

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 20 MAY 2015

REPORT BY HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SUPPORT
SERVICES

EAST HERTS MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND PLEDGE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To adopt the updated East Herts ‘Member Development Strategy’
- To re-sign the East Herts ‘Member Development Pledge’

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: that the</u>	
(A)	updated East Herts Member Development Strategy appended to the report now submitted be adopted; and
(B)	East Herts Member Development Pledge be endorsed and formally signed, on behalf of Members, by the Leader of the Council.

1.0 Background

1.1 The South East Employers (SEE) regional organisation operates a Member Development Charter scheme which is designed to assist local authorities to take a strategic approach to training and skills development of elected Members.

1.2 To gain Charter (or Charter Plus) status, a local authority has to be externally assessed against a detailed set of criteria to show they are meeting the standards required under a wide range of requirements. A full set of accreditation guidelines is available on their website at <http://www.seemp.co.uk/index/ctrlgov/emcharter/emcmilestones.htm>

1.3 East Herts applied for Charter status and was successfully assessed on 16 June 2011. The Charter was awarded for a term

of three years and a successful mid-term review was held on 14 January 2013.

- 1.4 As part of the standards required under the Charter, the member training and development programme at East Herts has been overseen by a member led Member Development Charter Group made up of representatives from all political groups and officers.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 The Charter status lapsed after three years (in June 2014) as the Member Development Charter Group was confident that the structure the Authority now has in place for member development is robust enough to maintain the high standards set by the Charter.
- 2.2 The Authority has a Member Development and Training Strategy.
- 2.3 This strategy has been reviewed and updated by the (out-going) Member Development (Charter) Group
- 2.4 The updated Strategy can be found at **Essential Reference Paper B**.
- 2.5 With the expiry of formal Charter status, the Council had no public facing documentation to indicate its commitment to developing and supporting elected members to take on their community role and other duties required by committee membership or leadership.
- 2.6 To address that gap, the Member Development (Charter) Group produced a Member Development Pledge for East Herts which was supported and signed in December 2014 by the leaders of all political groups represented on the Council at that time.
- 2.7 **Essential Reference Paper C** shows the Member Development Pledge. Council is invited to endorse the pledge and invite the Leader of the Council to sign a formal display copy of this document at the end of this Annual Council meeting.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

None

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