

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Peak District National Park Authority is committed to investing in lifelong learning and development for all its Members. The Authority recognises the contribution that such an investment can make in supporting Members in their roles as leaders within the organisation and the wider community. The ongoing development of Members is a key element of the organisational development of the Authority.
- 1.2 The Authority has therefore signed up to the East Midlands Regional Member Development Charter and is working towards achieving the standards required. In recent years progress in achieving the full award has been restricted due to budget pressures limiting the amount of staffing resource available to support the programme, however the Authority has continued to maintain the standard and use opportunities to improve when they arise.

2.0 The East Midlands Regional Member Development Charter

- 2.1 The East Midlands Development Charter for Members was developed around a national template adapted to reflect the culture of the region and the needs of the local authorities within it. The Charter sets out a process for accreditation and a framework of standards of good practice for Authorities to achieve.
- 2.2 The aim of the Charter is to make sure that Members have the knowledge, skills and attributes to fulfil their roles now and in the future in line with the Authority's corporate outcomes. The purpose of the Charter is therefore to act as a vehicle to improve the corporate performance of the Authority through the development of its Members.
- 2.3 A summary of the criteria for the current Charter is set out in Appendix A.

3.0 Our General Approach

- 3.1 One of the key principles for Member Learning & Development at the Authority is that Members are asked to take individual responsibility for their own training and development and identify their needs. The following tools are available to help Members do this:

A personal development plan for new Members

- 3.2 As part of the induction process all new Members are provided with the opportunity to meet with an external facilitator to identify their learning and development needs and produce a personal development plan.
- 3.3 Once completed the plan is considered by the Democratic and Legal Support Team who will consult with the individual Member on how to deliver their plan.
- 3.4 After their first year as a Member individual Members will take on responsibility for updating their plan as part of the annual self-assessment process.

Annual Self-Assessment

- 3.5 It is a requirement from The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs ('Defra') that the performance of all 'National' Secretary of State Members is measured and they complete a self-assessment. However, Parish Members and Local Authority Members are encouraged to complete their own self-assessment annually as this tool is useful in:
- Assisting individual Members in developing and updating their personal development plan.
 - Helping Officers to identify learning and development needs to inform the annual learning and development plan.

Members Survey

- 3.6 Once every two years the Authority carries out a survey of Members. The questions in the survey are structured around the following areas:
- Strategic and external leadership
 - Governance and scrutiny
 - Contributions and self-development
 - Communication
 - Community engagement
- 3.7 Once the survey has been completed the results are analysed and issues identified. In some cases the issues identified can be resolved through providing further learning and development opportunities. Where this is the case they will be incorporated into the annual learning and development plan.
- 3.8 The Members Survey due to be undertaken during 2018 was held in abeyance as a result of the creation of the Member led Governance Review Working Group. It was agreed that the bi-annual Survey would be held after the Group had completed its review so that feedback could be gained from the wider membership of the initiatives introduced by the Group and adopted by the Members of the Authority. Although it was anticipated that the next Members Survey would be conducted at the end of 2020 this was put back to 2022/23.

4.0 Our current arrangements for Member Learning and Development

New Member Induction

- 4.1 The effective induction of new Members is a crucial element to making sure that all Members are able to contribute to the work of the Authority as soon as possible after their appointment. However, we need to make sure that we strike the right balance of providing what is needed but avoiding an overload of information. We also have to recognise that Members also have other significant commitments outside of the Authority.

4.2 With this in mind the following induction arrangements have been agreed.

a) Compulsory elements			
<i>Topic</i>	<i>Delivered by</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Getting started as a Member – An introduction to Democratic Services	Democratic Services Manager	Within 2 weeks of appointment	2 hours
An introduction to the Peak District National Park Authority (Strategy)	Chief Executive and Chair of the Authority	Within 4 weeks of appointment	2 hours
Planning Training Induction:			
Read the Introduction to Planning Information pack and complete the on-line knowledge test	Head of Planning and Democratic Services Manager	Within 8 weeks of appointment	4 hours
Observation of a meeting of the Planning Committee	Head of Planning and Democratic Services Manager	Within 8 weeks of appointment	3 hours

b) Optional elements but highly recommended			
<i>Topic</i>	<i>Delivered by</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Allocation of an experienced “buddy” Member	Facilitated by Democratic and Legal Support Team	Within 2 weeks of appointment	To be agreed by the new Member and their buddy
Produce a personal learning and development plan with assistance from an external facilitator.	Arranged by Democratic and Legal Support Team	Within 8 weeks of appointment	2 hours
Attend a national new Member induction event.	Bookings arranged by Democratic and Legal Support Team	Within 18 months of appointment	2 or 3 day residential or virtual event

Annual Learning and Development Event Programme

4.3 Each year the Authority will approve the Member Annual Learning and Development Event Programme. Taking the report to the November meeting of the Authority allows us to incorporate into the plan any issues identified in new Member learning and development plans and from the self-assessments completed by other Members.

4.4 The Learning and Development Plan will be divided into three sections:

Essential or Desirable	Core events for all Members to attend
New Member Induction	Events for new Members to attend
Development	Optional learning and development topics for Members to choose from with delivery tailored to interest

4.5 As there is a limit to the financial resources available for supporting Members in attending external courses and workshops individual requests for support will only be considered if it is clear that the event will help to meet needs identified in that Member's self-assessment or learning and development plan.

Performance

4.6 The following aspects are measured to give us guidance on how these arrangements are working. These aspects are reported the Authority meeting as part of the annual learning and development report.

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Member participation in essential training events	54%	72%	60%	57%	63%
Members with a personal development plan in place	30%	30%	24%	27%	24%
Members who completed a self-assessment form.	32%	30%	47%	30%	24%
Members who felt objectives were met at L&D events	*Data not available	*Data not available	72 – 100%	72 – 100%	72 – 100%
Members who rated workshops as good	*Data not available.	*Data not available	70 – 100%	70 – 100%	70 – 100%
Target of 20 hours learning and development per Member obtained	23%	*0%, however 43% obtained 16 hours	17%	10%	27%

*Data information and participation in events affected by Covid-19 pandemic and continuing effects during 2020-22.

It is recognised that there are many ways that Members may be developed including training at other authorities and self-development such as personal research. These activities should be captured in individual self-assessments so that they can contribute towards the 20-hour target.

East Midlands Member Development Charter Standards (Updated October 2020)

1. Commitment to Member Development and Support

- 1.1 Political and managerial leadership is committed to the development of Members.
- 1.2 The Authority actively promotes democratic participation, publicises the role of councillors as community leaders, and proactively engages with under-represented groups.
- 1.3 The Authority is committed to ensuring equal access to learning and development for all Members.
- 1.4 The Authority has a designated budget for Member development which is adequate to meet priority development needs.

2 Strategic approach to Member development

- 2.1 The Authority has a Member Development Strategy in place.
- 2.2 The Authority has a structured process for regularly assessing Members' individual learning and development needs based on focused objectives.
- 2.3 The various Member roles are clearly defined and outline how they contribute to the achievement of Authority and community objectives
- 2.4 The Authority has a structured process for assessing current and future leadership and executive team development needs.
- 2.5 There is a Corporate Member learning and development plan in place.

3 Learning and development is effective in building skills and knowledge

- 3.1 Investment in learning and development is regularly evaluated and improvements implemented
- 3.2 Learning shared with other Members and where appropriate with Officers and stakeholders to encourage capacity building and a culture of learning across the Authority and externally.