

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
MEETING:	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
DATE:	14 th JUNE 2023
TITLE OF REPORT :	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT
REPORT BY :	HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING MANAGER
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PURPOSE OF REPORT :	TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT MATTERS FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the report is to provide the Standards Committee with an update on Training and Development matters since the report presented in June 2022 and to provide an overview of the provision offered to Elected Members during the last financial year.

In addition, information regarding arrangements in place for the 2023-2024 training plan is also presented.

2. THE PLAN

Between 11 May 2022 and 31 March 2023, 59 training days were offered to Elected Members by the Human Resource Training Team – note that these sessions were in addition to the regular briefing sessions available to them.

The training offered covered a wide range of subject areas, some of which relate to specific Committees e.g. Planning/Audit whilst additional generic sessions such as Chairing and ICT skills were made available to all. Attendance at sessions has been variable.

In relation to the courses deemed to be mandatory, attendance levels are noted below:

- Code of Conduct x 29
- Equalities and Diversity x25 (additional session arranged for March 2023)

- General Data Protection Principles (GDPR) x19
- Cyber Security x35
- Safeguarding x21

3. PLAN FOR 2023-2024

As highlighted in section 4 of the Member Development Strategy (see appendix 1), The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that local authorities provide every Member with the opportunity to have an annual review of his/her training needs. Arrangements were put in place for all Members to be offered a Development Interview by the end of April.

The development interview should ideally be conducted by the member's group leader. If this is not possible, then the interview can be conducted with the Head of Democracy. The interview should focus on the member's roles and responsibilities and the outcome from the above will be an individual Development Plan for each Member who undertakes an interview or provides details of his /her training needs to the Head of Democracy (within the constraints of available budgets and other resources).

In order to ensure the Training programme addresses the Authority's overall needs in addition to that of individual Members, the Authority's Strategic Leadership Team and Heads of Service will be consulted and invited to submit any potential development and training needs for their area of responsibility.

All the above will be taken into account in drawing up the 2023-2024 plan which will be presented to the Chair of Democracy and Head of Democracy for approval.

4. COMMUNICATION

In terms of the communication, as a follow on to the initial publication of the training plan, Elected Member Bulletins have been published and circulated, with the purpose of promoting upcoming training.

Electronic versions of the bulletins are available within the Elected Members Dashboard (launched in July 2022) and which can be found on the Authority's E-Learning Platform, Learning Pool. Elected Members also have access to Health & Wellbeing information; generic modules as well as those specifically for their roles.

In addition to the above, invitations to attend training are shared via emails/appointments.

As a new arrangement this year, quarterly reports will be distributed to Group Leaders which record details of specific training Members of their Group have offered/attended.

5. METHODS OF DELIVERY

Delivery of sessions continues in the main to take place via media such as MS Teams/Zoom as well as utilising the additional resources available on the Authority's E-Learning platform, Learning Pool, allowing access at any time. In addition, consideration will be given to hosting classroom/hybrid sessions during 2023/2024.

Timings of sessions is continually being reviewed in terms of when sessions are delivered i.e. daytime/late afternoon/early evening, so that work/caring commitments are taken into account and also to maximise attendance. Wherever possible and practicable the Training Team will seek to offer options of dates and times.

6. IN SUMMARY

Acknowledgement is given to the high number of training sessions that were arranged at the beginning of this term however as the year progressed the number eased. Where Elected Members were unable to attend some of the mandatory sessions, the intention is to offer further sessions during 2023/2024 programme in order to ensure compliance.

Naturally, the plan will continue to be reviewed and revised with input from stakeholders, ensuring that we are able to respond to the identified needs and ensuring timely delivery.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- To note of the content of the report

Miriam Williams
HR Training Manager
June 2023



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ISLE OF ANGLESEY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Isle of Anglesey County Council

**MEMBER
DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY**

2022 - 2027

**‘Shaping the future through
developing people’**

Review date: March 2027

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

1. Introduction

1.1 The Isle of Anglesey County Council recognises that there are ever increasing demands on, and expectations of Members, given the pace of legislative change and constantly changing environment. There is therefore a requirement to ensure that effective development and support is in place to enable them to fulfil the demands of their roles.

1.2 The Council is operating in a constantly changing environment, having to respond to changes in legislation (e.g. Local Government (Wales) Act 2015, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014); Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, reducing budgets whilst taking on new responsibilities. This requires Elected Members and a workforce that are flexible and responsive to change. The Council is faced with an extremely challenging and demanding programme which includes:-

- Collaborating with other local authorities and agencies to improve service delivery.
- Responding to budget cuts year on year.
- New, challenging and changing roles for Elected Members.
- New political management arrangements and responsibility for the scrutiny of other public service providers.
- An emphasis on continuous improvement.
- Corporate Governance.
- Digital and Technical Developments

1.3 In embracing these challenges, the Council must continue to develop its Members so that they:

- Are responsive to change.
- Maximise the use of all available resources.
- Can challenge the Council and other organisations fairly and identify best practice.
- Are focussed on maximising the outcomes provided by public services within the challenging climate of diminishing financial resources.

- Are influential community leaders.

2. Purpose of the Strategy

2.1 To enable Councillors to operate efficiently and effectively in fulfilling their various roles it is the Council's policy to identify the learning and development needs of all Councillors.

2.2 This requires a proactive approach towards Member Development and support in the form of internally and externally facilitated presentations, seminars and workshops as well as through specific training courses. The Council has supported Member development through the allocation of a specific budget and applied its policy on an equal basis to all 35 Members, as well as supporting co-opted members of the Standards, Audit and Scrutiny committees. This system was formalised in 2008 when the Council was awarded the WLGA's Charter for Member Support and Development, which was subsequently renewed in 2019.

2.3 The Council recognises the need to further improve opportunities and support for Members and their learning and development needs. Charter status underlines the continuing importance of training and development for Members and ensures future provision will be based on need, provided by professionals where the quality of training is monitored for quality and provided to all Members on an equal basis.

3. Member Development Strategy – Aims and Objectives

3.1 Member Development refers to any development activities or training programmes specifically designed to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of Elected Members in their varied roles.

3.2 This strategy aims to equip Members with the skills and knowledge they need in their current and future roles and role descriptions amended/updated as required. To ensure that this strategy meets the needs of Members and the Council, activities will be properly planned, resourced within current budget limits, monitored and evaluated.

3.3 The strategy's main objectives are:-

- To achieve a clear and shared understanding of the various Member roles.

- To improve the performance of senior post holders aided by annual Personal Support and Development Interviews.
- To provide an integrated induction and ongoing role, skills and knowledge programme of development opportunities for all Members.
- To provide opportunities for Elected Members to develop and enhance their digital skills which will serve to become proficient and effective with technological challenges
- To provide support tailored to the needs of Members based on individual training needs analysis.
- To monitor the impact of the strategy and use feedback to improve over time and celebrate success.

3.4 The Council will provide Elected Members with flexible and responsive training and development that is based on individual and organisational needs. This will maximise the effectiveness of Members in their various roles to ensure that the Isle of Anglesey County Council will be regarded as a leader in the provision of support to Elected Members and deserving of Charter status.

3.5 This strategy should be read in conjunction with the Authority's current corporate "Learning, Training and Development Policy"

4. Implementing the Charter Requirements

4.1 It is fundamental to its success that Members take a leading role in its development, will oversee its implementation, willingly participate with the requirements of the Charter and play a full role in evaluating and monitoring its progress and effectiveness.

4.2 The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development sets out a rigorous and structured approach for Member development. Set out below are the Charter's main requirements and the Council's approach to their implementation:-

4.2.1 Members are supported with role descriptions, which are reviewed as required and are subject to formal approval before circulation to all members, including co-opted members. They will be used to inform the individual training and development plans which will be available to all members.

Links from the standard role descriptions and personal specifications are made to each member's personal online page.

4.2.2 Members are supported in undertaking their duties according to high standards of conduct – Code of Conduct training has been identified as a core element of the Member Development Programme and training will be provided as need is identified.

4.2.3 Members are supported in understanding their roles and responsibilities as set out in the Constitution – Appropriate training will be provided on the various roles of both Members and committees.

4.2.4 A Member learning and development strategy has been adopted – This document has been adopted by Council as its Member Development Strategy.

4.2.5 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that local authorities provide every Member with the opportunity to have an annual review of his/her training needs. Arrangements will be put in place for all Members to be offered a Development Interview and Members will be reminded of this opportunity on an annual basis. The WLGA Charter further requires that all Members who receive a Senior Salary must undergo such an interview.

4.2.6 In order to ensure that the training and development needs cover as wide a range of Member requirements as possible, where individual Members do not take up this option they will be given the opportunity to respond either directly to the Head of Democracy and/or Lead for Workforce Development by telephone, e-mail or in writing.

4.2.7 Identification of the Authority's Needs – In order to ensure the programme addresses the Authority's overall needs in addition to that of individual Members the Authority's Strategic Leadership Team and Heads of Service will be consulted on an annual basis to submit any potential Member development and training needs for his/her area of responsibility.

4.2.8 Individual Development Plans – The outcome from the above will be an individual Member Development Plan for each Member who undertakes an interview or provides details of his /her training needs to the Head of Democracy (within the constraints of available budgets and other resources).

4.2.9 E-Learning – A series of e-Learning modules will be developed and utilised as a key element of Member development.

4.2.10 A development programme for councillors is in place with a mechanism for its annual review – A Member Development Programme will be agreed by the Democratic Services Committee annually, taking into account and evaluating the previous year's plan, individual Member development reviews, feedback from Members who respond to the Head of Democracy and feedback from officers and the Authority's Strategic Leadership Team.

4.2.11 All Members are made aware of, guided to and are able to access the development activities equally – A programme of training events will be circulated to all Members.

4.2.12 Prospective candidates, candidates and new Members are informed of their role and responsibilities – Prospective candidates will be provided with appropriate information, events and support during the period leading up to an election.

4.2.13 Development activities are relevant and of high quality – A range of both in house and external provision will be utilised as appropriate and an evaluation of each session undertaken.

4.2.14 There is a clear responsibility for leading the programme, driving the strategy and monitoring the outcomes – The Democratic Services Committee, supported by the Head of Democracy, will be responsible for both this strategy and the programme.

4.2.15 Resources are identified and provided for Member development – An annual training budget will exist to meet Member development requirements, the level of which being subject to the financial constraints of the Authority.

4.2.16 All Members will be offered the opportunity to request mentoring with mentors who have received appropriate training to undertake the role.

4.2.17 Officer support is provided for Member development, support and scrutiny – The Democratic Services Committee, supported by the Head of Democracy, will have responsibility for ensuring that adequate support exists.

4.2.18 Arrangements made for the business of the Council are flexible and enable Members to participate fully, regardless of personal circumstances – An annual report will be presented to Council to consider the dates and times of meetings for the coming year, taking account of the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and to address the diversity of the Elected Members.

4.2.19 Contact management and communication – Members will be supplied with appropriate information as part of an Induction pack and on the Council's Intranet site to support them in undertaking their duties.

The Authority will maintain standards for response times to e-mails, telephone calls and written correspondence.

4.2.20 Annual Reports – All Members will be offered the opportunity of producing an Annual Report in line with requirements

4.2.21 All Members are provided with adequate access to ICT – Appropriate equipment, support and training will be provided to Members.

4.2.22 Information resources are provided – Appropriate resources and information are available to Members in an appropriate format.

4.2.23 Facilities for Members to work in the Council are available – The Democratic Services Committee, supported by the Head of Democracy, will periodically review that accommodation, ICT and other related resources are adequate to meet Member needs.

5. Strategy Delivery

5.1 The Chair of the Democratic Services Committee, as the Member Development Champion will lead on this, supported by the Head of Democracy. The Strategy/Charter Application will be presented to Council, but adopting the annual plan, monitoring and reporting will be the responsibility of the Democratic Services Committee.

5.2 The purpose of the Committee's work in this respect will be:-

- To establish a comprehensive and robust Member Training and Development process using the principles of the WLGA Charter for Member Development and Support.
- To ensure that Member Development becomes part of the overall mainstream organisational activity.
- To make recommendations to Council, as appropriate, on Member Support, particularly Member Development.
- The co-ordination and continuous evaluation of the Member Development Programme.
- To monitor progress against the Strategy's objectives.

5.3 All Member training and development activities provided as a result of this Strategy will:-

- Be secured from the most effective and appropriate training providers or facilitators from within or outside the Authority.
- Respond to the needs of Members for method and style of delivery.
- Take into account the principles of relevant Council policies.
- Planned and delivered at suitable times and locations to meet the diverse range of Elected Members.

6. Evaluation of the Strategy

6.1 Progress will be continually monitored and evaluated by the Democratic Services Committee and the Head of Democracy.

6.2 The development of Members as a result of the activities will be assessed by themselves with support of appropriate senior Members and Officers if participating in the Personal Support and Development Interviews.

7. Resources

7.1 An annual budget will be included in the Corporate Training budget to support Member Training and Development activities. The Head of Democracy has overall

responsibility for Member Development and is supported by the HR service to coordinate, liaise and organise the relevant training.