



## South West Charter for Elected Member Development

**Name of Council:**                      **Torbay Council**

### Our approach

- Charter Commitment – December 2007
- Members' Development Group includes top political leadership. The Group led the process working closely with officers
- Senior officer allocated full-time to establish Council's approach to member development using Charter framework as a basis
- Clear action plan with set targets developed by the Members Development Group
- Charter guidelines used to build on and improve existing practice including: informing Members Development Strategy; developing evaluation process; reviewing induction; and new approach for members' work/life balance.
- Members' Development Strategy adopted in February 2008 provided a structured approach in meeting Charter requirements
- Charter awarded – March 2008
- Ongoing improvement journey identified through evaluation and peer review

### Benefits

#### For the Council

- Structured approach to members' development ensures development opportunities contribute towards meeting the Council's aims and objectives.
- Provides a basis for ongoing improvement journey and our commitment to developing members.
- Ensures value for money as identifying members' and the Council's needs means that resources are allocated appropriately.
- Working with members to achieve the Charter status has helped build stronger links between members and officers and enabled a cross party approach.



"Pursuing Charter status gave us focus on our journey of improvement. We are committed to ensure that members are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge in order to be effective in leading the Council and meet the ever increasing challenges to their roles."

**Elizabeth Raikes**  
**Chief Executive**

## For the Councillors

- Members are fully supported to carry out their complex roles and the framework ensures that they are equipped to meet new challenges and changes to roles.
- Member led approach means that the process adopted is what supports them best – ‘done with, not done to’!
- Providing a structured approach helps individuals identify the skills and knowledge they already have to bring to the role and areas where they may need support. 95% of members have one to one development plans.
- Members can access a variety of learning tools and techniques in addition to standard training.
- A robust induction programme provides core training in the first two months to give new and re-elected councillors a good grounding to enable them to be more effective more quickly in their roles.



“The Charter gave us a superb structure to develop our approach towards member development and ensured that we were meeting national best practice. We now have processes in place which ensure that member development is effective, responds to new challenges and provides value for money. It also enabled excellent working with other authorities in Devon and we were able to share our new Skills Framework which was used as a basis to develop a Devonwide framework.”

**June Gurry**  
**Democratic Services Manager**  
**(Lead officer for Members’ Development)**

## For the Local Community

- Members are better equipped to respond to the needs and aspirations of the communities they represent.
- Public resources for member development are used more effectively.
- Improved levels of members’ performance in all their roles results in communities having better representation.



“The structured approach we now have for developing our members has helped build our capacity to take the Council forward and provide a better future for the residents and visitors of Torbay.”

**Councillor Carroll**  
**Cabinet Member for Performance Improvement & Governance and Chairman of the Members’ Development Group**

Contact information:

If you want to find out more about Torbay's approach to the challenges and benefits of the Charter, please get in touch with us:

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