

WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

Fundamental to the strategy is that Members take a leading role, through the Member Development Commission, to ensure its implementation.

PURPOSE

- To demonstrate the approach the Council will take to training and development for Members.
- To inform Members of the Protocol for Members Attending Conferences/Courses

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

The principle training and development objectives for Members will be:

1. To improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of elected members to undertake their community role efficiently and effectively.
2. To meet the Council's statutory obligations and understand the implications of new legislation and codes of practice that impacts on their role.
3. To embrace the benefits, application and skills necessary to make full use of emerging technology in meeting business objectives.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

The Council will determine its priorities in relation to training and development needs. It is likely that, given its finite financial resources and the need to ensure that service delivery continues on a daily basis, it will need to determine priorities each year in relation to training and development needs. A procedure in relation to Members Attending Conferences and Courses is set out at Appendix A.

The main areas of training and development to be given priority will be:

1. Induction training provided for elected Members new to the Council to ensure they have the necessary information and awareness of the organisation's internal and external relationships;
2. Health and Safety in working practices;
3. Training in the use of ICT and new technology as and when introduced.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

As indicated in the Protocol for Members attending Conferences/Courses, information on courses etc. will arrive from a variety of sources, such as by email, directly addressed letters or 'flyers'.

Training and development requirements will be met in a range of ways and with an assortment of partners including:

- Through collaboration with other authorities, for example with Lancashire County Council (LCC);
- In-house training provided by the Council's officers or bought in;
- Distance learning;
- Self-study.

All applications to participate in training will be treated in accordance with the Protocol for Members attending Conferences/Courses.

MEMBER COMMITMENT

Members have a responsibility to attend training and development opportunities organised for them. Developing skilled Councillors is not the exclusive responsibility of the Council, it is also the responsibility of elected Members.

INDUCTION

The starting point for the Strategy is to support Members when they first join the Council. Following their election a Member is provided with a comprehensive induction pack. An induction briefing session is held within the first weeks of taking office and a follow-up session, usually after six months in office, is available if requested.

IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS (ITN)

To assist with the identification of training needs for Members new to the Council, a Councillor Training Needs Questionnaire is circulated with the Induction pack. One to one interviews are also offered as part of the ITN arrangements.

ANNUAL MONITORING

The Member Development Commission, which will meet twice a year, is responsible for monitoring progress in relation to Member Development. An annual report, outlining training and development undertaken by Members will be considered by the Commission each year.

EVALUATION

As far as practicable all Member Development activities will be evaluated.

RECORDS

A record of training approved by the Leader in accordance with the Protocol for Members Attending Conferences/Courses will be maintained in Member Services. However, Members will be responsible for maintenance of their own individual development record related to other forms of training undertaken.

ROLE OF POLITICAL GROUPS

Each political Group is asked to nominate one of their Members to promote Member Development and to encourage this being a regular item on group meeting agendas. The Groups are also asked to assist their Members in informal ways, for example, mentoring of newer Members to encourage one-to-one interviews and attendance at training sessions.

The Member Development Group Representative is normally also a Member of the Member Development Commission and acts as a link between the Commission and their Political Group.

RESOURCE

Member training and development activities are to be delivered within resources and have to provide value for money. If additional resources are required then a business case would need to be made and taken forward through appropriate channels.

RISK ASSESSMENT

There are no significant risks arising from this document. Risks associated with any training undertaken by Members would be assessed at the point of delivery.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Strategy provides Members with an opportunity to undertake training to ensure that the target groups are not disadvantaged.

APPENDIX

A Protocol for Members attending Conferences/Courses.