MEMBER DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT

Derby City Council is committed to supporting its elected Members in carrying out their roles, as policy makers, representatives of their communities and leaders of those communities. It recognises the need to provide appropriate training, development and learning opportunities to help Members undertake these roles and to play the fullest possible part in making 'Derby a city for all, through strong leadership and excellent customer focused services'

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

1.1 This policy applies to all elected Members and independent members of regulatory committees, who will be included in role specific development opportunities, to enable them to fulfil their roles. The policy supports the principles of the East Midlands Member Development Charter.

1.2 The Policy sets out the Council's commitment to provide appropriate learning and development opportunities for all Members, to enable them to acquire the knowledge and skills required to be effective across all their roles, and to provide a structured and planned approach to training activities.

1.3 The Council recognises that continuing investment and commitment to Members' training, development and lifelong learning, is integral to achieving the Council's strategic objectives, the delivery of high quality services and to meeting its statutory obligations.

2. OBJECTIVES OF MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The key requirements of Members' training and development are to:-

- enable Members to carry out their roles efficiently and effectively and be fulfilled in that work.
- assist individual progression and develop capacity.
- provide support to Members in developing their roles as ward representatives and as community leaders
- enable Members to undertake specific duties and responsibilities
- keep Members up to date with new legislation and changing policies
- keep under review the Council's policies and strategies and assist with the implementation and achievement of corporate priorities.

3. KEY PRINCIPLES

Equality of Access and Opportunity

3.1 The Council recognises its responsibility to offer equality of access to learning and development to all Members. In practice this means making sure that there are no physical, social, religious or cultural barriers to Members who want to participate in development opportunities, including those with family and work responsibilities and using a range of methods to meet learning needs.

3.2 All Members will have the opportunity to benefit from learning and development opportunities, regardless of their physical circumstances, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, age or religion.

3.3 Information about Member development opportunities will be published well in advance and be appropriately publicised.

Member-led Approach

3.4 The Council will ensure a Member-led approach to learning and development by vesting responsibility for its implementation in the cross- party Members' Services Working Party, which will monitor delivery and evaluation of Member development activities. Members will be encouraged to identify their own development needs and participate fully in training and development events.

Community Engagement

3.5 Member Development opportunities will include activities that promote community engagement, work/life balance and good citizenship.

Resources

3.6 The Council will allocate a budget for Member development to cover needs, linked to corporate, role specific and individual learning and development requirements, subject to finances and resources being available. will be reviewed annually. Joint training activities with other authorities and/or partner organisations will be used where appropriate to reduce the costs of training to the authority.

3.7 Member entitlements to travel and subsistence for attendance at learning and development events are set out in the Members' Allowance Scheme.

3.8 The Council will fund a Broadband connection to every Members' home and supply the hardware, applications and training to enable Members to access training opportunities away from the traditional classroom setting. Members will be expected to demonstrate a level of proficiency in the use of IT, as established in the 'IT Passport' within a few weeks of their election, or to undertake bespoke training within an agreed timescale. The Role Descriptions, referred to in Section 4.2 of the Policy, reinforce this principle.

4. PROCESSES FOR MANAGING MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Summary

4.1 Member development will take place within a structured process. In line with best practice, the Council will implement a staged approach to managing Members' learning and development activities as follows:

- Identification of needs
- Planning activities
- Delivery of activities and opportunities
- Evaluation and monitoring of investment and benefits of learning and development

Identification of Needs

4.2 The identification and delivery of learning and development needs and priorities will be carried out at a number of levels; Individual, Role specific and Corporate.

Individual
A Personal Development Plan review will be offered to every Member within his/her four year term of office. The discussion will be facilitated by a senior officer in the Democratic Services Division, with an HR professional, and use the principles of the I&DeA Six Core Skills for Councillors. The resultant needs analysis will form the basis of an individual development plan for each Member, whilst recurring themes will be used to inform the content of the broader Member Development Programme.
Newly elected Members will have an opportunity to discuss training and development needs as part of their induction.

Role Specific
The Council will publish and maintain Role Descriptions and Person Specifications to assist in identifying training and development needs for Members. Those whose roles change can use the profiles to identify any new skills to be learned. Similarly those who aspire to roles can use the profiles to plan ahead to maximise their potential. (Note: the Role Descriptions and Person Specifications are attached to this policy statement)

Corporate
Councillor training will be linked to corporate priorities. Identification of learning and development needs to meet corporate priorities will be through the Council's business planning and performance processes, which includes the Chief Officer Group and the Cabinet.

Planning Members' Learning and Development Activities

4.3 The Council has a thorough induction process for all newly elected Members and reviews that process annually. Induction includes a briefing on the key principles of Member development and guidance on how the invitation process to Member Development Days works and how to book on external events.
The Council will set aside ten Member Development Days each year in its Schedule of Meetings and draw the attention of Members to these dates.
The programme of learning opportunities will be advised with as much notice as practicable, but not so far in advance as to compromise flexibility to respond to unforeseen developments. The cross party Members' Services Working Party will influence the training programme.

Delivery of Activities

4.4 A flexible approach to the delivery of training and development will be adopted to make full use of the different methods available, to provide Members with the knowledge, capabilities, opportunities, networks and experiences they need to fulfil their role as effectively as possible. When appropriate, joint Member and officer training and development activities will be encouraged

Evaluation

4.5 All training and development activity must be evaluated to ensure both effectiveness and value for money. Members will complete a 'Learning Request and Evaluation Form' when they have identified an event they wish to attend. This will set out their expectations in advance and include a post-event review on the success in achieving those expectations. Members will also be asked how they intend to share any new knowledge or skills with their colleagues. The Council's commitment to continuous improvement requires that the development of Members must be regularly reviewed and the Members' Services Working Party will receive regular monitoring reports.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each individual Member is responsible for undertaking core training, identifying their training requirements and sharing knowledge and skills with their colleagues.

Political Group Leaders must support and encourage their Members to attend training and development events to ensure their training needs on core competencies are met.

The Members' Services Working Party is to monitor the action plan for accreditation under the East Midlands Member Development Charter and to influence proposals for the Training and Development Plan as appropriate.

The Chief Officer Group, Service Directors and Heads of Service must identify training and development needs for Members arising from new initiatives and/or legislation and liaise with the Head of Democratic Services on appropriate methods of delivery.

The Head of Democratic Services is responsible, through the Members Services Working Party, for the day-to-day management and overall development of Member Training and Development and will be supported as and when appropriate by HR professionals from the Organisational Learning and Development Team.