

# **ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER B**

## EAST HERTS COUNCIL

### MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING STRATEGY: 2015 TO 2019

#### 1.0 **Strategy Aim**

1.1 East Herts Council is committed to the continuous development of its elected members. A training and development programme will support the strategy and will be designed around the individual needs of the elected members to support them in their personal and organisational effectiveness.

1.2 Development areas would include:

- Gaining knowledge and understanding of the Council and the context in which it operates
- Awareness of local and national door step issues
- Specific statutory training required for legislative committees
- Enhancing individual soft skills for example chairing meetings, communication training, leadership etc.

1.3 This strategy has been developed to ensure the elected members respond appropriately to the internal and external challenges and opportunities that affect East Herts Council.

#### 2.0 **Introduction**

2.1 East Herts Council is committed to continuous improvement and ensuring each resident receives excellent services.

2.2 Council recognises the contribution members and employees make to ensure it delivers that excellent service. It is committed to creating development opportunities for members and staff.

2.3 East Herts has made a commitment to Member training and development through its Member Development Pledge.

2.4 Council supports the principles of training and development for the elected members; and recognises the importance of

identifying members individual needs as a key to the success of a development plan. The plan needs to be flexible and have multi-options for delivering development and training.

### 3.0 **Corporate Objective**

- 3.1 Council will consolidate Member training good practice and development that is provided.
- 3.2 High quality training and development contributes to the achievement of all the council's corporate objectives and supports the individual roles of the members, especially those on the legislative committees.

### 4.0 Access to Training and Development Opportunities

- 4.1 The training and development opportunities are available to all and members are all encouraged to part take irrespective of political affiliation or length of service.
- 4.2 An annual personal development assessment will be used to ascertain the development needs of an individual member. The Member Development Group (MDG), which is a mixed team of officers and members, will determine how these areas for development can be met in the most effective and cost effective ways. If members have a query in regard to the training plan they can contact a member of the MDG.

### 5.0 **Roles and Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The individual councillor – whilst Council will offer practical support, encouragement and resources, it expects each individual councillor to take personal responsibility for their own learning and self-development.
- 5.2 The MDG – will support and encourage related strategies and programmes for members. It will
  - support members in the identification of their training needs and the provision of training opportunities;
  - ensure that all new councillors receive a comprehensive induction in all the appropriate council functions and services and in local government generally;

- encourage and monitor progress in member development, retaining the need for confidentiality regarding each member's own personal development plan;
- ensure appropriate and comprehensive training and development opportunities are provided and delivered in a flexible and effective way that meets the identified training needs;
- monitor the effectiveness of the training provided against an individual's needs;
- encourage and develop new approaches to learning and development for members and oversee a framework whereby training is evaluated, and
- be formed from members and officers to ensure a mix of expertise.

## 6.0 **New Member Induction Programme**

- 6.1 Council will organise a comprehensive induction programme for new councillors which will also enable refresher training for re-elected members following district elections.
- 6.2 The induction programme will be on a facilitated delivery basis using various styles.
- 6.3 All members will be offered the opportunity to complete a CoLANDER interview (with a mentor/buddy/councillor colleague) to identify learning needs in order to fulfil their roles.

## 7.0 **Member Development and Training**

- 7.1 Identified member training and development needs will be categorised as, for example:
- committee based training;
  - specific role training e.g. executive members
  - corporate awareness training e.g. risk management, procurement, Health and Safety
  - developing skills e.g. speed reading, media skills, chairing meetings.
- 7.2 Members' training will be delivered by other Members, internal officers, external providers or other government organisations.

7.3 The MDG will ensure training and development is planned more strategically. Members will be able to build up a training record that can be regularly reviewed and encourages continuous development of each individual.

8.0 **Evaluation**

8.1 All training will be reviewed to assess value for money, delivery against objectives and the needs of the members attending.