

ANNUAL REVIEW OF MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY
REPORT OF
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (COMMUNITY DIRECTION)



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the Scrutiny Commission of Member Development activities over the past 12 months and to outline planned development opportunities.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- (i) The report be noted and activities undertaken and planned be endorsed;
- (ii) The intention to achieve the East Midlands Councillor Development Charter during 2012 be endorsed.

3. **BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT**

Supporting members by providing them with the tools to support their communities and the knowledge to make informed and effective decisions on behalf of the authority is of great importance. The purpose of this report is to provide information, raise awareness of activities and is necessary to meet requirements under the East Midlands Councillor Development Charter.

Over the past year, work on member development has focused on providing events and information for prospective councillors and preparing for and running the induction programme for the new Council.

Two Prospective Councillor events were held - the first in October 2010, which had the purpose of encourage people to stand for election, and the second in January 2011 was aimed at those who were seriously considering standing. Both events, whilst not achieving a large number of attendees, were well received and had positive feedback.

Following the nomination process, information packs were sent out to all candidates. These packs contained the calendar of meetings, a draft induction programme and details of mandatory, advisable and optional training sessions. This was in order to make candidates aware of the time commitment involved in being a councillor, and also to enable them to diarise necessary training dates.

The induction programme following the 2011 borough elections started with an open evening on 12 May. This was a 'Freshers Fair' style event, where Members could find information on many different services, meet officers, collect and/or sign necessary forms and pick up their Handbook. This event was extremely well attended and received excellent feedback.

The induction programme which followed contained those training sessions such as Planning and Licensing, which are mandatory under the Constitution, along with some sessions that Members were advised to attend, such as Charing skills and Knowing your Community, and other optional sessions, some of which had been funded by the East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (EM IEP). Those sessions held at HBBC were all well attended, but attendance figures were

understandably much lower for those held outside of the borough, however sessions run in partnership received good feedback due to the opportunity for networking.

In order to plan for and develop a programme of future training, the Member Development Steering Group agreed to proceed with Development Needs Assessments for all Members. In the past these have been undertaken by officers and very occasionally an external specialist. At the meeting of the Steering Group on 14 December, it was agreed that the next Needs Assessments would be carried out by Members - either Group Leaders, Deputy Leaders, or Whips, with the support of officers. This shows an excellent commitment to member development and is a positive step. The Needs Assessments will be arranged in early 2012.

The outcomes of the Development Needs Assessments will inform a training programme for 2012/13 which will consist of training to meet identified needs in relation to supporting the community, the authority, and the individual member.

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, along with the other districts in Leicestershire, signed up to achieving the East Midlands Councillor Development Charter in 2006. The Charter assesses all aspects of councillor development within the authority, and particularly the requirement that member development is member-led. Since signing up to the Charter work has progressed steadily, however the Member Development Steering Group has now expressed its intention to achieve the Charter during 2012, and have given their commitment to supporting work, gathering evidence and leading the process in order to achieve the target.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (DB)

There are none arising directly from this report. All proposed expenditure can be met from existing resources.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS LH

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations in this report support all corporate aims in providing Members with the support and training in order to meet the needs of the community and the authority.

7. CONSULTATION

The information contained within this report has been discussed with the Member Development Steering Group previously, and this report is now presented to the Scrutiny Commission in its capacity as consultee in order to scrutinise progress against the requirements of the Councillor Development Charter.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

| Management of significant (Net Red) Risks | | |
|---|---|-------------------|
| Risk Description | Mitigating actions | Owner |
| Lack of take-up of member training | Ensure support of group leaders to encourage or enforce attendance | R Owen |
| Failure to achieve Councillor Development Charter | Ensure process is member-led and all participants are fully briefed | R Owen / L Horton |

9. **KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

Whilst this report does not have direct impact on any particular communities or groups, the benefits of an effective training programme will improve awareness of the needs of all communities, vulnerable and minority groups.

Invitation to some development activities can be extended to parish councillors and will be of benefit to the parish councils and their parishioners.

Some training sessions are particularly tailored to support rural communities and provision of services in rural areas. Similarly, training is often provided on environmental issues with the aim of understanding and reducing environmental impact.

10. **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning Implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers: Previous Member Development update reports.

Contact Officer: Rebecca Owen, Democratic Services Officer, telephone 01455255879
 Executive Member: Councillor Ms BM Witherford