



**Melton
Borough
Council**

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Audit and Standards Committee

19 November 2019

Report of:	Director for Governance and Regulatory Services
Cabinet Member	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement

Establishment of Member Development Group

1.0 Summary:

- 1.1 To approve the establishment of an informal Member Development Group to ensure that Elected Members receive timely and appropriate support and training so they are equipped to deliver the Council's statutory and corporate priorities and carry out their role as Ward Councillor.
- 1.2 Approve the terms of reference (Appendix A) for the Member Development Group which define the scope and remit of the Group.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 **To approve the establishment of a cross party informal Member Development Group to lead on the Member Development Framework for Melton Borough Council as set out in the terms of reference (Appendix A).**

3.0 Report Detail

- 3.1 Melton Borough Council is committed to providing Elected Members with the tools and knowledge required to carry out their role and considers that the establishment of a Member-led Development Group will ensure that there is a coordinated and focused approach to Member training and development.
- 3.2 There are a variety of skills and knowledge required in order to carry out the role of the Elected Member and the variety of responsibilities that involves, from representing the community as a Ward Councillor, to assisting the Council to deliver the Corporate Plan, achieve its strategic priorities and carry out its statutory and regulatory functions.
- 3.3 Elected Members come to the role from diverse backgrounds. They will have a variety of skills and previous experiences and they will have specific time commitments and learning styles. This must be recognised and reflected in the development programme which should be designed in order to meet the needs of both new and more experienced Members and any specific roles or responsibilities they are appointed to.

- 3.4 Melton Borough Council historically had a Member Development Steering Group. It is considered that following the Local Elections in May 2019 and the completion of the preliminary induction programme for the new Council, it is an appropriate time to refresh the Council's approach to Member Development.
- 3.5 It is important that the Member Development Group is led by Elected Members, so that they can take on the responsibility as champions of the training framework and to promote the importance of continuous learning and development to other members. It is proposed that there should be cross party membership as detailed below:
- Leader/Relevant Portfolio Holder (Chairman)
 - Elected Member (Conservative Group – nominated by Group Leader)
 - Elected Member (Opposition Group – nominated by Group Leader)
- 3.6 The Group will be supported by the Democratic Services Team. The Democratic Services Manager will attend all meetings and will be the officer lead on Member Development, with strategic responsibility reserved to the Director for Governance and Regulatory Services.
- 3.7 It is proposed that the Member Development Group meet on a quarterly basis. The Group may choose to meet more regularly to plan for Member Induction Events in advance of Local Elections at the end of a Council Term.
- 3.8 The Group will plan a programme of training on an annual basis within the scope of its terms of reference and the approved budget for Member Development. This programme will include the provision of internal training events held at the Council Offices and provided by Melton Borough Council officers, partner organisations and external training providers. The Group will also consider member training events provided on an ad-hoc basis by external training providers such as East Midlands Councils, Local Government Association, The Institute of Local Government Studies, Centre for Public Scrutiny, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy etc.
- 3.9 The Member Development Group will provide a report to the Audit and Standards Committee on an annual basis. This report will detail the work of the group over the previous year, including training and development sessions provided and figures on member's attendance at both mandatory and optional training events. The annual report will also contain a proposed programme for the forthcoming year for the Committee's comment, feedback and approval.
- 3.10 The Group will also be asked to formulate and lead on a Member Development Framework for the Council which will outline the aspirations of Members in relation to the focus and outcomes for the Member Development Programme. All members will be invited to feed into the development of this document. The Framework will be presented to the Audit and Standards Committee for approval.

4.0 Consultation and Feedback

- 4.1 The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement has been consulted on the proposed establishment of a Member Development Group.
- 4.2 The Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Independent Group have also been consulted.

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1 Group Leaders of the Conservative and Independent Group will be asked to nominate a member of their Group to sit on the Member Development Group.
- 5.2 Democratic Services will arrange quarterly meetings in consultation with members of the Group.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Budget for Member Development is approved by Council as part of the Annual Budget setting process.
- 6.2 The Budget for Member Development for 2019/20 has been set at £9810 (The Budget is higher for this year due to the increased demand on training as a result of the Member Induction requirements following local elections in May 2019).
- 6.3 The proposed Budget for 2020/21 is £5810. This will be agreed by Council in February 2020.

7.0 Legal and Governance Implications:

- 7.1 Member Development is a specified function of the Audit and Standards Committee as set out in Section 1.22 of Chapter 2, Part 6 of the Melton Borough Council Constitution, as approved by Council on 17 April 2019.
- 7.2 The Group will work towards developing a Member Development Framework which will be presented to the Committee for approval. The Group will develop a Member Development Programme on an annual basis, this will form part of the annual report and will also require Committee approval.
- 7.3 The Member Development Group will have no decision making powers other those in relation to day to day implementation of the Member Development Programme which must be within the constraints of their terms of reference, the Member Development Framework and agreed budgets.

8.0 Equality and Safeguarding Implications:

- 8.1 Training events will be provided in order to ensure that general and specific requirements of elected members are considered to ensure provision of training which are accessible and appropriate for all Members.
 - 8.2 Members who have specific learning requirements are encouraged to approach their representative on the group to ensure these are considered and so that adjustments to the provision of training can be made.
 - 8.3 Equalities and Safeguarding Training for Members will form part of the rolling programme for Member Development.
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9.0 Community Safety Implications:
9.1 There are no community safety implications.

10.0 Other Implications
10.1 There are no other implications.

11.0 Risk & Mitigation:
11.1 The risk of failing to implement an effective Development Programme is that Members will not receive timely and appropriate training in order to carry out their roles effectively.

Background Papers:
There are no background papers.

Appendices
Appendix A – Terms of Reference Member Development Group

Report Timeline:	Dated: (initials and date)
Equalities Check & Challenge	11.11.19
SLT Sign off	N/A
Previously Considered by Cabinet	N/A
Director Approval	6.11.19
Chief Finance Officer Sign Off	6.11.19
Monitoring Officer Sign Off	6.11.19
Consultation with Portfolio Holder	7.11.19

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