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| <p>TITLE: MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>TO/ON: CABINET - 9th NOVEMBER 2005</p> <p>BY: HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</p> <p>LEAD MEMBER: JANET GRAHAM, HUMAN RESOURCES AND MEMBER DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>STATUS: FOR PUBLICATION</p> |
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To seek approval to the Member Development Strategy 2005/06 and to outline the reasons for the production of the Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. To note the reasons for the production of a Member Development Strategy;
- 2.2. To approve the revised terms of reference of the Member Development Working Group; and
- 2.3. To recommend to the Council to adopt a Member Development Strategy for 2005/06 and associated Member Development Action Plan 2005/06.

3. REPORT AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS AND TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 In 2002 the Audit Commission's Corporate Governance report identified weaknesses in the Council's corporate governance arrangements and highlighted that the Council did not provide adequate development opportunities for elected Members. Particular areas of concern included poor political leadership, a lack of understanding and clarity of roles, an absence of development and training, insufficient knowledge and skills for Members to take informed decisions; and a lack of basic induction training. Members will be aware that the Audit Commission's findings were accepted by the Council and are now being addressed in the Improvement Plan which is monitored by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

- 3.2. The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) carried out by the Audit Commission in 2003, whilst acknowledging some improvements, also highlighted on-going concerns in respect of the lack of a Member Development Framework; the poor knowledge base of elected Members; a lack of opportunities to share information; limited confidence; a lack of briefing on key issues; and patchy involvement in the management of performance. In response to that report the Council introduced, in 2003, a Member Induction Programme and a Member Training Programme. The training programme continues to be delivered jointly by both in-house providers and the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA).
- 3.3. The Audit Commission's Progress Assessment Report of December 2004 noted the improvements which had been made with regard to councillors' involvement in difficult decision making, member development and performance management. However, there was an acknowledgment that this was not fully embedded or yet having an impact on delivery or outcomes. Accordingly, in January 2005, the Council adopted Member Development and New Political Arrangements as its second corporate priority for 2005/06.
- 3.4. The I&DeA published its report in March 2005 following a review of Member Development and Political Arrangements. The report considered the progress made so far and the proposed priorities for the future. The recommended priorities for 2005/06 were as follows:-
 - 3.4.1. Formalisation of the new political and governance arrangements
 - 3.4.2. Development of front line Members
 - 3.4.3. Community leadership
 - 3.4.4. Member/Officer relations.
- 3.5. A training proposal developed by the I&DeA in April 2005 has been agreed and provides the following strands of support:-
 - 3.5.1. Support to the development of new political governance arrangements
 - 3.5.2. Promoting a strategic approach to Member development
 - 3.5.3. Peer support and Members mentoring
 - 3.5.4. Development of Member/officer relationships and working.
- 3.6. The purpose of the Member Development Strategy is to provide a clear guidance and direction for the development and support of elected members over the forthcoming year. It will ensure that member development is central to the day to day working of the Council and underpins the move towards Rossendale Council as a learning organisation. The Strategy will provide Members with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver the Council's

corporate improvement priorities for the benefit of local constituents. A copy of the proposed Strategy is attached at Appendix A.

- 3.7. The five key objectives of the Strategy, which have been identified in the light of the evidence contained in the above reports, are as follows:-
 - 3.7.1 The provision of a comprehensive Member Development Strategy and Development Programme which balances group and individual needs with Council priorities;
 - 3.7.2. Ensuring that all newly elected Members are properly inducted into the Council and their role;
 - 3.7.3. Ensuring that all Members are connected to the Council's IT system;
 - 3.7.4. Undertaking annual personal development plans for Members based upon individual need and preferred learning style to assist them in their development;
 - 3.7.5. Improving the external recognition of Rossendale Borough Council as a lead authority for Member development.
- 3.8. The Strategy contains an Action Plan, which outlines how each of the above priorities will be met. It is also intended that the Strategy will form the basis of a Member Development Programme issued quarterly, which will identify a range of facilities, activities and materials, which Members will be able to access to ensure self-development. The Strategy itself will be revised annually.
- 3.9. The production of this Strategy represents an important milestone in the Council's recovery programme, as Members take responsibility for and control of their own development needs, rather than simply responding to external advice. Members can be justifiably proud of this achievement. The Authority will continue to work closely with the I&DeA in delivering Member development for the future. However, the adoption of this Strategy allows greater flexibility for Members to choose the areas of learning which are important to them.
- 3.10. A Member Development Working Group (MDWG) has been established to oversee the production of the Strategy and Development Programme and to monitor their effectiveness. The Working Group will help to ensure that the views of elected Members remain central to the process. The Working Group specifically comprises cross party representation, with a mixture of gender, Portfolio Holder/Front-Line Members and differing lengths of service. The Working Group met for the first time on 20th July 2005 and agreed its terms of reference, together with the draft Strategy. Subsequently, a proposal has been developed to expand the scope of the MDWG to include overseeing the provision of Members' Services. A copy of the revised terms of reference of the Working Group is attached at Appendix B.
- 3.11. Throughout the period July/August 2005 Members were invited to complete Personal Development Plans (PDPs). This process involved a structured interview with a member of staff from Legal and Democratic Services or the

I&DeA to assess each councillor's achievements to date, plans for the future, any training undertaken, appointments held, key skills sets, future development needs and preferred learning styles. Some 31 elected members participated in the PDP exercise, which represents an impressive 86% take up. The results have been collated by I&DeA colleagues and their report is attached at Appendix C. The PDPs have helped to identify broad Member development needs and it is envisaged that they will also inform the Development Programme. The annual PDP process will also provide a useful source of information when the Strategy is revised each year.

- 3.12. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 8th August 2005, considered a report on the draft Strategy and the establishment of the MDWG and agreed to recommend the Cabinet to adopt the Member Development Strategy for 2005/06 and the associated Member Development Action Plan 2005/06.
- 3.13. The Improvement Board, at its meeting on 22nd August 2005, considered progress in relation to Member development and were provided with a copy of the draft Strategy. The Board reiterated the importance of Member development in relation to CPA. They also made some suggestions in relation to identifying timescales within the Action Plan, incorporating the work of the East Lancashire Leadership Programme into the Strategy and ensuring that training was delivered.
- 3.14. It is intended to work towards accreditation through the North West Charter for Member Development. The award, issued by the North West Employers Organisation, recognises achievement in the area of Member Development.
- 3.15. A further meeting of the MDWG is scheduled to be held on 2nd November 2005 to consider the recommendations of the I&DeA report and the latest draft of the Strategy. Any comments received will be reported orally at the meeting on 9th November 2005.
- 3.16. The Cabinet is requested to note the report, to approve the revised terms of reference of the MDWG and to recommend Council to adopt the Strategy for 2005/06 and associated Member Development Action Plan 2005/06.

4. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

4.1. FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1.1. Not applicable

4.2. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS

4.2.1. Production of a Member Development Strategy is central to the delivery of this corporate priority. Specific elements of training within the Development Programme will also assist in the smooth implementation of the new political management arrangements.

4.3. HUMAN RESOURCES

4.3.1. Development of Elected Members can be seen in parallel with the overall development of the Council's Human Resources and the change in culture to that of a learning organisation. It is envisaged that member development will help to increase the capacity of elected members to deliver improvements in Council services.

5. ANY OTHER RELEVANT CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1. Not applicable

6. RISK

6.1. None

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM THE REPORT

7.1. None

8. EQUALITIES ISSUES ARISING FROM THE REPORT

8.1. None

9. WARDS AFFECTED

9.1. Not applicable

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1. Member Development Working Group

Background documents:

I&DeA Report – Member Development and Political Arrangements: Progress to Date and Next Steps – March 2005

For further information on the details of this report, please contact:

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MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2005/06

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1. Why have a Member Development Strategy? What is it all about?

In 2002 the Audit Commission produced its Corporate Governance report on the Council. The Audit Commission concluded that the Council was one of the worst run Council's in the country. It found that there were weaknesses in the Council's governance arrangements and that the Council did not provide adequate development and training opportunities for members. The following quotes illustrate this:-

“The Council's problems are a result of poor political leadership and the failure of senior management to tackle the problems over a number of years”.

“The political leadership needs to understand and respect the respective roles performed by officers and work with them to find solutions to the identified problems faced by Rossendale Borough Council”.

“There is little recognition of the need for Councillor development and training”.

“Councillors have commented about not having sufficient knowledge or skills to take properly informed decisions. A significant proportion of Councillors are not actively engaged in the decision making process”.

“Members should be given basic induction training on procedure and roles in Council meetings. The training should explain clearly the difference in officer and member roles as well as the role of backbenchers and the scrutiny function. They should attend an induction session on the work of a Committee prior its first meeting after an election. That session should cover; which officer is responsible for what (i.e. who to contact), the key services, the legislation affecting them, the successes and problems, the risk the Council is exposed to, what it costs, the savings/changes that have been looked at. Ideally there should also be a tour to the key sites (e.g. leisure services, problem housing estates, highways and refuse vehicle yards, finance etc) and this should include an opportunity to speak to some service users. Members should also receive specific training on the Council's budget process. This training may be best provided by an external agency.”

The Council accepted the Audit Commission's findings and implemented an Improvement Plan which is monitored by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

In 2003 the Audit Commission carried out a comprehensive performance assessment on the Council's. The Audit Commission's subsequent report stated:-

“There has been limited development of the role of Members in the recent past and there remains no overall framework within which Member development needs can be identified and met. The knowledge and information with which Members are currently working are insufficient to meet the needs of the Council as a whole. There is limited

knowledge sharing or appropriate and timely briefings on key issues, for example housing stock options. Members' confidence in their knowledge and understanding of these issues will be vital when decisions need to be taken. Scrutiny is in its early stages of development and is beginning to consider the policy development role of Members, through working parties initially scrutinising key issues arising from the CTI report."

"The involvement of Members in management of performance is also patchy. There is no history of Members scrutinising and challenging performance, and the lack of data and systems of accountability for performance has exacerbated this situation. Member confidence in performing their role in the scrutiny of the performance is low."

In 2003 the council introduced its first ever member induction programme and member training programme.

The Audit Commission's progress assessment report dated December 2004 states:-

"The introduction of the Pilot Executive Committee and Member Development Programme with IDeA have improved decision making.

"Members, especially Committee chairman and opposition spokespersons should be encouraged to attend professional conferences and should be made aware of all other development opportunities and the local government media."

The Council has now moved to a position where member development is routinely provided as part of the normal business of the Council. Members now value member development and see it as an important part of their commitment to continuously improve the way they carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Member development is the Council's second corporate priority this year.

The Improvement and Development Agency in its review of member development concluded that the Council's priorities for 2005-06 should be as follows:-

1. Formalisation of the new political and governance arrangements
2. Development of front line members
3. Community leadership
4. Member Officer relations

Having a member development strategy in place will mean that there is clear guidance and direction for the development and support of members over the forthcoming year and it will ensure that member development continues to be embedded as a key element of the Council.

The Strategy will be developed out of the training and development needs that are identified annually by members from their personal development plans to assist them in the delivery of the Council's corporate improvement priorities.

It sets out:

- What areas members have identified as the main priorities to be addressed
- How these are being met and what support is available
- What benefit this will bring to Members, the Council overall and the residents of Rossendale

The Strategy is reviewed annually so that any priorities identified are based on relevant and current needs.

2. Who has been involved in the development of this Strategy?

The Member Development Working Group is developing the Strategy. The Working Group is also responsible for monitoring the Strategy's implementation.

The Member Development Working Group



Cllr Janet Graham



Cllr Judith Driver



Cllr David Hancock



Cllr Gladys Sandiford



Cllr Catherine Pilling

3. What are the ideas behind the Member Development Strategy?

The guiding direction (the vision) behind the Strategy is set out below.

To ensure that all members are fully supported in their learning and development so that they have the necessary skills to deliver the council's priorities for the benefit of their constituents.

This vision will be achieved by 5 key objectives:

1. The provision of a comprehensive Member Development Strategy and Development Programme which balances group and individual needs with Council priorities.
2. Ensuring that all newly elected members are properly inducted into the Council and their role.
3. Ensuring that all members are connected to the council's IT system.
4. Undertaking annual personal development plans for members based on

individual need and preferred learning style to assist them in their development.

5. Improving the external recognition of Rossendale Borough Council as a lead authority for member development.

The Member Development Action Plan sets out how these objectives will be achieved, along with the main priorities for member development for this year.

4. What has been achieved so far?

Some of the recent successes in relation member support and development include the following:

- ◆ The creation of a Member Support Officer post within Democratic Services
- ◆ The publication of a Members Bulletin
- ◆ Provision of Laptops to all Members
- ◆ A comprehensive induction programme for new and returning members to provide specialised support for the first few months in office
- ◆ Individual training records for every member
- ◆ An annual training programme
- ◆ Personal development plans for members (31 Members have participated)
- ◆ Signed up to the North West Charter for member development
- ◆ Participation in the East Lancashire Leadership programme

5. How do we measure our successes?

The Member Development Working Group has the responsibility for reviewing and monitoring support and development for Councillors. It will review the Strategy and Development Programme every 12 months, and reports are regularly taken to the Standards Committee throughout the year on a number of issues.

6. What are the main priorities for the forthcoming year? How have these been identified?

As a result of consultation with all Council Members via the group representatives on the Member Development Working Group, a list of main priorities for member support and development for the forthcoming year has been identified. The priorities are set in

the [Action Plan](#) in Section 9 of this Strategy and will form the basis for the Member Development Programme (see Section 8 for further details).

7. What about my own priorities for support and learning?

Each member has the opportunity to discuss his/her own individual support and learning requirements and develop their own personal plan to address these. These discussions are very informal and can take place either on an individual basis, or say, with a fellow Councillor who may have similar requirements that they too would like to discuss.

The Democratic Services Team will provide the necessary support for this to take place and can help to identify what ways this can best suit individuals as well as the full range of available resources and events.

All discussions will take place on a friendly and informal basis and, of course, are strictly confidential.

If you would like to discuss any individual support or requirements please contact Susan Pickup in the Democratic Services Team on 01706 244598.

8. What resources have we got available?

There are a number of resources that help deliver support for member learning and development:

The Member Development Programme

This document contains details of the wide range of facilities available to meet the main priorities identified including:

- ◆ workshops
- ◆ information briefings
- ◆ one-to-one training
- ◆ e-learning packages
- ◆ conferences
- ◆ visits to other authorities and organisations
- ◆ books, videos and DVDs
- ◆ mentoring and shadowing colleagues or officers

The Programme is issued each quarter and includes new events as they arise plus a review of those which have taken place. Copies of this document are available to all members on the Council's Intranet and will be sent to every member via the members' bulletin.

Officer support

Whilst Susan Pickup, Member Support Assistant is your first port of call, all members of the Democratic Services team are happy to help you with any queries or development needs that you have. The Democratic Services Team are:

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Doreen Fletcher

Executive Support Assistant

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Vivista provide support for the Members ICT at Home Scheme and Human Resources assist in the provision of training for members, as appropriate.

Financial support and equipment

A budget of £17,500 has been allocated for member development this year. Responsibility for the budget rests with Human Resources who review the expenditure each quarter.

Each member has a Council laptop and is connected to the Council's IT system.

9. Member Development Action Plan 2005/06

This Action Plan sets out how the objectives and priorities for the current year will be addressed and how success will be measured.

The actions listed have been informed by a number of sources including:

- Consultation with all three political groups on priorities for the year
- Objectives outlined earlier in this Strategy
- Continuation of actions from last years training Programme
- Actions set out in the Council's Corporate Plan
- The Audit Commission Report on Democratic Renewal
- Common themes emerging from members' personal plans

The Action Plan itself will be a 'living document' in that it will be updated regularly by the Member Development Working Group as priorities change and progress is made towards achieving any actions listed.

ACTION PLAN

Note:

MDWG = Member Development Working Group

General Priorities:

| Objective/Priority | Key Activities | Budget considerations | Timescale | Critical Success Factors | Key people involved |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Provision of a comprehensive Member Development Strategy and Development Programme which balances group and individual needs with Council priorities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDWG to consider initial draft Strategy following consultation with all members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil | August 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of minimum of 5 days training per member per annum 25% increase in attendance at training events compared to previous year Increased knowledge, skills and experience gained by Council members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDWG Democratic Services Team Human Resources (as appropriate) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to Cabinet and Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil | November 2005 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy to be published and made available to all Members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printing costs for copies or nil if email/website | December 2005 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Development Programme to MDWG based on Strategy priorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £17,500 training budget to address this | December 2005 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly review of development events to MDWG | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil | November 2005, February 2006 and May 2006 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly budget monitoring report to MDWG | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil | November 2005, February 2006 and May 2006 | | |

| Objective/Priority | Key Activities | Budget considerations | Timescale | Critical Success Factors | Key people involved |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| All newly elected Members to be properly inducted into the Council and their role | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any by-election | | On-going | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members feel comfortable in their role as councillor more quickly Rossendale's programme being recognised as example of good practice Encourage more candidates to stand for office | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDWG Democratic Services Team |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local election 2006 | | May 2006 | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing review of induction programme and mentoring scheme with MDWG | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil | May 2006 | | |
| All Members to have the opportunity to benefit from information technology to assist them in their role and their development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review provision of documents sent to Members by hard copy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probably printing savings | October 2005 and May 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members becoming e-champions and more accessible to constituents Faster access to documents Possible cost savings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDWG Democratic Services Team Vivista |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of electronic members' enquiry database | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> System to be developed in house | February 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of hours facility for logging queries Meet targets for response times to members' enquiries Increased public satisfaction with members | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out of lap top facilities to all Council members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible training costs to be met from Member training budget | August 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members to have access to IT at home Members to develop skills to utilise IT effectively | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly review of Members' Information Portal (accessibility, links etc) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil | November 2005, February 2006 and May 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to key documents More timely information on ward/corporate issues | |

| Objective/Priority | Key Activities | Budget considerations | Timescale | Critical Success Factors | Key people involved |
|--|--|---|----------------------|---|--|
| Personal plan for members to assist them in their training and development based on individual need and preferred learning style | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments to be scheduled throughout the year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some individual development costs | July/August 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of Members to have developed own Personal Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDWG • Democratic Services Team |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of uptake with MDWG | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil | November 2005 | | |
| Rossendale being recognised as a lead authority for member development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to MDWG on progress on NW Charter • Re-assessment visits from North West Employers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil • Nil | May 2006 On-going | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award of Member Development Charter • Shortlisting for LGIU Local Democracy Initiative of the Year • External recognition as Rossendale as lead authority • Constituents' confidence in local councillor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDWG • Democratic Services Team |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for LGIU Local Democracy Initiative of the Year Award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil | May 2006 | | |
| Review of Member/Officer Protocol | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to MDWG | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil | March 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved working relations between members and officers • Meet targets for response times to members' enquiries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDWG • Democratic Services Team |

Specific learning/development priorities:

(Please see the Member Development Programme 2005/06 for details of forthcoming specific events/resources available to address these priorities).

| Objective/Priority | Key Areas | |
|---|--|--|
| Communication skills | • Public speaking/presentation skills | • Customer (constituents) service skills |
| | • Negotiating/influencing skills | • Report writing |
| | • Assertiveness skills | |
| Surgery and related skills | • Running effective surgeries | • Handling conflict and aggression |
| | • Questioning/counselling skills | • Campaigning skills |
| | • Handling difficult people | |
| Media Relations | • Understanding of the media | • Giving media interviews |
| | • Giving press releases and statements | |
| General meeting skills | • Chairing meetings | • Making contributions in meetings |
| Scrutiny | • Chairing scrutiny meetings | • Questioning skills |
| | • Scoping scrutiny reviews | |
| Other Council meetings and related skills | • Planning issues | • Employment and Appeals |
| | • Licensing reforms | • Laws of natural justice |
| | • Code of Conduct for Members and declaring interests | • The Council's Constitution |
| Managing yourself | • Time management/prioritisation skills | • Setting up filing systems |
| | • Speed reading skills | |
| Information Technology (IT) | • Using word processing packages | • File management |
| | • Using the Internet | • Members' Portal |
| | • Using e-mail | • Developing your own website/pages |
| Budgets and finance | • Understanding the budget process | • Housing finance |
| | • Capital spending | |
| | • Education finance | |
| Performance Management | • The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process | • Other inspection regimes. |
| General issues and knowledge | • Equality and disability | • Information about Council departments |
| | • Community safety/crime and disorder | • The Council's Masterplan |
| | • Environmental issues | • Information on outside bodies |
| | • Risk management and health and safety | |

Member Development Working Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| BACKGROUND | The Member Development Working Group was appointed at Annual Council on 27 th May 2005 |
| PURPOSE | Informal Elected Member group to provide focus for member development for the Council. The group will help to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate member development, ensure the Member Development Plan's ongoing review and work towards continuously improving the competency of Rossendale Borough Council members. The group will also oversee Members' Services provision, act as a forum to consider Members' day to day concerns and suggestions and enable members to be consulted about new developments at an early stage. |
| FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS | 4 – 5 times per annum. |
| QUORUM | The group will be quorate when at least two of the elected members are present. |
| SUPPORT TO THE GROUP | The group will be supported in its work by the Democratic Services Team |
| OBJECTIVES | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide strategic direction 2. Strategically monitor / prioritise development plan activities 3. Strategically monitor training budget 4. Strategically review training outcomes 5. Ensure link to Council aims / priorities / objectives 6. Ensure Elected Member lead 7. Develop policy statement 8. Develop Elected Member Development Programme 9. Promote development opportunities 10. Identify development needs (individual & Council) 11. Lobby political groups |

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Ensure cross-party communication 13. Share learning best practice 14. Ensure and promote accessibility 15. Promote diversity 16. Demonstrate continuous improvement 17. Identify learning objectives 18. Induction programme 19. Identify budget 20. Promote democracy & citizenship. 21. Act as a forum for Member concerns and issues 22. Develop and oversee a Member complaints process 23. Oversee Members' Services provision, including the monitoring of performance and development of provision |
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| SCOPE | <p>Elected Member Learning & Development Organisational development Members' Services issues</p> |
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| MEMBERSHIP | <p>Total 5 Elected Members. Comprising, Executive Member with portfolio for Human Resources and Member Development . Remaining (4) membership to be politically proportionate and reflect the various roles of elected members.</p> |
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| REPORTING | <p>Notes from Member Development Group meetings will be submitted to Elected Member Representatives to communicate with their Party Group colleagues.</p> <p>Reports of the group are to be submitted as appropriate. It is anticipated that reports prepared on behalf of the group will be on issues of corporate concern.</p> |
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| DELIVERABLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected Member Personal Development Plans • Elected Member Development Strategy • Elected Member Learning and Development Programme • Elected Member role descriptions • Elected Member Handbook • Pre-Candidate event • Induction Strategy |
|---------------------|---|

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership and capacity building• Evaluation / improvement Strategy |
|--|--|

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

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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.

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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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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

1. 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.

2. 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

1. 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.

2. 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

1. 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".

2. 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

1. 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.

2. 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

1. 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.

2. 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

1. 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.

2. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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

1. 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

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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

1. 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.
2. 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

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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

1. 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

1. 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.

2. 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

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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

1. 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.
2. 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.

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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

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|--|---------------------|
| 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. 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> | |
| | |

| |
|---|
| Future Plans – Development activities What you said you wanted to learn: |
| |
| |
| |

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)

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?

Any other comments:

Signature: Date:

Please complete and return within 7 days to.....
Appendix C - Good practice guidelines – member development

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|---------------------------------|
| Good Practice Guidelines |
|---------------------------------|

1. Commitment to member development • 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

2. Strategic approach to member development • 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

3. Member learning and development plan in place • 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

4. 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) Improvements to learning and development activities

5. Elected Member Development promotes work life balance & 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