem-solving slot would allow this to happen and also provide the opportunity for members to practice new skills with the added support of an IT officer on hand if required. Alternatively, members could be allocated IT “buddies”, whom they could contact about basic IT tasks, to help alleviate some of the anxiety about using computers. Preferably, the IT “buddies” should be officers or members using IT in a day-to-day setting, rather than an IT professional.
44. There are also opportunities for the authority to ensure that e-government and IT feature in development activities identified elsewhere in this report. For example, IT can help in managing casework, or in communication with communities, via “blogging” for instance.
45. There are clear benefits to be derived from all members being able to use and be confident with IT including:
- Access to e-learning training packages (specialist and core skills) which members can undertake at their own pace
 - Availability of key information and reports
 - Access to updates, for example, around changes in legislation and regulatory functions
 - Development of a members’ intranet for keeping members updated, and to encourage the sharing of ideas and good practice, within the authority and across other neighbouring or other similar authorities.
 - Dissemination of information such as summaries of conferences attended by other councillors
 - External communication, for example via newsletters (although care needs to be taken over protocols)
 - Consultation exercises to engage others around developing local vision and priorities.

Business management skills

46. The PDPs have revealed a range of practical skills identified by members as development needs, including presentational and chairing skills. There may be training already available to officers that could be tailored to meet the needs of members, or opportunities available via the local college, or North West Employers.

47. Members may want to shadow others who show a higher level of competence and confidence in these areas and the authority could consider supporting buddying arrangements - newer councillors paired with senior councillors to help share experience and practice in the context of the key member roles. It is suggested that this is a voluntary arrangement.
48. Members identified a range of other topics, where they would benefit from learning and development support. They recognised that many of these specific needs could be met through self-study and research, or by seeking one-to-one meetings or briefing sessions with the appropriate officer.
49. In short, a range of other development activities should be encouraged, based on specific needs and learning styles of individual members, for example, one-to-one discussions, briefing sessions, real life issues, mentoring/coaching, sharing good practice/learning, member buddying, feedback from live meetings, visits, computer-based training, newsletters, independent research, away days, case studies and group work

Developing a strategic approach to member development

50. It is important that the council takes a strategic approach to member development and that development opportunities flow from an agreed member training and development policy. This not only provides evidence of the council's ownership and commitment to member development; it helps members appreciate the importance of their development, the support they will receive, and crystallises where resources should be targeted. A clear cross-party training and development policy/strategy can help in ensuring that the needs of members are addressed in a timely and flexible manner.
51. The authority has already made an excellent start to this by establishing a member development working group and has a single dedicated budget for member development. Attached at Appendix C are some good practice guidelines for developing a strategic approach to member development, and the authority is encouraged to follow these. These are based on the standards set out in the IDeA Councillor Development Charter, and will help the authority achieve the North West Employers Member Development Charter. The Charter aims to promote best practice in councillor development and can be seen as a vehicle to improve the corporate performance of a local authority, through the development of its councillors.
52. The council should ensure that an *annual programme of training and development* is produced and that it differentiates training and development on the basis of:
- Council – what the authority recommends in terms of development for all members, for example, community leadership.
 - Function – needs for specific committee/roles, for example, overview and scrutiny skills.

Individual – personal skills that help members carry out their roles, for example, chairing, time management, and computer skills.

53. Clearly there is scope to schedule key dates for the year. Regular dates should be reserved in the council's diary of meetings to ensure that training and development become a recognised part of the member calendar, and to secure member attendance. Other approaches to encouraging member take-up are addressed later in the report.
54. With regard to design of the annual programme, in outlining details of the modules and events, there are benefits in stating what the activity aims to achieve. It is important that participants understand the purpose and objectives of the training. Having clear aims for each element of the programme is also essential in evaluating the effectiveness of the programme, encouraging a focus on outcomes as well as outputs.
55. The impact of the programme plays a significant role in forming perceptions about the value of training and development. The quality of the programme should reflect the importance Rossendale places on member development. Wording that grabs members' attention, begs to be read and arouses interest all play a part in a successful programme. There is also a need to consider where and how members will store information and training materials they may receive, to avoid them being lost in a mound of paperwork they receive.
56. There are other issues that need to be addressed in developing a strategy for member development, including:
 - The benefit to be had from having a two or three year member training and development plan
 - A mechanism for capturing, evaluating and sharing learning ensuring that information gathering systems relating to member development are sufficiently robust.
 - A clear policy on members' attendance at external conferences, leadership programmes and seminars
 - A clear approach to succession planning – how it is to be addressed and how members will be developed to take on leading roles
 - Maximising development opportunities through a range of methods such as self-study, computer-based training, coaching, visits, tapping in to officer events
 - How training sessions and other development opportunities will be organised and promoted to maximise attendance
 - The benefits of and possible approaches to joint officer and member development.

Monitoring and Evaluation

57. It is difficult for local authorities to measure the return on investment of training and development in quantitative or financial terms. Nevertheless, monitoring and evaluation of outputs and outcomes relies upon robust information systems, with the resources to keep it up-to-date.

58. The authority needs to be clear about the purpose of recording information on the member development programme. For example, the authority will want to inform external agencies such as ODPM of the investment in and benefits from training and developing elected members. The authority itself will want to make judgements about the programme in terms of its impact, the level of investment, the quality of delivery, its accessibility and equal opportunities monitoring. Consideration must be given to what will be done with the information, for example its use in monitoring performance, and delivering continuous improvement and to inform those who have accountabilities or roles in training and developing elected members.

59. Evaluating the impact of and outcomes from the member development programme is critical. Mechanisms may include:

Identification of purpose and objectives at the design stage

It is extremely important that in designing and organising development activities there is a clear understanding of the desired outputs and outcomes. These are needed to measure the success and effectiveness of development activity.

End of event questionnaires

End of event questionnaires should be designed to provide an insight into the appropriateness of the training, the quality of the delivery, whether it is likely to have achieved its objectives and how it could improve.

Personal Development Plans

Personal Development Plan reviews are also a way of capturing information about what councillors do that is different as a result of the learning activity. This can be undertaken at an individual or council-wide level.

Other mechanisms to support evaluation

These may include structured telephone interviews with members; discussions with key officers and members, particularly about major matters within their function and the council; and scanning the big picture, identifying member involvement and any development activity which may have had an impact.

60. An evaluation of training and development should outline what the authority has invested in training and development, what it believes are the main benefits and what it intends to do as part of the process of continuous improvement. It is likely to provide:

- a summary of learning activities (both in-house and externally)
- resource input in terms of costs and people
- relevant statistical data on attendance and numbers of training day
- significant outputs and outcomes
- future action for improvement.

Supporting take up of member training and development

61. It is important to recognise that elected members lead busy lives. The very nature of their role means they are often on other committees and active in their local community, some have full time jobs and all have a personal life. In organising development activities there is a need to capitalise on the time available. There is also a need to ensure that members are aware of what development opportunities are priorities for Rossendale. These should be clearly linked to key member roles.

62. In order to encourage member take-up of learning and development opportunities, there are a number of possible actions the council can take relating to:

- Establishing an all-party training and development reference group
- Developing a training and development policy
- Issuing all members with individual learning portfolios
- Encouraging all members to continue personal development planning
- Designing an annual programme to promote events

63. Promoting participation by considering issues of access and availability, and giving members plenty of notice. A cross-party member development working group has recently been established with the purpose of encouraging member ownership of their development, making sure that opportunities address what is important for them and taking account of constraints. The working group could also informally 'lobby' members to attend important events.

64. Issuing all members with a *learning portfolio* would reinforce that each member has a responsibility for their own development, along with the council's commitment to supporting elected member development. The portfolio could be a box file or ring binder. It should reflect the professional approach being taken to member training and development, and be clearly branded. The portfolio would provide a place for reference for all information relating to the individual's development. For example, it could include a member's role/job descriptions, their personal development plan, their training record and certificates, the annual member development programme, the member development policy as well as literature from events.

65. The council should encourage all members to continue to take part in *personal development planning*. The party leaders and the member

development working group have an important role to play in encouraging take-up. Consideration should also be given to making personal development planning a requirement for all newly appointed members, as part of their induction process.

66. The council should also *design an annual programme* to promote events. Such a programme should have initial impact and reflect the professionalism of the training and development function. It should provide a clear guide as to what members can expect in terms of outputs and outcomes from the training and development offered. Other activities to promote events could include:

- Reinforcing important topics at cabinet and party group meetings
- Timely and brightly coloured fliers
- Telephone follow-ups
- Timely e-mails
- Scheduling key events and dates in the council diary
- Sending text message "reminders" to members' mobile phones.

67. *Access and timeliness.* Repeating key events during the day and in the evening to ensure maximum attendance reinforces their importance. Where appropriate, holding events before committee meetings will usually ensure good attendance and also save on travel time. Timeliness is another important feature, for example providing development opportunities on finance for councillors at the time of budget-setting.

Reviewing elected member personal development plans

68. Elected member PDPs are a joint responsibility and it is critical that the council maintains a watchful and supporting role. Rossendale will need to make an early decision on how and when reviews will be carried out.

69. Reviews should include progress made against planned activities relating to council duties as well as other training and development. The review is also an opportunity to evaluate development that has taken place, and will inform the programme for the following year. The authority may consider the timing of future personal development planning so that it is aligned with the municipal year.

70. Given the limited internal officer resource available, it is suggested that the next round of personal development planning is undertaken on a self-assessment basis using the template (or one developed by the authority) attached at Appendix B, and the process managed/co-ordinated by the Democratic Services Manager. This process will help ensure that members retain the responsibility and ownership of their personal development planning.

Conclusion and next steps

71. Elected members have a pivotal role in seeing that their communities receive good public services. Ultimately they will serve the community better if they continuously update and develop their existing skills and knowledge. Personal development planning provides a structured process to do this.
72. Having assisted you to design and implement a PDP system we look forward to supporting Rossendale Borough Council to design a member development programme and working with you on commissioning, monitoring and evaluating it.

Paul Clarke
Acting Programme Manager
Improvement and Development Agency

Tel. 07887 706960
Email. paul.clarke2@idea.gov.uk

September 2005

Appendix A

Rossendale Borough Council - Summary of training and development needs identified from PDP interviews *(Based on 31 PDP Interviews)*

Topic	Number of Councillors
Executive and leadership	
Develop role as cabinet member	2
Strategic issues affecting cabinet	1
Executive team training	1
Making informed decisions	1
Scrutiny and challenge	
Develop overview and scrutiny procedures, processes/techniques	9
Making use of call-in procedures	1
Providing constructive and effective opposition	1
Community and local leadership	
Communicating with all sections of the community	6
Working with the community/local leadership/ role in area forum	4
Being an effective councillor and running surgeries and satisfying constituents	4
Working of Local Strategic Partnership and promoting Rossendale	3
Making most of partnerships and working with community bodies	3
Working with neighbouring authorities	1
Reporting public concerns (within structures)	1
Regulatory and functional areas	
Licensing	5
Development control	4
Planning policies	2
Key regulatory skills/updates	2
Housing policy supporting development control	1
Developing tourism	1
Understanding public finance	1
Emergency planning	1
New look Lancashire Local	1
List of employees and contact details	1
Modernisation and understanding new policy and procedures	
Council protocols/procedures	6
New constitution and updates on change (policy/legislation/procedures)	1
Policy making procedures	1
Rehearsing full council	1
Managing performance	
Member and officer roles in performance management	1
Use of BVPIs	1

IT training	
Communicating electronically	1
Producing newsletters (MS)	1
IT skills training/1-1	12
Member websites	1
Guidance on use of laptop	3
Business management skills	
Listening/questions/constructive challenging	3
Communication skills	5
Time management	2
Assertive/meetings/chairing	10
Speaking in large groups	3
Communicating political values	2
Engaging the press/media training	2

Appendix B
PDP Review Form

Councillor: PDP Date:	Review Date:
<p>Positions Held / Committees Served On If there has been any changes to the committees you serve on since your PDP interview please list them.</p> <p>How might this affect your planned activities as a councillor and planned development?</p>	
<p>What you said you wanted to do in your ward or the wider community:</p>	
<p>Please comment on progress made and any other achievements.</p>	
<p>Future Plans – Development activities What you said you wanted to learn:</p>	

<p>Please list training and development you have undertaken since your Personal Development interview and the benefits to you and the Council. (This can include self study, visits, networking as well as formal events)</p>	
<p>Personal Development Plans are a joint responsibility. Do you feel that you are receiving sufficient support from the Council to carry out your Personal Development Plan and if not how could support be improved?</p>	
<p>Any other comments:</p>	
<p>Signature:</p>	<p>Date:</p>

Please complete and return within 7 days to.....

Appendix C - Good practice guidelines – member development

Good Practice Guidelines
<p>1. Commitment to member development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top political and managerial leadership commitment to development of elected members • Policy statement • Equality of opportunity and access to learning and development • Budget • Officer resource support • Dissemination of learning
<p>2. Strategic approach to member development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member led strategy • Linkage to council corporate plan • Member roles clearly set out • Process for identification of needs 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 • Mechanisms for evaluation, and informing future plans, identified
<p>3. Member learning and development plan in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses development priorities • Identify what development activities should achieve • Sets out how, when, where and who is responsible • Takes account of access to development opportunities • Linkage between Individual plans and the council’s corporate and other plans • Representative elected members consulted
<p>4. Learning and development is effective in building capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) Improvements to learning and development activities
<p>5. Elected Member Development promotes work life balance & citizenship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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