

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Constitution Committee

Date of Meeting: 24th March 2011
Report of: Member Development Panel
Subject/Title: Member Development: Chairman's End of Year Report

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report provides a summary of member training and development events held during 2010/2011 and outlines planned activities for 2011/2012.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Constitution Committee is invited to note the report.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 As set out in Part Three of Cheshire East Council's Constitution, part of the Constitution Committee's remit is to provide "*support for and facilities for Members, including member learning and development*".
- 3.2 Whilst responsibility for operational matters associated with learning and development lies with the Member Development Panel, the Committee is tasked with a monitoring role. The purpose of this report therefore is to raise awareness of action taken by the Panel during the current Municipal year and highlights future planned activities.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 None

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Democratic Services is being remodelled to achieve the targets set out in the 2011/2012 budget, which will result in streamlining of Member Training and Development activities. The Member Development Panel at its meeting on 16 February 2011 noted the situation and requested officers to

review the Programme for 2011/2012 in the light of the changes outlined, which is reflected in the proposed activities for 2011/2012 set out in paragraph 13 of the report.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The submission of an end of year report by the Chairman of the Member Development Panel will enable Constitution Committee to discharge its monitoring function of member learning and development activities in accordance with Part Three of the Council's Constitution.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The involvement of Councillors at all stages of the learning and development process is vital to ensure that the authority continues to meet the requirements of the North West Charter on Elected Member Development.

10.0 Background

- 10.1 In January 2009, the Council appointed a Member Development Panel ('the Panel'), the Chairman of which is Councillor Wesley Fitzgerald, Leader of the Council. The remit of the Panel is to -

- identify priorities for member learning and development;
- discuss and agree procedures for its delivery;
- review the effectiveness of the Member Development Programme and the Member Development Strategy; and
- act as a conduit for the exchange of information from and to political groups and the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

11.0 Member Development Programme 2010/2011

- 11.1 The 2010/11 Member Development Programme has continued to build on the successes achieved in year 1 by maintaining the flow of information to Councillors and enhancing Members' knowledge on a wide range of subjects. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the 'In house' and external events offered to Members during the year which has increased in number from 38 in 2010/11 to 43 in 2011/12.
- 11.2 As part of any future application for reassessment under the North West Development Charter, Cheshire East will need to provide evidence illustrating how its Member Development Programme links in with the Council's priorities. Column 4 of Appendix 1 identifies the relevant objective for each subject as set out in the Corporate Plan 2010/2013.

12.0 Progress Report 2010/2011

- 12.1 By constantly reviewing the training and development activities provided for Members, the Panel has ensured that the standard required under the North West Development Charter has continued to be maintained.

- 12.2 The Panel's priority this year has been the creation of a comprehensive Induction Programme for newly elected Members, which will provide support for Councillors across all aspects of Council life in a timely manner (paragraph 13.2 refers).
- 12.3 An initial review of the Member Development Strategy has also been undertaken which is nearing completion. Whilst the commitments contained therein are substantially unchanged, it has been necessary to make some revisions to meet budgetary targets. It is intended that a copy of the revised document will be made available to all Councillors elected in May 2011.
- 12.4 As part of its commitment to providing IT support for Members', nine Councillors enrolled onto an ITQ Level 1 course delivered by Macclesfield College. At the time of writing, six Councillors have successfully completed the course and have been awarded their certificates whilst three are waiting for their assessment results.
- 12.5 Members' views on the quality and relevance of events has continued to be evaluated via discussions at the Member Development Panel, the completion of e-surveys and the gathering of informal feedback. Work has been completed on creating a short paper/e-survey to be used at events; which was trialed in February and will be rolled out as part of next year's Programme.
- 12.6 In accordance with the Member Development Strategy, Personal Development Plan interviews were due to take place in 2010. To enable newly elected Members to participate in the process, the timeline has been modified to allow interviews to be held in 2011.

13.0 Proposed Activities 2011/2012

- 13.1 Work will continue during 2011 to maintain the standard required under the North West Development Charter to enable the Council to successfully apply for re-accreditation in 2012. However, it is unlikely that the Council will pursue a Level 2 application at this time opting instead for Level 1 Review.
- 13.2 The Induction Programme commences in May with a series of short events to provide support and advice to newly elected Members. Where appropriate, an invitation to attend key events will be extended to returning Members.
- 13.3 I T skills training remains a priority for the Council and work is on-going to identify appropriate and cost effective options for its delivery.
- 13.4 The 2011/2012 Programme will also continue to give priority to knowledge-based events although personal (or soft) skills will be addressed as appropriate. Where possible, the Council will continue to work with other

authorities and partnerships to enhance both the Programme and networking opportunities for elected Members.

- 13.5 Members will be encouraged to participate in their personal development. Newly elected Members will be given the opportunity to attend a Personal Development Interview; returning Members will be invited to refresh their existing plans. It is anticipated that interviews will take place in the early autumn.

14.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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