

## 2. MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ( A111/ RMM)

### Purpose of the report

1. This report outlines progress made on member personal development plans and makes proposals for the next annual programme of Member learning and business events (October 2009 -October 2010). The good practice recommendations made by Local Government East Midlands are also considered.

### Recommendations

2.
  1. That the proposed member learning and business events programme for October 2009- October 2010 at Appendix 3 be agreed
  2. That the actions outlined in paragraph 8(b) – 8(i) in response to the report at Appendix 2 from Local Government East Midlands be agreed
  3. That three Members are nominated to form a task team with the Member Representative for Member Learning and Development, the Director of Corporate Resources and the Democratic Services Manager as proposed in paragraph 8g of the report.

### How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

3. One of the key corporate actions for the Authority is K3: Valuing and developing staff and members and the Authority's objective for member development is:
  - To enable members to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviours to improve effectiveness and fulfil their role as a member of the authority and that processes are in place to support this within a framework of good governance and continuous improvement.

### Background

4. In October 2007 the Authority agreed a revised approach to Member Learning and Development. The full report can be found at: <http://resources.peakdistrict.gov.uk/ctte/authority/reports/2007/071005Item10-4Annex1.pdf> and a summary is given at Appendix 1. At this same meeting it was agreed that we should explore the possibility of signing up to the East Midlands Member Development Charter and this was agreed formally by the Authority in March 2008 with the full report at: <http://resources.peakdistrict.gov.uk/ctte/authority/reports/2008/080328Item11-2.pdf>
5. Key elements of progressing Member Learning and Development agreed at the time included:
  - commissioning the help of Local Government East Midlands (LGEM), working in partnership with the Improvement and Development Agency (Lisa Butterfill of LGEM is our main contact)
  - confirming the need to pace improvement within existing resources building on a sound basis
  - appointing a Member Representative for Member Learning and Development (Patricia Coleman)
  - reviewing the standards of the Member Development Charter so that they reflect the needs of the National Park Authority (these have now been agreed with LGEM)

- the introduction of member personal development plans
- a progress report from LGEM following the introduction of member personal development plans (see Appendix 2)

6. In considering the proposals in this report the following performance data is relevant:

Data	Results and comments
2008/09 member participation in training/briefing events	48%. This indicator is being monitored quarterly in 2009/10. Q1 performance for 2009/10 was better at 65.9%
2008 Member Survey:	Percentage of members who feel valued: 67% Percentage of members who feel developed by the Authority: 76%
Number of Members with personal development plans	50%. The following dates have been identified for new members and others to take up the opportunity to participate: 27 October and 4 November.
Evaluation of training conducted in 2008/09	Key messages from evaluation forms include: a) % of members who felt objectives of workshops were met = range: 78%-100% over 6 workshops b) % of Members who rated the workshop 'good' over 6 workshops = range: 71%-100% for 5 workshops; 55% for one workshop c) On the whole feedback comments from the 6 workshops were positive. There were some ideas for improvement from Planning workshop 1 which were implemented for Planning workshop 2 when the feedback was much better.

### Proposals

7. The following proposals are based on consideration of:

- The progress report from LGEM
- Performance data given above
- The desire to continue to improve to achieve best practice at a pace that is appropriate to current performance and within existing resources
- Discussion with the Member Representative, Management Team and Strategic Advisory Group

8. At this stage it is proposed that:

a) the **programme of member learning and business** events at Appendix 3 is provided for October 2009 – October 2010. The programme is split into three categories: essential events for all Members, desirable events for all Members and events to meet identified needs for some Members. The programme does not cover all the issues raised through the member personal development plan process as there is a need to prioritise. The intention is for some remaining needs to be met on an individual basis and for some to be met by future programmes. Members may have a view on priorities to be met from the needs identified.

- b) Members (50%) who do not yet have a **personal member development plan** are encouraged to participate by Members who have seen the benefit
- c) the **action plans** for those Members who have personal development plans be analysed by Democratic Services to assist in enabling access by individual members to learning opportunities that will not be met by the formal programme
- d) the modern councillor **e-learning workbooks** are researched further for possible future use
- e) the offer by three members to be **mentors** to new members is pursued
- f) **briefings for Member Representatives** for National Park Management Plan outcomes are arranged following approval of appointments in October
- g) a revised **member learning and development policy and strategy** is drafted involving a small task team of Members (working with the Member Representative, Director of Corporate Resources and Democratic Services Manager) which outlines the Authority's future approach to:
- Producing future member personal development plans (there are a number of options for how to deliver this in the future e.g. led by members as in some authorities, externally facilitated, internally facilitated)
  - Process for review of member development plans when in place (again there are a number of options for this e.g. self assessment, externally or internally facilitated after 12 months)
  - Member appraisals
  - Responding to the Minister's statement and advice (following consultations on direct elections to English National Parks and Broads Authorities) on developing the role of Parish council members (which might have implications for learning and development for all categories of membership)
  - Developing members to take on leadership roles including formal committee roles and Member Representative roles
  - Encouraging all members to participate in the essential events of the annual programme
- h) **LGEM is asked to complete a diagnostic report** on the Authority's progress against achieving the Member Development Charter
- i) The **web based learning platform** used for staff induction be developed for use for Member training in particular for planning and induction training in the first instance

**Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?**

9. **Financial:**  
Member development costs are funded by the Democratic Services budget with approximately £7,000 being available to fund all training including attendance at UK ANPA (Association of National Park Authorities) conferences and workshops. This means expenditure has to be prioritised.
10. **Risk Management:**  
The main risk is failure to enable Members to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviours to improve effectiveness and fulfil their role. The Authority has

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provided development opportunities for Members for many years. The proposals in this report are part of continuous improvement in our approach.

11. **Sustainability:**  
There are no issues to highlight other than the need identified for more briefing on climate change.

12. **Background papers**  
April 2008 to March 2009 Member training and development evaluation report

**Appendices -**

Appendix 1: Summary of key points from October 2007 review of member training and development

Appendix 2: Report on member personal development planning by Local Government East Midlands

Appendix 3: Proposed programme of member learning and business events for October 2009 – October 2010

**Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date**

Ruth Marchington, Director of Corporate Resources, Thursday 24 September 2009.