



Democratic Renewal Working Party 8 September 2011

Member Development: Update

SUMMARY

1. East of England Local Government Association (LGA) Charter for Elected Member Development

1.1 Firstly this report provides an update on progress with the Member Development Charter Action Plan approved at the last meeting.

2. Setting the remainder of the 2011/2012 Member Development Programme

2.1 A total of 35 Training Needs Analysis (TNA) forms have now been completed by Members. An analysis has been undertaken of how Members assessed themselves against a range of skills (see Appendix A), as well as other comments added by Members regarding the provision of training. Additionally, analysis has been carried out of comments received on post-training evaluation sheets returned following the induction training sessions during May, June and July 2011. The information provided by Members on the TNA forms and evaluation sheets can be used to inform a Member Development Programme for the remainder of 2011/2012.

3. Member Development Budget

3.1 Action 6 of the Member Development Charter Action Plan asks that the Working Party be kept up to date with the budget for Member Development. The current status of this year's Member Development budget is provided at Appendix B for Members' information and discussion as necessary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Working Party is asked to:

1. East of England Local Government Association (LGA) Charter for Elected Member Development (Section 1)

1.1 Discuss progress with the Member Development Charter Action Plan.

2. **Member Development Programme 2011/2012 (Section 2 and Appendix A)**
- 2.1 Use the summarised results of the Training Needs Analysis exercise, information provided on course evaluation sheets and local and national priorities to advise officers of the areas for prioritisation for the remainder of the 2011/2012 Member Development Programme.
3. **Member Development Budget (Section 3 and Appendix B)**
- 3.1 Discuss the use of the Member Development budget and advise officers whether the budget is being allocated appropriately.

Contact Details

Name
Telephone
E-mail

Chairman

Cllr Mrs P Warby
(01284) 704138
patricia.warby@stedsbc.gov.uk

Scrutiny Manager

Adriana Stapleton
(01284) 757613
adriana.stapleton@stedsbc.gov.uk

1. East of England Local Government Association (LGA) Charter for Elected Member Development

1.1 The Working Party has previously set an Action Plan of twelve recommendations arising from the Council's assessment for the Member Development Charter. The first three recommendations are essential in order for the Council to re-achieve Charter status, and the remaining actions, whilst desirable, are not essential.

1.2 The Action Plan is set out below, together with progress to date in achieving the actions. Shaded actions are, in officers' opinion, complete.

Recommendation	Actions	Progress
Priority areas for improvement		
<p>1. That a minimum of 60% of Elected Members, including the entire Cabinet and Democratic Renewal Working Party, complete the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) by 30 September 2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TNA to be circulated to all Members following Borough Council Elections; • Officer "buddies" to meet with any Members requiring assistance to complete the TNA; • Group Leaders to stress the importance of Member Development and encourage their Members to complete the TNA; and • Evidence of 60-70% return on TNA to be submitted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TNA circulated late June 2011, giving Members time to "find their feet" before assessing their own skills levels and training needs. • Member Buddies nominated from across the Council have met with new Members during June/July 11 to complete the forms if required, and the Scrutiny Manager has also met with a number of Members. • We are currently showing a 78% return (60-70% return was required by the deadline of 30 Sept 2011). • All Cabinet and DRWP Members have completed the form.
<p>2. Following completion of this process, the authority adopt a training programme based on the corporate priorities of the authority, national, legislative and partnership priorities, and the needs identified in the Training Needs Analysis (target December 2011). Evidence of progress to be provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each potential area of development to be accompanied by its relevance with regard to Corporate Priorities and national and partner priorities; and • Publication of Member Development Programme for the remainder of 2011/2012. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Member Induction Plan was developed into a brochure giving details of each session offered, including links to the Corporate Priorities. • The wider Member Development Programme cannot be set until after completion of the TNA. • In the meantime, development sessions have been set for September, October and November 2011 based on changing legislation and areas identified by officers.

Recommendation	Actions	Progress
<p>3. There is a need to co-ordinate central training and "satellite" training arranged by other officers through the Democratic Renewal Working Party, with all of this being incorporated into the Annual Training Programme (target: September 2011).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with Management Team emphasising necessity for all training to be identified as part of the Member Development Programme; • MT to be periodically reminded of this necessity; • All induction training to be co-ordinated through the Scrutiny Manager and Working Party; and • Evidence of "satellite" training being included in the Member Development Programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MT colleagues have been requested to advise Scrutiny Manager of all planned training. • All induction training has been arranged through the Scrutiny Manager and Working Party. • Extensive joint planning training with Forest Heath DC is being commissioned in consultation with their Member Development Officer.
<p>Additional areas for improvement</p>		
<p>4. That all Members be encouraged to complete the Training Needs Analysis by December 2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TNA to be circulated following Borough Council Elections; • Officer "buddies" to meet with any Members requiring assistance to complete the TNA; and • Group Leaders to stress the importance of Member Development and encourage their Members to complete the TNA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms circulated late June 2011. • Buddies and Scrutiny Manager met with Members requiring assistance.
<p>5. It was acknowledged that there are some Members who are yet to be engaged in the Member Development process. Further work needs to be undertaken by the Working Party to identify the barriers to them being involved and how their training needs can be met.</p>	<p>Section on the TNA form asking Members their preferred time for training sessions, reminding them that training events are an approved duty qualifying for payment of carers and travel allowances, and asking whether there are any other barriers to them attending training.</p>	<p>TNA form has been updated to include this section. Results are included in Section 2 below.</p>
<p>6. That the Democratic Renewal WP needs to become accountable for setting, prioritising, spending and monitoring the Member Development budget to ensure value for money.</p>	<p>Current budget position to be appended to each report to the Working Party for discussion.</p>	<p>The current position of the 2011/12 Member Development budget is now included on every Working Party agenda.</p>

Recommendation	Actions	Progress
7. Members attending external development activities should produce a short report, including copies of slides/information where possible, which can then feed back to other Members to share the learning gained.	Proforma to be provided to help Members to produce these reports.	Proforma will be produced and sent to Members attending external sessions.
8. To review the Member Development Policy (adopted in November 2005) and update it to reflect the changes that have occurred to Member Development in the interim period. This then needs to be promoted widely within the Council and to prospective Councillors.	Review the Member Development Policy at a future meeting.	Updated Member Development Policy adopted through full Council June 2011, and circulated to Members via the Members' Bulletin, and in the Members' Corner on the Intranet.

1.3 Assessors from the South East Employers (SEE) made a short visit to the Council in July 2011, in order to catch up with the progress made by the Council since the assessment in October 2010. In the main, the assessors were pleased with progress. The only barrier to re-achieving Charter status appeared to be the very low number of Training Needs Analysis forms received, which at that point stood at 11. The assessors advised that, in order to re-achieve the Charter, a minimum of 60% of forms (28) would need to be received, including all Members of the Democratic Renewal Working Party and all Cabinet Members.

1.4 At the date of writing this report 35 forms have now been received, 78%. The South East Employers have advised that, although the required number of TNA forms have been returned, they will be unable to re-award the Charter until they can see that a Member Development Programme has been put in place which has been clearly informed by the TNA. Once a programme has been developed, a review will be undertaken by SEE, following which they should be in a position to award the Charter.

1.5 Analysis of the TNA returns will take place at this meeting, where the Working Party is asked to advise officers what the remainder of the 2011/2012 Member Development Programme should contain. Officers will then commission a programme as soon as possible, and forward it to SEE. It would appear, however, that it will be nearer the end of the year before we re-gain Charter status.

2. **Setting the remainder of the 2011/2012 Member Development Programme**

2.1 As 2011 was an election year, an extensive programme of induction training took place between May and July 2011. The remainder of the Programme is to be set following analysis of Training Needs Analysis forms received, together with comments on course evaluation sheets, and corporate, national and local priorities.

2.2 In the meantime, as the dates for Member Development sessions have been set on the Calendar of Meetings, and not knowing how long would be needed to commission training following analysis of forms, and also due to officers advising that Members should receive training on a couple of important issues, a programme has been set to the end of the year as follows:

Date	Title	Details
21 Sept 2011	Communications Skills	Members will recall that a Communications Skills session had been identified as high priority under the previous year's Member Development Programme, and had been booked for April 2011, but was deferred due to its proximity to the election period. This session has now been re-booked for 21 September at 5pm in Room GFR-14. Full details of the session were included in the Members' Bulletin on 5 August 2011, and will be repeated nearer the date.
29 Sept 2011	Scrutiny – Module 2	Further to the well-attended Module 1 of scrutiny training held in June, Module 2 has now been arranged for 29 September 2011. The session will be shared with Members from Forest Heath District Council, and will take place in the Education Centre, West Stow Country Park. It will commence at 5pm. The outline for Module 2 was included in the Members' Bulletin on 15 July and 5 August 2011, and will be repeated nearer the date.
4 Oct 2011	Emergency Planning	The Central Joint Emergency Planning Unit team are scheduling information sessions across the County for Members with responsibility for Emergency Planning, ie Leaders, Portfolio Holders, and Members and Substitutes of Emergency Planning Working Parties, and will be running a joint "West" session with Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury on 4 October 2011. The session will take place in the Education Centre, West Stow Country Park, and will run from 4pm – 7pm. All relevant Members have advised of their availability for the session, but reminders will be sent nearer the date.
25 Oct 2011	The New Social Housing Reforms	An information session will take place on 25 October 2011 regarding the changes coming about under new housing legislation, including new affordable rents and flexible tenancies for social housing. The information session will be held from 5pm – 7pm in Room GFR-14. This session will provide information that all

		Councillors should be familiar with, and details were placed in the 5 August Bulletin, and will be repeated nearer the date.
22 Nov 2011	Scrutiny – Module 3	The third and final module of scrutiny training has now been arranged for 22 November 2011. The session will be shared with Members from Forest Heath District Council, and will take place in the Education Centre, West Stow Country Park. It will commence at 5pm. The outline for Module 3 was included in the Members' Bulletin on 5 August 2011, and will be repeated nearer the date.

2.3 A total of 35 Training Needs Analysis (TNA) forms have now been completed by Members. An analysis has been undertaken of how Members assessed themselves against a range of skills (see Appendix A), as well as other comments added by Members regarding the provision of training. Additionally, analysis has been carried out of comments received on post-training evaluation sheets returned following the induction training sessions during May, June and July 2011. The information provided by Members on the TNA forms and evaluation sheets can be used to inform a Member Development Programme for the remainder of 2011/2012.

2.4 The results of the TNA exercise can be interpreted in a number of ways, for example:-

(a) The top 7 areas of training where Members assessed their skill level as "Low" were:-

Microsoft Powerpoint	15	
Microsoft Excel	14	
Cabinet Development	12	
Emergency Planning	10	(training already arranged)
Performance and Audit Cttee	9	
Local Government Finance	8	
Development Control enforcement	8	(training being arranged)

(b) However, it is important to take Members' comments into account. Although many Members scored low on Powerpoint, the comments seem to indicate that this training would not be required.

(c) Sorting the data into the top 7 areas of training where Members assessed their skill level as "Low" or "Medium" gave the following areas:-

Emergency Planning	30	(training already arranged)
Local Govt Finance	30	
Licensing and Regulatory	28	
Knowledge of major partnerships	28	
Presentation Skills	25	
Development Control - Enforcement	25	(training being arranged)
Performance & Audit Cttee	25	

- (d) The top 6 areas of training which attracted the most comments requesting the training were:-

Dealing with the media	11	
Knowledge of major partnerships	8	
Cabinet development sessions	7	
Development Control Cttee	7	(training being arranged)
Emergency Planning	7	(training already arranged)
Dealing with Ward Issues	7	

(a further 6 areas of training attracted 6 requests)

- (e) Other areas of training requested by more than one Member were:-

Localism Bill	2
---------------	---

- 2.5 Requests or suggestions for additional training from course evaluation sheets were:-

- (a) 13 Members stressed the need for ongoing information to be provided to Members on the Shared Services Project.
- (b) 9 Members requested more training on Choice Based Lettings/Strategic Housing, and a session has been arranged for 25 October 2011.
- (c) 7 Members commented on the need for more training on local government finance, with particular emphasis on Section 106 contributions and pensions.
- (d) 7 Members requested further Licensing training.
- (e) 7 Members commented on the need for ongoing training on Development Control issues. However, a 7-module programme of planning training is currently being commissioned.
- (f) 3 Members stressed the need for more scrutiny training. Modules 2 and 3 have already been timetabled.

- 2.6 The Working Party is requested to use the assessments in Paragraph 2.4 and 2.5 above, as well as the Council's Corporate Priorities, and local and national priorities, to advise officers where the focus for the remainder of the Member Development Programme from January 2012 should lie. Taking all this information into account, and discounting areas where training is already in the pipeline, it would appear that the following areas should be considered for the remainder of the Programme:-

Local Government Finance
Knowledge of major partnerships
Presentation skills
Dealing with the media
Dealing with ward issues/community engagement
Cabinet development sessions
Localism bill/legislation developments
Performance and audit
Shared services

2.7 Visiting other Council locations

- (a) As part of the TNA Members were asked whether they would be interested in visiting any Borough Council locations. The results were:-

Waste Recycling Plant	17
CCTV Control Room	16
Moyse's Hall Museum	6
Bury St Edmunds/Haverhill Depots	6
The Apex	5
Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre	5
Nowton Park	3
West Stow Country Park	2
Haverhill Leisure Centre	1
Abbey Gardens	1
East Town Park	1

- (b) Other suggestions added by Members to the forms:-

Museum Storage warehouse	1
Vaults under the Abbey	1
Haverhill Golf Course	1

- (c) The Working Party is asked whether it would like officers to arrange any of these visits.

2.8 Barriers to attending training

- (a) Members were reminded that training events were an approved duty qualifying for the payment of carers and travel allowances, and asked whether there was anything which would make training more accessible, or what stopped them attending. The results were:-

Make training in the daytime or late evening	1
Repeat sessions so we have choice of dates	1
Conflicting commitments, so no answer	3
Subject not of interest	1
West Stow was difficult to get to	1
Tie in with other meetings to cut down on journeys	1

- (b) The Working Party's comments on the above are requested.

2.9 Preferred times for attending development sessions

- (a) The results of this part of the form were:-

Mornings	11	Afternoons	10	Evenings	15
2 hours	26	3 hours	5	Half day	4

- (b) This would suggest that we should keep training to evenings, and no longer than two hours, however, the Working Party's comments are requested.

2.10 **Induction Programme**

- (a) Members' extensive comments on the induction programme offered between May and July 2011 will be re-visited when the time comes to start considering the next induction programme.

3. Member Development Budget

- 3.1 There are two separate budgets which are used to pay for Member Development activity. A budget of £8,100 is used for the main Member Development Programme, including funding externally sourced sessions which are delivered in-house, places on sessions offered by other councils or organisations, the Member Development Charter and other costs. A separate budget of £2,900 pays for attendance at external conferences by individual Members.
- 3.2 The current position of both of these budgets for 2011/2012 is shown at Appendix B, and Members are asked to consider this information.

W:\Democratic WP Services\Committee\Reports\Democratic Renewal Working Party\2011\11.09.08\C117 Member Development - Update.doc

Self Evaluation Questionnaire

Below is a list of important skills needed in the Member role. Please assess your current level of expertise in each skill by ticking either low, medium or high.

General skills and knowledge of a Councillor	Link to Corp Priorities	Your current skill level		
		Low	Med	High
Local Government Finance	3,4	XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XX	XXXX
The decision-making structure, Constitution and the different roles of Members	All	X	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXX
Understanding the organisation – structures and services	All	X	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXXX X
Standards and ethics/Code of Conduct	4	X	XXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XX

		Your current skill level		
		Low	Med	High
Dealing with the media	4	XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXX
Knowledge of equal opportunities, diversity and faith issues	1	XXXX	XXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX
Emergency Planning	1,4	XXXXX XXXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX	XXX
Introduction to Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation	4	XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXXX X
Knowledge of major partnerships	All	XXXXX XXXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX	XXXX
Committee Specific	Link to Corp Priorities			
Cabinet development sessions	All	XXXXX XXXXX XX	XXXXX XX	XXXXX

		Your current skill level		
		Low	Med	High
Overview and Scrutiny	1	XXXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXX	XXXXX XXXXX X
Development Control Committee	2,3	XXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXXX XXX
Development Control – Enforcement	2,3	XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXX
Licensing and Regulatory Committee and Licensing Act Sub-Committee	All	XXXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX	XXXX
Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee	4	XXXXX XXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XX
Information and Communications Technology	Link to Corp Priorities			

		Your current skill level		
		Low	Med	High
Microsoft Word	4	XXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX
Microsoft Excel	4	XXXXX XXXXX XXXX	XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXXX XX
Microsoft PowerPoint	4	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX	XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXX
Use of email/internet including Outlook	4	XX	XXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX X
Any other ICT training (please specify)	4	XXXXX	XXX	XXXX
Personal skills	Link to Corp Priorities			
Chairing committees and other meetings	4	X	XXXXX XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXX

		Your current skill level		
		Low	Med	High
Questioning and listening skills	4	x	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXX
Managing stress	4	XXXXX x	XXXXX XXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX
Plain English	4		XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX
Speed reading	4	XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXX
Time management/ work-life balance	4	XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX
Community role	Link to Corp Priorities			
Community engagement	All	x	XXXXX XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX

		Your current skill level		
		Low	Med	High
Presentation skills	4		XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX	XXXXX XXXX
Dealing with complaints	4	x	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX
Influencing and negotiating skills	4	x	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXX
Handling challenging people and situations	1,4	XX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXX
Facilitating groups	4	XXXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXXX XX
Dealing with ward issues	All		XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX	XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX

APPENDIX B**Member Development Budgets: 2011/2012****0610 1290 – Training Expenses – budget £8,100**

Date	Detail	Cost	£
May 2011	Induction expenses, including Member Handbooks	284	
June 2011	Attendance at LGPS Trustees Conference	475	
July 2011	3 Members – all day Licensing training	450	
July 2011	Room hire for training events at West Stow	360	
Sept 2011	Communications Skills training	790	
Total spend to date		£2,359	

0610 3850 – Conference Expenses – budget £2,900

Date	Detail	Cost	£
June 2011	Local Govt Association – Annual Conference	495	
July 2011	LA Treasurers Investment Forum	125	
Sept 2011	Annual Rural Conference 2011	263	
Total spend to date		£883	