

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Governance and Constitution Committee

Date of meeting: 21 May 2009
Report of: Democratic Services Manager
Title: North West Charter on Elected Member Development

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider supporting an application by Cheshire East Council for the North West Charter on Elected Member Development (Level One).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That
- (1) Cheshire East Council sign the Declaration of Commitment to the principles of the North West Charter on Elected Member Development; and
 - (2) a signing ceremony be arranged; invitations to attend to be extended to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and the Group Leaders.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The North West Charter on Elected Member Development is a regionally recognised standard for Member Development and is the minimum level to which a high performing Council, such as Cheshire East should seek to achieve.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Not applicable

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 Not applicable

7.0 Financial Implications for Transitions Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 None identified.

8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

8.1 There is no direct cost to the authority from signing the document.

9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 None identified

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 If Cheshire East Council wishes to attain Charter standard during its first year, the application will need to be submitted and assessed no later than July 2009. If the document is not signed until this date, the commitment of the authority to meet the principles of the Charter could be brought into question adversely affecting the authority's application.

11.0 Background and Options

11.1 From its inception, Cheshire East Council's vision has been to "*work together to improve community life*". The authority values the contribution each of its 81 Councillors makes towards delivering this goal, seeking to ensure that each elected member has the necessary skills required by providing support and learning opportunities by way of its Member Development Strategy/Programme.

11.2 To formalise its commitment to the development of its Members, the authority has indicated that it wishes to apply for accreditation with North West Employers Organisation (NWEO) by seeking to achieve the standard required for the North West Charter on Elected Member Development (Level One). Authorities that meet the six principles set out in the document (Appendix A) are awarded Charter status for a period of three years at which time the authority can choose to be reassessed.

11.3 The first step in the process is for the Chief Executive and Leader of the authority to sign the Declaration of Commitment and the Committee is invited to pass a formal resolution to this effect to illustrate the authority's support for the application. In addition, to raise the profile of the Charter amongst elected members and the public, the Committee is also invited to resolve that a signing ceremony be arranged involving the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and Group leaders to which appropriate publicity could be given.

12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

- 12.1 It is important that Cheshire East Council makes clear its intentions during year one. By signing up to the principles of the Charter, the authority is setting a high standard which can be built upon in subsequent years.

13.0 Access to Information

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

Name:	Diane Moulson
Designation:	Acting Senior Member Development Officer
Tel No:	01270 529729
Email:	diane.moulson@cheshireeast.gov.uk