

Title Member development and support
What are the main issues? <i>what is the policy background?, how does it link to the councils corporate priorities?</i>
<p>In 2003 Brent adopted the principals of the National Charter for Member Development, with the leaders of all three political groups at that time signing up to the Charter. This marked a national move towards increasing support for members in the context of learning and development and signified a greater commitment by the council to assist councillors in performing their roles and to help them identify training needs.</p> <p>For a number of years it has been an established practice for the Member Development Manager to develop personal development plans for all councillors by interviewing and assessing each Members' learning and developments needs/ interests.</p> <p>The PDPs are used to inform and develop the overall Member Development Programme for all councillors. This programme of planned training activities is designed to meets the training needs of all councillors and also seeks to link to the long term strategic aims of the council such as the corporate strategy.</p>
Why are we looking at this area? Has there been recent legislation/policy changes? Are there any performance or budgetary issues?,
<p>The recent election has led to 28 new councillors many of whom have had little or no local government experience. The political situation here in Brent has led to the creation of a joint administration comprising of councillors who previously formed the opposition. Consequently, training provision will need to be targeted to ensure that it adequately meets the wide range of training, learning and development needs of both new and old members</p> <p>The additional training requirements have implications for the current budget allocation which reflects the needs of councillors who had been in post for four years and required less support.</p> <p>Member development is also important for the CPA process as the Audit Commission expect highly performing authorities to place training for members high on the agenda. It is therefore important that member development adapts to the new circumstances to ensure that the council achieves its aim of achieving a four star rating.</p> <p>Members learning and development also impacts on other accreditation processes such as Investors in People and there is significant good practice on Member Development</p> <p>A review would also provide a useful opportunity to look at how the member development programme engages members and monitors outcomes. It is important to ensure that there is sufficient liaison with members throughout the programme to seek feedback.</p>

What should the review cover? Give brief outline of what members could focus on, which partners to engage with, how residents/public can be involved.

- Good practice on member training from other councils;
- Review IDeA guidelines for member training and development;
- Review the current budget allocation – members need to be clear about how much training costs and what they want to get from training in terms of cost, benefit, impact assessment;
- Look at ways to ensure that methods for measuring the effectiveness of training outcomes are fully embedded in the programme;
- Look at possibility of outlining the different roles and responsibilities of councillors by developing clearly defined role descriptions;
- Consideration of further ways to involve members in the development of the training programme;
- How do we further embrace the National Charter for Member Development – what are we doing with it and what have we achieved by signing up to it?
- Members need to inform the longer-term approach to Member Development – what do Members want from the programme beyond short term training priorities? As a Council are we going to take a different approach?

What could the review achieve?, influence policy change?, improvement to service delivery?, budget savings?, develop partnerships?.

Engage members in the training provision which in turn would lead to overall improved performance for the council.

Ensure that the council is conforming to the principles of the charter for member development and working to further embrace the principles. Explore Member led initiatives such as Councillor-to-councillor mentoring?
Lead Member shadowing.

Ensure that members training supports the councils long term objectives

Ensure that Member Development and Training has a longer term objectives