

Member Development Group: Report to Cabinet 2018/19

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Member Development Group is to provide a forum where members can advise on the planning, delivery and evaluation of member development activities. The Group is made up of a member of each political group and is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

The Group is required to report to Cabinet on an annual basis. This report meets this requirement and summarises the work of the Group during the 2018-19 municipal year.

2. Terms of Reference

The Group's Terms of Reference are as follows:-

The Member Development Group will advise on the planning, delivery and evaluation of member development activities and make recommendations to Cabinet where appropriate. The Member Development Group will report to Cabinet on an annual basis.

The membership of the Member Development Group will be the relevant Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Member Development and one member from each political group represented on the Council. The Group will be chaired by the Portfolio Holder. Members of the Group will be responsible for the promotion of Member Development within their political group.

The Member Development Group will:-

- oversee the provision of member development opportunities;
- advise on policies and procedures relating to member development; and monitor their implementation and effectiveness;
- regularly review the level and allocation of the Councillor development budget;
- oversee the evaluation of member development opportunities and assess the contribution of member development opportunities towards the Council's corporate objectives;
- ensure that Charter Status for Member Development is maintained and monitor the progress of the implementation of the recommendations from the Charter Assessment.

3. Composition

The membership of the Group in 2018-19 was as follows:-

Councillor David King, Portfolio for Resources, Chair
Councillor Cyril Liddy
Councillor Jackie Maclean
Councillor Theresa Higgins
Councillor Gerard Oxford

The Group has been supported by Hayley McGrath, Corporate Governance Manager, and Richard Clifford, Lead Democratic Services Officer.

The Group has met on four occasions in 2018 - 19.

4. Main Areas of Work

4.1 Member Charter Status

The Council's assessment for Member Charter Status was undertaken on 25 July 2018. The assessment was based on a portfolio of evidence submitted in advance, a series of interview with Councillors and key officers on the assessment day and telephone interviews with two group leaders who were unable to attend on 25 July. The outcome was that the Council continued to meet the Charter criteria and therefore was awarded Charter Status for a further three years from 25 July 2018. In its report on the Assessment the Group commented positively about the role of the Group.

The areas of strength identified by the Assessment team were as follows: -

- Awareness of the importance of member development and ownership for the responsibility for delivery throughout the organisation;
- Clear articulation of and commitment to member development by the Leader of the Council and Group Leaders;
- Clear vote of support for member development in Full Council;
- Effective engagement in processes to identify training needs;
- Effective cross-party Member Development Group - impressive in their clarity of thinking, unity of purpose and strategic focus;
- Commitment to member development reflected in the resources (staff and budget) allocated to it;
- High levels of engagement with New Council Conference;
- Introduction of mandatory modules together with a potential penalty;
- Good awareness of where further involvement is needed both within the Member Development Group and at Group Leader level;
- Commitment to leadership development through support for the LGA's Leadership Academy.

The areas of suggested improvement/development were as follows: -

- Investment in Member Development Group and its members to tap into their potential and enhance their influence within the wider member body;
- Increase uptake of personal development within the Conservative Group and fully utilise the budget for the benefit of all group members;
- Consider how to better evaluate member development and embed the evaluation strategy within the organisation;

- Invest in creating space and informal opportunities for Councillors to meet and discuss issues within a non-partisan environment.
- Further embed the mandatory training initiatives;
- Use the Garden Communities initiative to promote corporate behaviours and a culture of partnership working;
- Hold a “Be a Councillor” event to raise awareness of the role of the Councillors in the wider community;
- Organise site visits to see best practice in place in other Councils;
- Consider becoming a Charter Plus Council;
- Disseminate shared learning from those who have attended Leadership Academy.

The Group will be looking at a number of these suggested improvement areas and development areas and has begun to consider how informal opportunities for Councillors to meet and in a non-partisan environment could be delivered.

The Group would like to place on records its thanks to those councillors and officers who met with the Assessment Team and contributed to the successful outcome of the Assessment.

4.2 The Provision of Member Development

Details of attendance at member development sessions for 2018-19 is at Appendix 1. The attendance figures are positive and show a healthy interest in training and development across the Council. Only four Councillors have not attended a member development event: two of these are senior Essex County Council members who may take advantage of training opportunities provided there. Several Councillors have attended 10 or more sessions.

Feedback is collected at each session and this is largely very positive. In particular the feedback on the three local plan sessions was extremely positive.

The Group established measurable objectives to measure attendance and quality of member development sessions and performance against these objectives is shown below. The figures for 2017-18 are also included for comparison and to indicate trends.

	Target	2017-18	2018-19
Number of Councillors attending one or more Development Session	80%	90%	92%
Number of Councillors attending 5 or more Development Sessions	25%	49%	49%
Number of Development Sessions or Briefings provided for Councillors over the course of a municipal year	10	17	21
Number of Councillors who have completed Leadership Academy	1	1	-

programme during the course of the Municipal Year			
Percentage of completed feedback forms indicating that development session was worthwhile	75%	81%	88%

As well as providing some training on core skills, the programme of member development has provided briefings to keep members up to date on key Council projects and initiatives. A number of these concentrated on issues relating to community safety and health issues and included sessions on Policing in Colchester, Crimestoppers and the North East Essex Health and Social Care Alliance.

Planning and licensing training has also been provided to ensure that members are kept up to date with developments in these fields and to ensure that there is a wide pool of members able to sit on the Planning and Licensing Committees.

In July 2018 the Council made training on safeguarding, equality and diversity and GDPR mandatory for all Councillors. In line with the views expressed in the debate at Council, the Group has sought to provide such training online and nearly all Councillors have now completed the required training on GDPR and safeguarding. The provision of an online course on equality and diversity took longer to deliver than originally envisaged but has now been made available to members.

Council also made training on Chairing skills mandatory for all Committee and Panel Chairs and this was successfully delivered.

4.3 Member Development Budget and Resources

The member development budget for 2018-19 was set at £10,000. The budget is split into two elements: a core training budget of £4900 which is used to fund core training with a council wide application such as training on licensing, planning and scrutiny. It is also used to fund a place at Leadership Academy. The remainder of the budget is split between the political groups on the basis of £100 per member.

Expenditure on the budget 2019-19 is set out below. The Group had agreed at its meeting in October to fund a number of Local Plan development sessions. This was at the request of the Committee, supported by the Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Business and Culture. Sessions on viability, housing numbers and sustainability appraisal were provided at a combined cost of £4814.42.

This was funded via unspent elements of the group budgets. Notwithstanding this, the Group indicated that requests for external training that would normally have been funded through the group budgets to be looked at sympathetically and funding has been found to ensure all such requests were met.

There has been a small overspend on the budget that will be met from elsewhere in Policy and Corporate budgets.

Licensing training, Cornerstone, 7 June 2018	£1000
Social Media training, Creative Communicators, 11 September 2018	£1055.2
Chairing Skills, LGIU, 23 October 2018	£817.6
Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Training, Riki Therival, 1 November 2018	£816.35
Local Plan Housing Numbers, Richard Pestell, 14 November 2018	£3326.07
Local Plan Viability, 29 November 2018	£672
Sub Total	£9042.42

Conservative Group Budget - £2500

Cllr Davies Attendance at LGA Conference	£545
Chairing Planning Committee – Cllrs Hazell and Jarvis, PAS, 27-28 September 2018	£500
Scrutinising Council Performance - Cllr Hayter, CfPS 12 March 2019	£195
Sub total	£1240

Liberal Democrat Group Budget - £1200

Giving Effective Speeches and Presentations – Cllr Luxford-Vaughan, LGIU, 11 December 2018	£202.46
Sub total	£202.46

Labour Group Budget - £1100

Labour Group Away Day	£777.24
Labour LGA Conference – Cllr J. Young, 9 February 2019	£143.7
Sub total	£920.94

Highwoods Group Budget - £300

No spend on budget

Total spend on Member Development Budget - £11405.82

Member development is supported by the Democratic Services Team. Support was also provided by the Corporate Governance Manager as and when required. Considerable time and efforts is put into providing sessions and development by officers across the organisation. The Group wishes to formally record its appreciation for the time and effort that officers and partners put into providing development opportunities for Councillors.

5. Conclusion

The Group considers that a useful and varied programme of development opportunities has been provided for councillors and that the resources put into member development have provided good value and have contributed towards the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities. It was particularly pleased that the Council's approach to member development received external validation through the successful assessment for Charter Status for Elected Member Development.

Appendix 1

Attendance at Training and Development Opportunities 2018- 19 Municipal Year

	GDPR, Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding	Planning Training	Induction evening for New Councillors	Social Media Training	Licensing Training	Intro to Local Government Finance
Training Dates	08-May-18	14-May-18	15-May-18	16-May-18	07-Jun-18	11-Jun-18
Attendees	Buston Arnold Barlow Bourne Chapman Chillingworth Crow Flores Davies Dundas Fox Hogg King Laws Moore Scordis Warnes Whitehead Wood	Dundas Buston Chapman Crow Flores Lissimore Moore Scordis Whitehead	King Crow Dundas Hayter Luxford Vaughan Whitehead	Fox Arnold Chillingworth Crow Harris King Luxford Vaughan Scordis Moore Pearson Scott-Boutell Warnes Whitehead Willettts Wood	Dundas Buston Cope Crow Harris Young, J	Liddy Crow Coleman Hogg Luxford Vaughan Warnes Whitehead Willettts

Universal Credit	East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust	Social Media Training	North East Essex Health and Social Care Alliance	Chairing Planning Committee	Crimestoppers	Chairing Skills
19-Jun-18	28-Aug-18	10 September 2018	20-Sep-18	27-28 September 2018	02-Oct-18	23-Oct-18
Ellis	Chilingworth	Higgins	Goss	Hazell	Crow	Oxford, B
Bourne	Barlow	Buston	Bourne	Jarvis	Barton	Cory
Buston	Barton	Chuah	Cory		Coleman	Fox
Crow	Chapman	Hazell	Fox		Cope	Laws
Fox	Goss	Hogg	Hazell		Davies	Oxford. G
Goss	Harris	Liddy	Oxford, B		G. Oxford	Scordis
Harris	Jarvis	Loveland	Scordis		Laws	Warnes
Liddy	Young, J	Young, J	Whitehead		Scordis	
Hogg	King	Young, T	Young, T		Lilley	
King	Whitehead				Oxford, B	
Luxford Vaughan	Young, T				Wood	
Pearson						
Willetts	Turrell					
Young, J						
Young, T						

Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Training	Local Plan Housing Numbers and Objectively Assessed Need	Colchester Borough Homes briefing	Safeguarding	Local Plan Viability	Giving Effective Speeches and Presentations - LGIU	Parking Schemes and Traffic Regulation Orders
01-Nov-18	14-Nov-18	26-Nov-18	28-Nov-18	29-Nov-19	12-Dec-18	08-Jan-19
Davidson	Buston	Fox	Loveland	Arnold		Barton
Barlow	Arnold	Bourne	Oxford, B	Bourne		Buston
Barton	Barber	Chapman	Oxford, G	Buston		Hazell
Buston	Barlow	Davies	Oxford, P	Chapman		Hogg
Ellis	Chapman	Hogg		Cory		Laws
Fox	Coleman	Laws		Davidson		Moore
Hazell	Ellis	Liddy		Ellis		Oxford, G
Laws	King	Warnes		Jarvis		Scordis
Jarvis	Fox	Oxford, G		Laws		Young, T
King	Hazell	Scordis		Liddy		
Luxford Vaughan	Laws			Maclean, J		
Moore	Liddy			Oxford, G		
Oxford, B	Luxdord-Vaughan			Scordis		
Oxford, G	Maclean, J			Warnes		
Scordis	Moore			Willetts		
Scott-Boutell	Oxford, B			Young, T		
Warnes	Oxford, G					
Wood	Scordis					
Young, T	Warnes					
	Whitehead					
	Willetts					

Policing in Colchester	Essex Highways briefing	LGA Labour Conference	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner	Digital Access	Scrutinising Council Performance - Centre for Public Scrutiny
05-Feb-19	07-Feb-19	09-Feb-19	04-Mar-19	12-Mar-19	12-Mar-19
Arnold	Chillingworth	Young, J	Cory	King	Hayter
Buston	Crow		Barton	Buston	
Chillingworth	Hazell		Chuah	Chapman	
Chuah	Jarvis		Cope	Hazell	
Coleman	Laws		Crow	Oxford, B	
Crow	Luxford Vaughan		Davies		
Goss	Maclean, J		Hogg		
Higgins	Scott-Boutell		Jarvis		
Hogg			Laws		
Laws			Liddy		
Scordis	From Tendring District Council		Warnes		
Warnes					
Willetts	Ann Davies				
Wood	Richard Everett				
	Mark Stephenson				

Name	Number of development sessions attended
Christopher Arnold	5
Lewis Barber	1
Nick Barlow	4
Lyn Barton	5
Kevin Bentley	
Tina Bourne	5
Roger Buston	10
Nigel Chapman	7
Peter Chillingworth	5
Helen Chuah	3
Phil Coleman	4
Nick Cope	3
Mark Cory	4
Simon Crow	11
Robert Davidson	2
Beverly Davies	3
Paul Dundas	4
John Elliott	
Andrew Ellis	4
Vic Flores	2
Adam Fox	7
Martin Goss	4
Dave Harris	4
Chris Hayter	2
Pauline Hazell	9
Theresa Higgins	2
Mike Hogg	8
Brian Jarvis	6
John Jowers	
David King	8
Darius Laws	10
Cyril Liddy	7
Michael Lilley	1
Sue Lissimore	1
Derek Loveland	2
Andrea Luxford Vaughan	8
Fiona Maclean	
Jackie Maclean	3
Patricia Moore	6
Beverley Oxford	7
Gerard Oxford	8
Philip Oxford	1
Chris Pearson	2
Lee Scordis	12
Lesley Scott-Boutell	3
Martyn Warnes	10
Lorcan Whitehead	8
Dennis Willetts	8
Barbara Wood	5
Julie Young	5
Tim Young	7