

# **Member Learning and Development Strategy**

**2014**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In order to represent their constituents and to fully participate in the Council's decision making processes, all Members need to be supported and develop the necessary skills required in order to carry out their roles.
- 1.2 This strategy has been developed to set out the aims of Member development and how Member development will be identified, delivered and managed.
- 1.3 This strategy has the collective support of all Political Parties on the Council.
- 1.4 The strategy recognises that Members have a range of different backgrounds and experiences and endeavours to take this into account in order to support all Members in undertaking their roles.

## 2. Aims

- 2.1 The aim of the learning and development strategy is that all elected Members will have all the necessary skills to perform effectively in their current or potential roles for the Council.
- 2.2 The strategy will create a clear framework for the development of Members based on their individual needs and the needs of the Council.
- 2.3 It will ensure that Elected Members have the skills that are at the right level and that meet their roles and responsibilities
- 2.4 It will ensure that Elected Members have the skills and knowledge to lead the delivery of high quality public services and the confidence to undertake their roles
- 2.5 The strategy will ensure that Elected Members are fully aware of their responsibilities, accountabilities and legal requirements
- 2.6 The strategy will support the development of Elected Members in preparing them for future roles and
- 2.7 The strategy will ensure consistency of approach for all Elected Members
- 2.8 The key values of the strategy will therefore be as follows:
  - Development will be available to all Elected Members

- The development will be based on the identified and agreed needs of the individual Elected Member
- That all Elected Members will contribute to identifying and agreeing their development needs
- Development will be delivered through a variety of methods and times to ensure equality of access
- Acknowledge that Elected Members may have transferable skills that can be used to help them perform or develop their Council role.

### 3. Management of the Strategy

3.1 In order to ensure that learning and development activity is focussed and relevant, it is vital that the strategy is effectively managed. To ensure that the strategy remains relevant, the Group Leaders will lead and make recommendations on all matters of Member Development. The strategy will be regularly reviewed at the Group Leaders meetings and will be revised accordingly. The Director of Corporate Services will support the Group Leaders at the Group Leaders meeting. Implementation and review of the strategy will be led by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

3.2 The Group Leaders will have the following responsibilities:

- To regularly review the strategy to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of individual Elected Members and the Council
- To agree the methods of identifying and assessing Elected Member development needs
- To identify any matters either within or outside the Council that may create a training need
- To identify the learning and development that is required to undertake the various roles and responsibilities of Elected Members
- To monitor and agree the budget for Member learning and development
- To monitor the effectiveness of the learning and development carried out
- To monitor Elected Member involvement in the training and development provided and to take relevant action to improve attendance if required
- To monitor and review sources of external funding or the potential for partnership working in shared learning and development programmes

## 4. Identifying Member Development Needs

4.1 Member development needs will be identified in the following ways:

a) Corporate Training Needs

The Group Leaders will identify areas either, internally or externally that may require learning or development to be provided. Changes may include areas such as corporate priorities, new legislation, developments in the structures, functions or funding of local government,

b) Mandatory training Requirements

These will include training the Code of Conduct, in quasi judicial roles such as, Licensing, Planning, Adoption, Schools Admission and Employment appeals

c) Roles of Members

It is important that learning and development activities ensure that Elected Members have the necessary skills to undertake their roles. The Group Leaders will ensure that all Elected Members have knowledge and understanding of the skills needed to fulfil their roles and that each newly Elected Member or those Members full-filling or aspiring to full-fill new roles are provided with either an induction to their new role or the support to undertake the required responsibilities

d) Special role needs

Many roles will require specialist focused training, such as Chairing Meetings, Media training or Leadership skills. The Group Leaders will identify any such training needs should they not be identified by the individual member.

e) Identifying personal development needs

Identifying learning and development needs by the use of the criteria outlined in a- d above, will define generic training needs linked to corporate aims or Elected Member roles. However, Elected Members need to identify and provide any Personal learning and development needs and Group Leaders will agree and monitor there inclusion in the learning and development programme. All Members should be encouraged to develop a Personal Development Plan and identify such areas for development as presentation skills, speed reading, public speaking etc

4.2 Based on the combination of the areas identified above, a Member Training Plan will be produced.

## 5. Meeting Member Learning and Development Needs

5.1 In order to ensure value for money and provide an audit trail for effective monitoring the criteria for attendance on external training/conferences should be as follows:

The event must relate to the official business of the Council and the purpose should contribute to the priorities and values of the Council. It must also meet at least one of the following criteria.

- a) Provides an opportunity to positively promote the City of Southampton on a national and international stage.
- b) Gives an opportunity for the Council's views to be fully represented at key national or international conferences and events.
- c) Gives an opportunity to meet with key individuals and organisations to promote support for key initiatives and developments in the City of Southampton, attract investment and share experience/expertise.
- d) Provides the opportunity to meet with key individuals from local and/or national government
- e) Provides the opportunity to attract inward investment into the City of Southampton and to strengthen and develop links with twin and partner cities.
- f) Provides the opportunity for the Council to participate in trade missions and delegations to promote local and regional economic development
- g) Gives an opportunity to gather and exchange information on new projects and policy areas.
- h) Gives an opportunity to promote areas of expertise and give guidance to other local authorities within the UK and abroad.
- i) Gives the opportunity for Members to develop experience and expertise in areas that meet the Council's priorities or for which Members have specific responsibility for policy development and implementation.
- j) Give the opportunity for personal development that reflects the roles, responsibilities and personal development plans of the individual Member or Members.

5.2 In order to support the needs of Members, the range of learning styles, individual circumstances and needs, a range of options need to be employed to deliver the learning and development programme. Such delivery methods may include:

- Attendance on Training Courses or Seminars
- In-house briefing sessions
- Written briefings or learning material
- Mentors
- E-learning packages
- Visits to other organisations, local authorities or Partner organisations
- Sharing of information from networking opportunities
- Use of existing knowledge, skills or expertise, for example encouraging Members to lead work shops, disseminating information from training courses, or as a means of meeting continued development aims and objectives.

## 6.0 Resources

6.1 The Council has identified a training budget for Member learning and development and this will be monitored by the Group Leaders.





## Member Skills Development Framework

### Section One – All Members

#### 1. Basic Knowledge of Roles and Responsibilities

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for role	Learning and Development Provision
<p>Representing the Council and Constituents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding of the key activities undertaken by Councillors</li> <li>➤ Understanding the work of the Council</li> <li>➤ Understanding the role of a Councillor</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of the priority areas for service delivery</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of the core business processes such as financial planning</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of the Constitution</li> <li>➤ Understanding the role of the monitoring officer and the Section 151 Officer</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of where to find information</li> <li>➤ Understanding ethical standards</li> <li>➤ Understanding equality and diversity issues</li> <li>➤ Understanding the Media Protocol and Procedures</li> </ul>	<p>Member Induction Programme                      Networking                      Briefing sessions with Directors and Council Officers                      Council's Constitution                      Council's Web pages</p>

## 2. Basic Knowledge of the Councillors Role

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
Attending Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge of meeting (Meeting details and Terms of Reference etc)</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of the law and practice of meetings</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of the Codes of Conduct</li> <li>➤ Meeting conventions</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of specific legislation (i.e. planning and development control regs, licensing regs etc)</li> </ul>	Member Induction Programme Listening Skills Presentation or Public Speaking Skills Council's Web site Briefings
Interaction with Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge of officer responsibilities and contacts</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of the Officer/Member Protocol</li> </ul>	Member Induction Programme Director/Officer briefing meetings Council's Constitution
Working to ethical Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding of the code of conduct, standards and ethics</li> <li>➤ Understanding of the Declaration of Interests Register</li> <li>➤ Understanding of Declaring Interests at meetings</li> <li>➤ Understanding the Role of the Monitoring Officer</li> </ul>	Member Induction Programme Council's Constitution
Internal Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding the Political Group Protocols</li> <li>➤ Understanding the Political Make-up of the Council</li> <li>➤ Understanding Roles and Responsibilities</li> </ul>	Political Group Mentor

### 3. Basic skills or knowledge to successfully fulfil Councillor Responsibilities

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
Work life Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Time Management</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of the Officer Role, Responsibilities and key contacts</li> <li>➤ Stress Management awareness</li> <li>➤ Effective use of IT systems</li> <li>➤ Networking</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of key activities, priorities and responsibilities</li> </ul>	Courses Officer/Member Mentor
Managing Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge of sources of information</li> <li>➤ Understanding processes</li> <li>➤ Understanding data</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of data storage and file management</li> </ul>	Effective use of IT Members Zone Council's web site Data management protocols Speed reading
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding Media protocol</li> <li>➤ Diversity Awareness</li> <li>➤ Effective communication skills/techniques</li> </ul>	Member Induction Programme Courses – such as presentation skills, letter writing
Working with Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding ethical diversity</li> <li>➤ Understanding the roles and responsibilities of others and of the Councillor</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of key contacts</li> </ul>	Member Induction Programme Member briefings Council's Web site Courses – such as Public speaking,

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Officer/Member Protocols</li> <li>➤ Understanding the community leadership role</li> <li>➤ Understand the different roles of Councillors (board/trustee members, corporate parent)</li> <li>➤ Understand when and who to escalate information to</li> </ul>	mediation skills
Risk Management and Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding of responsibilities for health and safety as an individual and as a Member</li> </ul>	Member Induction Programme Members risk assessment
Promoting and enhancing the Council's reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Awareness of key roles affecting the Community</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of Council's decisions and reasons for them</li> <li>➤ Maintaining exempt and confidential information</li> <li>➤ Ability to challenge negative perceptions</li> <li>➤ Ability to communicate relevant information</li> <li>➤ Ability to adapt communication style to different audiences</li> </ul>	Member Induction Member briefings Ward Meetings Surgeries Council's constitution Courses – such as assertiveness training
Corporate Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge and Understanding of Corporate Roles and legal Responsibilities such as: Corporate Parenting, IT Protocols Data Protection/FOI, Media Protocol Confidential Information</li> </ul>	Member Induction Officer briefings Council's Web Site

#### 4. Basic Skills to enhance the role of Councillors

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
Community Champions for the City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding current and future issues across a range of topics</li> <li>➤ Understands community issues and relation to Council's strategic vision and values</li> <li>➤ Understands the role and responsibilities of a community champion</li> <li>➤ Engages with the community, working collaboratively, fairly and constructively</li> <li>➤ Knowledge Council Policy on common issues such as planning.</li> <li>➤ Understanding corporate complaints procedure</li> <li>➤ Understands partnership framework and engagement in relation to community issues</li> <li>➤ Understanding funding sources and local government finance</li> </ul>	<p>Courses such as mediation            Officer briefings            Surgeries            Advocacy/counselling skills            Presentation skills            Negotiation skills            Media skills</p>
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding strategic and service context</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of constitution</li> <li>➤ Understanding of the impact of decisions on areas and constituents/partners and other organisations</li> <li>➤ Understanding key concepts such as bias and predetermination</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of key contacts and who to involve</li> <li>➤ Understands when to refer decisions or take advice</li> </ul>	<p>Political Mentor            Officer briefing            Council Web site            Advocacy/counselling skills</p>

Casework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding the needs problems raised by constituents and extent and limits of personal Involvement</li> <li>➤ Good interpersonal skills</li> </ul>	
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## Section 2 – Specific Roles

### 1. Leader

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Leadership Skills</li> <li>➤ In-depth knowledge of the Council's roles and responsibilities</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of decision making law and Council's constitution</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of key community issues</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of key issues and working practices of key partners and stakeholders</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of Regional and National issues</li> <li>➤ Conflict Management</li> <li>➤ Project Management</li> <li>➤ Risk Management</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of Group Members</li> </ul>	LGA Leadership Academy Programme 1:1 Briefings Negotiation skills Media Skills Team building Conflict management Coaching and Mentoring skills
Public and community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge of working practises of partners and stakeholders at a local and regional level</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of key issues relevant to the</li> </ul>	Leadership Skills Advanced communication/media skills

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
	community ➤ Is able to communicate vision and values ➤ Is aware of different communication techniques and interpersonal skills	Presentation skill Team building and Development
Strategic Vision	➤ Knowledge of key community issues and areas of improvement ➤ Knowledge of Council's Policies and procedures ➤ Understands wider decision making implications for Council and the City ➤ Understands resource issues	Communication/media skills
Political judgement	➤ Understands the relationship between national and regional government ➤ Combines vision with reality ➤ Is able to reconcile political vision with strategic awareness	Leadership Skills Advanced communication/media skills Presentation skill
Relationship with CX and Directors	➤ Understands roles and responsibilities ➤ Is able to build relationships ➤ Is able to work on key strategies and promote vision and values ➤ Knowledge of procedures and protocols needed to hold Senior Officers to account	Leadership skills Management skills Team building and Development Performance Management Project management

## 2 Cabinet Member

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
Decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understands the role of the Cabinet member as an individual and as a Member of Cabinet</li> <li>➤ Understands Council's policies and strategies</li> <li>➤ Understands how the role fits with the Council's Management Board</li> <li>➤ Understanding nation and local policies</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of decision making law and Council's constitution</li> <li>➤ Understands wider decision making implications for Council and the City</li> <li>➤ Understands roles and responsibilities of Senior Officers</li> <li>➤ Understands portfolio area and issues</li> <li>➤ Is aware of key stakeholders and partners</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership skills            Communication skills            Management skills            Team building and Development            Performance Management            Project management</p>
Communication Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Is able to communicate decisions and reasoning</li> <li>➤ Is aware of different communication techniques and interpersonal skills</li> </ul>	Advanced communication/media skills



### 3. Scrutiny Member

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
Reviewing and developing policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge of existing policies and best practice</li> <li>➤ Understanding of wider policy context</li> </ul>	Meetings and briefings
Performance management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge of council's performance management strategy</li> <li>➤ Understanding of risk management</li> <li>➤ Understanding of project management</li> <li>➤ Questioning skills</li> </ul>	Meetings and briefings

### 4. Chair

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
Provide leadership and direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In depth knowledge of the role of the panel/committee</li> </ul>	Meetings and Briefings
Provide effective meeting management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding of the role of the chair</li> <li>➤ Understanding the roles of supporting officers</li> <li>➤ Understands meeting protocol and procedures</li> <li>➤ Understanding of bias and predetermination</li> <li>➤ Understanding use of resources</li> </ul>	Facilitation/Mediation skills Public speaking Questioning and listening skills Communication skills Time management

## 5 Group Leader

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge of Council procedures, practices and policies</li> <li>➤ Understanding of the Council's visions, values, key targets, projects and timescales</li> <li>➤ Understanding of the Group Leaders role and responsibilities</li> <li>➤ Political awareness and knowledge</li> </ul>	Leadership skills 1:1 Briefings Negotiation skills Media Skills
Development of Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge of Group Members</li> </ul>	Team building Conflict management Coaching and Mentoring skills
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understands different communication styles</li> </ul>	Media skills
Relationship with Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understands roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	Briefings Protocols and Procedures

## 6. Mayor

Role or Responsibility	Skill/knowledge required for Role	Learning and Development Provision
Perform ceremonial duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understands remit, roles and powers</li> <li>➤ Understands etiquette and protocol</li> </ul>	Public speaking Communication techniques Briefings
Preside over Council meetings	See role of Chair above	
Promote the role of the Council as a benefit to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowledge of the Councils priorities</li> <li>➤ Knowledge of the City</li> </ul>	Briefings