



Member Learning and Development Strategy
2021 to 2024

Appendices

Appendix	Document Title
A	Member Learning & Development Evaluation Policy

Introduction

This Member Learning and Development Strategy is fully endorsed by the cross party Councillor Development Group.

Local government is the subject of frequent change and councils have new and varied responsibilities and functions from time to time. The learning and development needs of Members will vary and be required to be assessed in the light of changed roles and responsibilities.

Members are integral to achieving our aims and strategic objectives and to the delivery of high-quality services. We are working to support the development of all Members to enable them to perform effectively in their roles and to develop to meet future challenges.

The purpose of this strategy is to set out our approach to helping our Members develop their own performance and contribution to lead the community of Boston.

We are committed to ensuring that:

- All Members have access to appropriate learning and development activities to enable them to acquire the knowledge and skills required to be effective in their role.
- A planned and structured approach to Member learning and development needs is taken.
- Access to learning and development activities is equitable.
- Learning and development is linked to the Council's priorities.
- Learning and development, wherever possible, is linked to Members' specific roles.
- Member learning and development activities are adequately resourced and within available budgets.
- Learning and development activities are evaluated to assess the impacts.

Members are encouraged to identify their own development needs and participate fully in learning and development activities.

An agreed member Learning and Development Programme will be produced each year based on feedback from Members; the requirements of the Council and in recognition of the changing local government landscape. This Programme will be linked to the Council's corporate priorities, the roles and function of Members and the key changes affecting the Council's priorities and services.

East Midlands Regional Councillor Development Charter

Standards set out in the East Midlands Regional Development Charter aim to promote best practice in Member development and can be seen as a vehicle to improve the corporate performance of a Local Authority through the development of its Members. The Council was accredited to the Charter in December 2012 and successfully re-assessed in March 2016. The Council will be seeking reaccreditation in 2022 as its accreditation expired in early 2020.

Roles and responsibilities in Member learning and development

In addition to input from Group Leaders, a cross-party Councillor Development Group was set up in 2010 to champion Member development. The Democratic Services and People Services teams provide support and assistance to the Group.

The role of political leaders

The role of political leaders is to pledge commitment to learning and development for Members from all political parties and to support the delivery of the Member Learning and Development Strategy.

The role of the Councillor Development Group is to:-

- Assist in the development and monitoring of this strategy.
- Approve and monitor the delivery of the Members' Learning and Development Programme.
- Create an environment that encourages self-development and continuous learning and the sharing of knowledge and skills amongst the members in their 'political' groups.
- Consider requests for learning and development and direct priorities for learning and development.
- Review the effectiveness of Member learning and development.
- Monitor the Member learning and development budget.

The role of individual members

Members are responsible for:

- Identifying their learning and development needs, supported by Group Leaders where appropriate.
- Seeking opportunities to improve their effectiveness and increase their potential.
- Attending arranged learning and development activities.
- Sharing their knowledge and skills with their peers.
- Reviewing their learning and development activities.

- Applying the knowledge and skills developed through learning and development activities.

The role of services

Services are responsible for:

- Identifying service specific learning and development areas.

Member Learning and Development Programme

To ensure that the maximum is achieved for the investment, learning activity needs to be planned.

The purpose of the Programme is to:

- Establish clear priorities for learning and development linked to the Council's corporate priorities and the changing landscape in which local government operates.
- Enable identified needs to be prioritised and linked to the Council's corporate priorities.
- Identify resources required to deliver the plan and any resource gaps.
- To ensure equity.
- Ensure the best use is made from learning and development budgets and other resources.

Delivery of learning and development activities

A flexible approach to the delivery of learning and development will be adopted to make use of the different development methods available and to meet the needs of Members.

Methods used will include the following but this list is not exhaustive:

- Officer mentoring
- Councillor mentoring
- E-learning
- Facilitated presentations
- Facilitated workshops
- Member briefings

Where appropriate shared Member and Officer development activities, as well as joint learning events with other local authorities, will be encouraged.

Access to learning and development opportunities

- All Members will have the opportunity to benefit from learning and development opportunities.
- All Members will have equal access to information relating to learning and development opportunities.
- All Members will have equal access to participation in learning and development opportunities,

subject to their personal needs, taking into account those with work or family commitments and the needs of their roles and responsibilities throughout their office on the Council.

Monitoring and evaluation

Evaluation will establish the effectiveness of learning and development activities. The role of Members in the evaluation of learning and development is critical to the continuous improvement of learning events.

The Councillor Development Group is committed to increasing the take up of those who provide feedback as this will provide better data to determine the value and benefit of learning and development opportunities.

Evaluating what has taken place can assess the extent to which training has benefited Members, the organisation and the community.

Appendix A sets out the Evaluation Policy.

Resources to support elected member learning and development

Member learning and development is resourced from the allocated Member development budget. This budget will be prioritised to cover the most pressing needs linked to the member Learning and Development Programme and corporate learning and development needs. The budget is £8,000.

Learning and development records

It is the responsibility of PSPS HR to maintain Member learning and development records. Learning will be evaluated to inform future plans and budgets.

Implementing the strategy

This strategy is intended to be a common framework for the provision of all Member learning and development.

Review of the strategy

This strategy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it meets the needs of the organisation and its Members.

Appendix A

Member Learning and Development Evaluation Policy

Introduction

We are committed to carrying out evaluation of learning and development opportunities to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the individual, the organisation and achieving value for money.

This policy is inextricably linked to the Member Learning and Development Strategy and will help support the Council's aim to achieve the East Midlands Councillor Development Charter once again.

Evaluation will help to:

- provide the value of a Learning and Development Programme.
- measure the effect of learning and development activities.
- ensure that individuals have met their stated needs.
- show links between learning and development and achieving the corporate aims.

Prior to a learning and development event

Clear and measurable objectives for the activity should be set:

- individually by those attending the learning and development event.
- by the course designer – who will identify what the activity is aiming to achieve.
- corporately – what area(s) of the corporate aims and objectives the activity is designed to support.

How we will gather feedback.

There are a variety of methods which can be used to evaluate activities that have been delivered. Evaluation can be determined prior to any activity taking place as some forms of evaluation will be to measure a change and therefore there will be a need to measure the behaviour or knowledge level before the activity takes place.

Examples of methods of evaluation:

- feedback from course facilitator
- pre and post course questionnaires
- case studies
- longer term evaluation
- input from senior officers or members

Feedback from delegates will be requested immediately after the delivery of learning and development activities to gauge 'on the day' responses.

In the case of more significant events i.e. induction or where a specific piece of training has targeted a particular need post training evaluation questionnaires will be circulated within three months of attendance at the event to capture information on any changes they have been able to make as a direct result of the training or any other gaps in their knowledge that they have been able to identify.

Information gathered from evaluation feedback will be reported to the Councillor Development Group to support future training provision and to make any necessary adjustments to future activities.

Value for money

Value for money will be determined for each course delivered through consideration of Member feedback and cost per head.

Delivery of this policy

This policy will be delivered through the Councillor Development Group with ongoing support of the PSPS HR and Democratic Services teams. Evaluation of learning and development activities is a standing agenda item at meetings of the Group and as such they will be asked to evaluate progress against the Member Development Programme on a regular basis.