

# CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL

**Report to:-** Carlisle City Council

**Date of Meeting:-** 26 April 2011

**Agenda Item No:-**

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**Public**

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**Title:-** **AMENDMENT TO COUNCIL FRAMEWORK FOR MEMBER LEARNING**

**Report of:-** Chief Executive

**Report reference:-** CE 12/11

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## **Summary:-**

The Member Learning and Development Working Group has identified that improvements are needed with regard to Member learning and have proposed several changes to the approach adopted by the City Council. These changes will require a formal amendment to the existing policy framework.

## **Recommendation:-**

Council is asked to approve the amendments to the Council Framework for Member Learning.

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**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None**

## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS**

1.1 In August 2004, Council adopted a Member Learning and Development Framework (MLDF). This was amended by Council in June 2008.

1.2 At a meeting of the Member Learning and Development Working Group (MLDWG) on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010, the group considered the current MLDF and recommended that changes were made to it. Discussions about different aspects of Member learning had taken place at meetings during 2010 and the group had decided that a new approach to Member learning was needed to reflect changing circumstances, similar to the one currently being taken with staff development. The group wanted a more differentiated approach to Member learning initiatives which would recognise the different learning needs and learning styles of individual Members.

1.3 The parts of the MLDF that the MLDWG are proposing to amend are Personal Development Reviews (PDRs), the Learning Credits Scheme and parts of the Member Learning and Development Programme (MLDP). These changes will ensure that Member learning initiatives support Members to meet the challenges proposed in the new Localism Bill and to continue to champion the needs of their communities.

1.4 PDRs were introduced in 2004 as part of the MLDF. The idea was that Members would meet with a Member Learning and Development Representative (now called Member Champions) to discuss their learning needs and develop a Personal Development Plan. The MLDWG reviewed the PDR process in 2010 and concluded that a new approach was needed which would look at a wider range of issues.

1.5 The MLDWG is proposing to introduce a Member/Leader Review (see Appendix A) to replace PDRs. Instead of a meeting taking place between a Member and the relevant Member Champion for their Group, the meeting would be between a Member and their Group Leader. Although learning needs would still be discussed, it would be as part of a wider agenda, looking at ward issues and support that would be helpful from both the City Council and other organisations. The MLDWG thought an annual conversation between Members and their Group Leader would be more beneficial than the PDR process. The original form would be kept by the Member with a copy to be kept by the Group Leader and another copy to go to the Organisational Development Team for them to organise

any training or other support requested at the meeting. The Member/Leader Review will provide sufficient evidence for the North West Member Charter

### **Proposal 1 – Replace Personal Development Reviews with a Member/Leader Review.**

- 1.6 The Amendment to Council Framework for Member Training (PPP 62/08) replaced the Scale of Recommended Involvement introduced in the 2004 Member Learning and Development Framework (ME 20/04) with the Learning Credits Scheme. The MLDWG discussed the Learning Credits Scheme at meetings in 2010 and decided to adopt a less formal approach to recording Member Learning.
- 1.7 At the August 2010 MLDWG meeting Members discussed refocusing Member learning on three key areas: induction for new Members, specific role training (e.g. for chairs and members of committees) and ‘How the Council Works’ which would include finance, governance and IT training. They were keen to focus the MLDP on the most important learning and development issues and involve Members more closely in determining the content of the programme.
- 1.8 Further discussion took place at the November 2010 MLDWG meeting about whether there was any specific learning that Members should be expected to do. It was decided that new members and substitutes on the Licensing and Development Control committees should undergo training before they could sit on the committee and that this would be the only required training for Members. It was later decided that new members and substitutes on Employment and Appeals Panels should attend equal opportunities training before they sit on a panel.

### **Proposal 2 – Remove the Learning Credits Scheme from the Member Learning and Development Framework**

### **Proposal 3 – Require new members and substitutes on the Licensing and Development Control Committees, Employment and Appeals Panels to attend relevant training before they sit on a committee/panel**

1.9 The MLDWG is working with the Organisational Development Team to look at new ideas for Member learning opportunities and this will include workshops in the three key areas mentioned above. They are also looking at new ways to deliver Member learning to encourage more Members to engage with learning and development opportunities.

1.10 A revised Member Learning and Development Framework is included as Appendix B.

## **2. CONSULTATION**

### **2.1 Consultation to Date**

Member Learning and Development Working Group  
Executive  
Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Council is asked to approve the amendments to the Council Framework for Member Learning.

## **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- To endorse the proposals from the MLDWG to refresh Member learning
- To enable the policy framework approved by Council in 2004 to be amended accordingly

## **5. IMPLICATIONS**

- Staffing/Resources – None applicable
- Financial – There are no new financial implications for these proposals as they will be covered by the Member Learning and Development budget.

- Legal – The Licensing Act (2003) requires members of the Licensing Committee to be trained in matters relevant to the Act.
- Corporate – The City Council has held the North West Members Charter for Learning and Development since 2005.
- Risk Management – If new and substitute members of Licensing and Development Control Committees were not to undergo training before they sit on a committee decisions made by those committees could be challenged on the grounds of Members not being sufficiently qualified.
- Environmental – None applicable
- Crime and Disorder – None applicable
- Impact on Customers – None applicable
- Equality and Diversity – None applicable

### **Impact assessments**

**Does the change have an impact on the following?**

<b>Equality Impact Screening</b>	<b>Impact Yes/No?</b>	<b>Is the impact positive or negative?</b>
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age	<b>Yes</b>	
Disability	<b>Yes</b>	
Race	<b>Yes</b>	
Gender/ Transgender	<b>Yes</b>	
Sexual Orientation	<b>Yes</b>	
Religion or belief	<b>Yes</b>	
Human Rights	<b>Yes</b>	
Health inequalities	<b>Yes</b>	
Rurality	<b>Yes</b>	

A Workforce and Member Development Equality Impact Assessment was completed in April 2010. This will be reviewed in April 2011.

## Appendix A

### CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL MEMBER/LEADER REVIEW



[www.carlisle.gov.uk](http://www.carlisle.gov.uk)

#### PERSONAL DETAILS

Name of Member	
Group	
Ward	
Your previous experience	

#### YOUR WARD

What are the key issues in your ward at this time?	
How could Carlisle City Council officers help with these issues?	
How could other organisations help with these issues?	

#### YOUR ROLE AS A MEMBER

What support from Carlisle City Council would help you in your role?	
What learning opportunities are you interested in?	

How would you like to develop in your role?	
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Signature of Member

Signature of Leader

Date:

Date:

## **Appendix B**

### **Amended Council Policy (Framework for Members Learning and Development) 2011**

Carlisle City Council aspires to continuous improvement, both of individuals and of the organisation.

In accordance with our ambition to be an authority dedicated to meeting the needs of the community, and one that demonstrates best practice in local government, this Council has made an explicit commitment to the development of our Elected Members. We wish to become the exemplar in Cumbria for Member Learning and Development.

We recognise that it is not only the performance of staff that can determine our success and so we will encourage and enable our Members to undertake learning and development activities as appropriate to the needs and aspirations of both individual Members and of the Council.

This Framework exists so as to ensure that we organise this in a professional way and to the highest standard possible within available resources.

All Members have been consulted in the drawing up of this Framework.

#### **1. Principles**

1.1 This framework applies to all Members who should aspire to review and enhance their performance on an ongoing basis.

1.2 It will be championed by the Executive.

1.3 It will be led by Members.

1.4 It will be supported by officers.

1.5 It will be validated through achievement and maintenance of the North West Employers Charter for Members Development.

1.6 Appropriate resources will be dedicated in support of this framework.

1.7 This framework will be reviewed periodically by Members themselves.

## **2. Management and oversight of this framework**

2.1 A Member Learning and Development Working Group has been established whose remit is to consider and advise on the learning and development needs of Members and particularly on:

- Member learning and development priorities.
- The distribution of available resources.
- A set of core skills and knowledge required to undertake various member roles and responsibilities.
- The content and timing of an annual Member Learning and Development Programme.
- The content and timing of an Induction Programme for new Members.

2.2 The Group is made up of the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Development (Chair) and three Member Champions, one Member of each of the political groups, nominated by those groups. It will provide cross party feedback to the Executive to assist it in making any decisions for which the Executive is responsible in respect of Members learning and development matters.

2.3 Active substitutes will be identified for each Group who shall receive all papers so as to keep up to date, and if wish attend meetings in an informal capacity.

2.4 The views of any Independent Members will be channelled through the Liberal Democrat Member Champion.

## **3. Role of Member Champions**

3.1 Promote a positive attitude towards Continuous Improvement within their party.

3.2 Sit on the Members Learning and Development Working Group or serve as an active substitute.

3.3 To maintain and update their knowledge and skills. Training for their role will be provided.

## **4. Needs Analysis**

4.1 All new Members will complete a training needs analysis ('TNA') questionnaire.

4.2. All Members will take part in a Member/Leader Review. Any resources necessary for the achievement of the review will be agreed at or about the time of the review.

4.3 Groups will determine the distribution of resources made available to them via the Organisational Development Manager under the Leader's delegated authority.

4.4. Information from Member/Leader Reviews collectively (and confidentially) will be fed into the Working Group to inform priorities.

4.5 The Working Group will determine the use and frequency thereafter of Member/Leader Reviews with an understanding that individual needs analysis should be undertaken on a regular and preferably annual basis.

## **5. Required Training for Committee Members and Substitutes**

5.1 New members and substitutes on the Licensing and Development Control Committees, Employment and Appeals Panels should undergo training before they sit on the committees/panels.

## **6. Induction of New Members**

6.1 The Working Group will ensure that a set of skills and knowledge for new Members is created.

6.2. An induction programme based upon that will be designed.

6.3 In addition, new Members will be offered a mentor. The mentoring period will be one year. New Members will elect a mentor of their choice from a selection of self-nominated mentors within their own Group. Mentoring training will be made available to such mentors.

## **7. Member Learning and Development Programme (MLDP)**

7.1 An annual programme shall be produced by the Working Group, utilising the outcomes from the Member/Leader Review.

7.2 The MLDP would be planned initially in outline prior to the start of each municipal year and endorsed by Members. Officers would then produce a final programme, copies of which would be sent to each Member. Full details of each event within the programme would then be put onto the intranet.

7.3 The MLDP will be administered by the Organisational Development Team

7.4 There will be greater use made of e-learning and alternative learning methodologies.

This Framework was effective from 4 August 2004 and amended in July 2008 and February 2011\*.

*\* in addition to a new section 5 to accommodate the requirement for new Members and substitutes of the Licensing and Development Control committees to undergo*

*training before they sit on committees, there have been other smaller amendments. These have been either entirely cosmetic (i.e. to replace the term 'Member Learning and Development Representative' with 'Member Champion' and 'Personal Development Review' with 'Member/Leader Review' to reflect the actual term used by Members and officers, or simple updating i.e. reflecting Council restructuring that changed 'Personnel and Development Services' to 'Organisational Development' and 'Portfolio Holder for Learning and Development' to 'Portfolio Holder for Performance and Development'.*