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| <b>REPORT TO:</b>              | <b>FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>           | <b>AGENDA ITEM: 14</b>          |
| <b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>        | <b>9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010</b>              | <b>CATEGORY: DELEGATED</b>      |
| <b>REPORT FROM:</b>            | <b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>                            | <b>OPEN PARAGRAPH NO: N/A</b>   |
| <b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b> | <b>NEIL BETTERIDGE (595895)</b>                   | <b>DOC:</b>                     |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                | <b>MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND INDUCTION PROGRAMME</b> | <b>REF:</b>                     |
| <b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>       | <b>ALL</b>  | <b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM02</b> |

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## **1.0 Recommendations**

1.1 The Committee is requested to consider the establishment of a Working Panel to develop a Member Development Programme, including working towards the East Midlands Regional Councillor Development Charter Standards and the formulation of a structured Induction Programme for all Members for implementation following the District Council Elections in May 2011.

## **2.0 Purpose of Report**

2.1 To consider Member development, as outlined in 1.1 above.

## **3.0 Detail**

3.1 Members are reminded that the Council has already signed up to the East Midlands Regional Councillor Development Charter, which is a vehicle to improve the corporate performance of local authorities through the development of its councillors. The Charter has been based on a national template, but written to reflect the culture of the area. It sets out a clear process for accreditation and a framework of standards of good practice for all councils to aspire to and achieve. The achievement of the standards will be recognised by an accreditation process and public acknowledgement of the success of the Authority will be demonstrated at an annual celebration event.

3.2 The Council already has a variety of learning and development processes in place for Members, but work towards this Charter provides an opportunity to assess the existing situation against the standards and develop an Action Plan that enables the Council to work towards achieving accreditation. The Council will be expected to compile a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate its compliance with the standards. When the Council considers that it has everything in place to demonstrate that it meets the standards, an on-site assessment will take place by a trained Councillor peer and officer from the area. The team will assess the evidence in the portfolio against the standards and conduct a small number of interviews with Councillors and officers.

3.3 In order to achieve success and gain the Charter, the Council needs to provide evidence to meet the following Charter standards:-

#### Commitment to Councillor Development

The Council will need to demonstrate that:-

- (1) Political and managerial leadership is committed to the development of Councillors.
- (2) A Councillor learning and development policy is in place.
- (3) Access to learning and development takes into account diversity of needs.
- (4) A designated budget for Councillor development is in place.
- (5) Officer support for Councillor development is in place.

#### Strategic Approach to Councillor Development

The Council will need to demonstrate that the following are in place:-

- (1) Councillor led strategy.
- (2) Councillor roles are clearly defined.
- (3) Individual learning and development plans.
- (4) Political leadership and executive team development.
- (5) Committee learning and development.
- (6) Development opportunities are promoted and take into account access requirements.
- (7) Joint learning activities with officers, partners and the wider community.
- (8) Corporate Councillor learning and development plan prioritising activities.
- (9) Structured induction process in place for all Councillors.
- (10) Evaluation mechanisms that inform future plans.
- (11) Councillor Learning and Development Reference Group.

#### Learning and Development is Effective in Building Capacity

The Council will need to demonstrate the following:-

- (1) Councillors learn and develop effectively.
- (2) Learning is shared with other Councillors and where appropriate, with officers and stakeholders.
- (3) Investment in learning and development is evaluated in terms of benefits and impact.
- (4) Improvements to learning and development activities are identified and implemented.

#### Councillor Development Promotes Work Life Balance and Citizenship

The Council will need to demonstrate the following:-

- (1) Council assists those with caring responsibilities.
- (2) Council examines how Council business is conducted to allow for equality of access to key political decision making processes.
- (3) Council holds events for the community to encourage people to become future community leaders.

- 3.4 It is felt that the Council has already undertaken considerable work which will count towards achievement of this Charter. However, it is also considered that all of the work required in order to be successful in gaining the Charter is work which a well performing authority would undertake in the area of Councillor development, regardless of whether Charter status was obtained. If the Charter can be obtained at the same time as a quality mark of the good work being undertaken in this area, then the award of the Charter is an effective way of measuring this good work and the effectiveness of the work being undertaken.
- 3.5 Members will note that one of the standards requires a structured induction process to be in place for all Councillors. It is considered that this should be developed as a priority in readiness for implementation immediately following the District Council Elections in May 2011, so that all candidates are aware of the induction timetable in advance of the Elections.
- 3.6 In order to develop the various issues outlined above in more detail, it is suggested that a Working Panel be established, which can meet on a regular basis during the next few months and report any recommendations back to this Committee. The terms of reference of the Working Panel would be to oversee, promote, monitor and make recommendations on Member development, working towards the standards of the East Midlands Regional Councillor Development Charter. The Working Panel will be committed to developing Councillors to enable them to engage effectively in the modernisation of local government and to deliver the Council's statutory functions and corporate objectives by providing them with the tools they need to fulfil their roles.
- 3.7 Members will recall that Councillor Lemmon was appointed as the Member Training Champion at the last Full Council Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

#### **4.0 Corporate Implications**

- 4.1 Theme 4 of the Corporate Plan (Value for Money) provides for the development of staff and Members to be responsive to change and high standards of corporate governance.
- 4.2 The Regional Councillor Development Charter aims to promote best practice in Councillor development. The Charter has taken into account the Investors in People National Quality Standard. The two initiatives should support each other in providing a consistent approach to verification of the Council's commitment to learning and continuous improvement.

#### **5.0 Community Implications**

- 5.1 Local authorities which are dedicated to meeting the needs of their communities must also be committed to developing their Councillors to enable them to engage effectively. The ongoing modernisation of local government agenda has placed an increasing emphasis on an authority's need to rethink the approach to Councillor learning and development and ongoing support to the Councillor role.

#### **6.0 Background Papers**

- 6.1 East Midlands Regional Councillor Development Charter Standards – Evidence Guidelines