

## **North West Charter for Elected Member Development**

### **Supporting continuing professional development for councillors**

At the heart of any council dedicated to meeting the needs of its community, there will also be a commitment to the development of its Councillors. This core principle underpins the North West Member Development Charter.

North West Employers have been supporting councils across the North West in recognising and celebrating excellent practice since the charter was first introduced in 2001. Using an established framework, councils undertake a self-assessment to review their good practice supporting and developing councillors to fulfil the vital role they play working with and supporting local communities; before a formal assessment process which is carried out by one of our team and a member of NW Employers' Executive Board.

### **Requirements**

#### **1. Clear commitment to councillor development**

1.1 Does the council have a signed Declaration of Commitment to the principles of the North West Charter that has been shared with all councillors?

1.2 Is there a cross party designated group of councillors that is focused on supporting councillor development, that takes into account the changing role of the councillor and shares development opportunities outside of the group?

1.3 Are there financial resources available for councillor learning and development and are these used in a cost-effective way?

#### **2. Promoting learning and development opportunities**

2.1 Is there clear reference to learning and development opportunities during the induction process for new councillors?

2.2 Is there an appropriate communication process in place to publicise and promote the development opportunities that are available to councillors? Does it actively encourage take up and engagement? Are councillors informed of who to contact for information on development opportunities?

2.3 Is there take up of learning and development opportunities by councillors with evidence to show how councillors are actively engaged and is this shared across all political parties? How is non-engagement by councillors in respect of development opportunities actively dealt with?

#### **3. Having a councillor led approach to developing learning and development**

3.1 Are councillors actively involved with officers in identifying their development needs and how these might be met to ensure they suit their preferred ways of learning and take into account their changing role? There is a continued drive to increase the quality of development planning.

3.2 Is there a mechanism in place which involves councillors analysing the information gathered from a training needs analysis or personal development plan?

3.3 Is there a clear link between councillors' personal development plans and their learning needs, and the development opportunities offered to councillors?

3.4 In what way are councillors supported in their role as leaders of their local community? Does the support take into account citizens' expectations and the current climate, e.g.technology, links to digital champions and the 21st century councillor?

**4. Have a strategy that includes impact measures within a continuous improvement framework**

4.1 Is there a strategy which sets a clear direction for councillor development? The strategy takes into account the impact of councillor development and is reviewed regularly to ensure there is a focus on continuous improvement.

4.2 Is there a clear link between the councillor development strategy and the corporate aims and objectives of the council,including integrated services and combined authorities? (Where applicable).

4.3 Is there evidence of an evaluation process to assess the impact and effectiveness that councillor development has on their learning at a number of levels and does this evaluation include practical and knowledge-based skills development?

4.4 Show how councillor development is scrutinised.