The Member Development Charter

Self-assessment template

Produced in conjunction with the following organisations

Member Development Charter

This template aims to help councils that sign up to aspire to the principles of the Charter for Member Development. It provides a guide for self-assessment and for drawing up an action plan to achieve the required award. Councils wanting to use their own action planning format should do so.

Whichever style of action plan is used it should identify:

- future planned action
- when action is expected to be completed
- who is responsible for the action
- who is responsible for monitoring implementation of the action plan.

Councils may find it useful to have a team of people responsible for pulling the action plan together, such as the all party member development group with officer support.

Those responsible for drawing up the action plan should look at each point on the guidelines and 'What this means in practice' section and ask:

1. What evidence do we have that suggests we are following good practice?

2. What action do we need to take, if any, to follow good practice or continuously improve? (Taking account of any resource implications and constraints)

3. When will this action be taken by?

4. Who will be responsible for the action?

A named person should be identified as being responsible for monitoring the action plan.

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Criterion 1. There is a clear commitment to councillor development and support						
	Elements	Requirements for Charter	Evidence	Action	By when	By whom
1.	**Political and managerial leadership is committed to the development of councillors**	• Clear commitment from the political and managerial leadership • Established cross party councillor development task group (CDTG) that meets regularly • There is a clear councillor development strategy which is embedded into practice and regularly reviewed • Named councillor(s) and officer(s) responsible for councillor development				

Criterion 1. There is a clear commitment to councillor development and support

	Elements	Requirements for Charter	Evidence	Action	By when	By whom
1.2	**The council actively encourages citizenship and publicises the role of councillors as community leaders as part of promoting local democracy so as to encourage under-represented groups to become councillors**	• The council holds a range of activities and events to encourage people to become councillors				
1.3	**The council is committed to ensuring equal access to learning and development for all councillors**	• Statistical analysis of cultural and personal circumstances • Timing of councillor development takes account of cultural and personal circumstances • All councillors have equal access to councillor development • The development programme includes a range of delivery methods to meet the different learning styles of councillors • Councillors are regularly updated on councillor development activities				

Criterion 1. There is a clear commitment to councillor development and support						
	Elements	Requirements for Charter	Evidence	Action	By when	By whom
1.4	**The council has a designated budget for councillor development which is adequate to meet priority development needs**	• Budget is explicit and clearly identified and monitored				
1.5	**Designated officer/s of the council have responsibility for coordinating councillor development**	• Appropriate and adequate officer resources are in place to support councillor development				

Criterion 2. The council has a strategic approach to councillor development						
	Elements	Requirements for Charter	Evidence	Action	By when	By whom
2.1	**The council has a councillor development strategy in place**	• The strategy is developed and monitored by the cross party member development task group • Strategy identifies priority development needs and makes stated and clear links with council's corporate/strategic objectives • The strategy is regularly reviewed (at least once every three years) by the cross party member development task group • The strategy includes an induction process that is evaluated after each election				
2.2	**The council has a structured process for regularly assessing councillors' individual learning and development needs based on focused objectives**	• A process exists to identify individual development needs in the form of a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) or Personal Development Plans (PDPs) and is working effectively				

Criterion 2. The council has a strategic approach to councillor development						
	Elements	Requirements for Charter	Evidence	Action	By when	By whom
2.3	**The various councillor roles are clearly defined and outline how they contribute to the achievement of community, political and council objectives**	• Councillors demonstrate an understanding of the skills and knowledge required in their ward and council wide roles • Councillor role descriptions exist and are maintained for all key roles including the ward councillor • Councillors are clear about what the council is trying to achieve and the key role they play in this as councillors				
2.4.	**The council has a structured process for assessing current and future leadership and executive team development needs**	• Structured process to assess current and future leadership development needs • A development plan is in place that supports the political and management teams in learning about each other and working effectively together • Leadership development is used to support future succession planning				

Criterion 2. The council has a strategic approach to councillor development						
	Elements	Requirements for Charter	Evidence	Action	By when	By whom
2.5	**There is a corporate councillor development plan in place**	• Councillor learning and development plan links to council's corporate objectives and the development of councillors • The councillor learning and development plan includes individuals, committees and political leadership needs				

Criterion 3. Learning and development is effective in building capacity						
	Elements	Requirements for Charter	Evidence	Action	By when	By whom
3.1	**Investment in learning and development is regularly evaluated in terms of the cost benefit and impact**	• Evaluation strategy is in place to analyse the cost and benefits of councillor development • Political and managerial leadership display a good understanding of both the costs and benefits of development activities • Councillors can describe why they did certain activities, what they learnt and what difference it has made to them carrying out their various roles as councillors				
3.2	**Learning is shared with other councillors and where appropriate, with officers and stakeholders to encourage capacity building in the council and a learning organisation culture**	• Knowledge and learning is shared with councillors, peers, officers and others				

Criterion 3. Learning and development is effective in building capacity						
	Elements	Requirements for Charter	Evidence	Action	By when	By whom
3.3	**The council demonstrates a commitment to an effective councillor learning and development programme by implementing improvements to learning and development activities as they are identified**	• Continuous improvement in the approach to developing councillors is identified and implemented				

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REF 11.32