

LONDON BOROUGH OF **HAVERING**

MEMBERS' **LEARNING &** **DEVELOPMENT** **FRAMEWORK**



Member Development Framework

Commitment to Member learning and development



Havering has faced many significant challenges in a constantly changing local government environment, with a continuing focus on modernising how local government operates. It is essential therefore that it recognises the key role Members have in taking forward the Council's aims and objectives and their continuous development is an important activity in contributing to that. It is essential that Members have the skills, knowledge and expertise to deliver the needs and expectations of communities.

The learning and development framework broadly outlines the skills and knowledge required by Councillors to perform their different roles and provides an indication of how they might carry them out effectively. It is not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive but provides a structure the delivery of learning & development programmes and which act as a prompt for new and existing Councillors to identify areas where they wish to improve their skills and knowledge.

The framework is designed to be flexible, so that Councillors can work with officers to identify the most effective methods to meet learning development needs. This support could be in the form of information, training, facilitated workshops, coaching and mentoring, or opportunities to learn from observation.

The development of the framework has been overseen by the Member Development Group (MDG). The Group is made up of representatives from all parties and is tasked with overseeing Councillor training on behalf of the Council and for leading on the development of strategies, policies and programmes for Councillors.

The MDG will review the framework annually to ensure that it reflects the Council's approach and commitment towards Member development.

The ROLE OF COUNCILLORS

Councillors are elected to serve the best interests of their constituents, the Council and the community as a whole. Key responsibilities therefore include, but are not limited to:

- Developing the strategic direction of the authority
- Representing the interests of local residents
- Scrutinising the work of the Council and its partners
- Promoting high standards of behaviour across the Council.

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CORE ELEMENTS

The Council recognises that there are four core elements towards delivering Member training and development:

1. Induction

The purpose of the Member Induction Programme is to provide initial comprehensive support for the development needs of Members following their election. It is the opportunity, through induction events, to meet other Councillors and senior officers and learn about the workings of the Council, its processes and procedures.

2. Individual Member Development Plan

With support from officers, each Member will create their own individual development plan with identified objectives and timescales for delivery. It will be the responsibility of Members and their parties to undertake six-monthly reviews of those plans, with a focus on outcomes and identification of key themes which need to be fed into the core Member development syllabus.

3. Member development syllabus

A core syllabus of training and development opportunities will be available for Members to select from which meets the objectives as outlined in their individual development plans. The syllabus will be reviewed and updated by the MDG to accommodate new legislation, emerging corporate themes, or changes in corporate practice and process.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

It is the responsibility of Members, officers and the MDG to ensure that the Member development syllabus and the wider provision of resource and support remain relevant to the aims of the framework and that it achieves its target outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation is therefore critical in delivering this.

Members must be encouraged to be self-aware in recognising their own strengths and weaknesses, and that Members achievements are recognised and acknowledged both individually and within political groups.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Peer support

Members will be encouraged to share their knowledge and expertise with other Members where appropriate by:

- Supporting newly-elected Members (mentoring)
- Disseminating knowledge gained from external conferences and seminars

Officer support

- Provide support through Democratic Services and HR Organisational Development for all Member learning and development matters.

- Devising and delivering a programme of induction training for newly-elected Members, in consultation with the Member Development Group.
- Devising and delivering a comprehensive syllabus of training and development opportunities for all Members based on individual Member development plans.
- Provide comprehensive support to the operation of the Member Development Group.
- Assist in the development and maintenance of the Members' intranet pages and the information contained within it

Methods of delivery

Members need the freedom to achieve development plan objectives according to their own learning preferences. Whether delivered through the Council's own in-house expertise or through specialist external training providers, access to learning and development will be offered through the following means:

- Core programme courses
- E-learning packages
- Member briefings
- External conferences and seminars
- Sharing knowledge with other elected members
- Written learning materials

IT Resources

Members are provided with IT equipment which enables them to communicate with residents, the Council and other partners. IT also provides Members with the tools to engage in e-learning and in their own time.

PROMOTING THE DISSEMINATION OF LEARNING

Council-funded attendance at external events is invaluable in acquiring information about a wide range of issues, both on a local and national level.

Members who attend such events should make any material available by placing copies in the Member's Resources Room. On occasion, it may be necessary to prepare a short written report or briefing to other Members.

Communicating Awareness

Communicating the commitments of this framework is essential in delivering successful learning and development for Members.

It is the goal of the Member Development Group to create a supportive environment in which all Members can participate and direct their own learning and development.

Likewise, the Council Senior Leadership Team reinforces the Council's commitment to developing Members and Officers alike and raising the profile and awareness of the framework.

Protocol for Member Attendance at external events

The protocol sets out the process for the approvals of requests to attend external events, including training, seminars, conferences where there is a cost incurred by the Council. Approval of expenses arising from attendance at such events is done so in accordance with the provisions of the Member Allowances Scheme. Party political events and any associated costs or expenses are excluded from this protocol.

Approval process

Using the Member training and development request form, all requests for attendance at external events should be submitted to the Head of Democratic Services and Chairman of the Member Development Group for approval.

When submitting such requests, Members will need to demonstrate how attendance at the event relates to the work of the Council and/or to their role.

Event evaluation

All Members attending external events will be require to complete an evaluation form upon their return.