



Title: **Torbay Member Development Policy**

Public Agenda Item: **Yes**

Wards Affected: **All wards in Torbay**

To: **Adjourned Annual Council** On: **16 May 2012**

Key Decision: **No**

Change to Budget: **No** Change to Policy Framework: **No**

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**1. What we are trying to achieve and the impact on our customers**

1.1 The Torbay Member Development Policy sets out the framework for the Council's approach to supporting and developing the Mayor and councillors (members). The policy aims to provide a clear structure and purpose to identify and meet learning and development opportunities for members so that they are better placed to serve the community.

**2. Recommendation(s) for decision**

**2.1 That the Mayor be recommended to approve the Torbay Member Development Policy (as set out at Appendix 1 to this Report)**

**3. Key points and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 The Torbay Member Development Policy is an update of the former 'Making a Difference – A Development Strategy for Torbay Council Members' which was adopted in 2008. It builds on the extensive work already undertaken on member development and provides a structured approach to ensure all members are supported in their role.

3.2 The Policy also ensures that members' development is effective in supporting the Council's corporate objectives.

3.3 The Council was awarded South West Charter for Elected Member Development in 2008 and Charter Plus status in September 2010 for its approach to member development. The Policy ensures the Council is following

best practice and the standards required for the Charter.

- 3.4 The Members' Development Group has taken a lead role in developing the Policy and, if adopted, will oversee its implementation.

**For more detailed information on this proposal please refer to the supporting information attached.**

**Elizabeth Raikes**  
**Chief Executive**

## **Supporting information**

### **A1. Introduction and history**

- A1.1 The Council has carried out extensive work on its approach to members' development and adopted its original strategy for this in February 2008. The 'Making a Difference – A Development Strategy for Torbay Council Members' ensured clear direction and purpose for developing the framework for future learning and development opportunities for members.
- A1.2 The Strategy has now been completed and the Torbay Member Development Policy sets out the Council's framework for its approach to member development. The Members' Development Group has taken a lead role in developing the Policy.
- A1.5 The Policy underpins the work already undertaken, confirms the commitment of the Council and the expectation from members. The key principles of the Policy are:
- a structured approach for attracting candidates;
  - ensuring members are well equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake their roles, which in turn builds the capacity of the Council to deliver its objectives defined in the Corporate Plan;
  - providing an integrated approach for identifying learning and development needs for members based on individual needs and the needs of the Council as a whole;
  - a member led approach to ensure members feel supported and confident in their role;
  - ensuring a consistent approach and equality of opportunity to learning and development; and
  - evaluating learning and development effectively and celebrating our successes.

### **A2. Risk assessment of preferred option**

#### **A2.1 Outline of significant key risks**

- A2.1.1 The key risks associated with the Policy include members not engaging with their development and the budget and staffing resources not being available.
- A2.1.2 To ensure members engage with their development, the Code of Conduct for Members includes a provision for members to comply with mandatory training requirements and to use best endeavours to undertake additional voluntary training. The Code also requires newly elected members to undertake induction training. All members sign-up to the Code of Conduct for Members when undertaking their declaration of acceptance of office.
- A2.1.3 All members are also given the opportunity to attend a one-to-one coaching session to produce a personal development plan to ensure development

programmes are tailored to their individual needs. All members have engaged with this and now have personal development plans. The approach to member development is very much member-led and members recognise the need to develop as well as the benefits and opportunities it brings.

A2.1.3 In respect of resources, the majority of support for members' development is provided in-house with external trainers being mainly funded through the Devon Member Development Shared Service.

A2.1.4 The support for members' development is part of the member support service provided by the Governance Support Team. In addition, the Devon Member Development Shared Service assist with conducting one-to-one coaching sessions. Senior members also contribute towards the delivery of members' development.

A2.1.5 Overall, the implementation of the policy will contribute towards maintaining the good governance of the Council by providing processes for ensuring that elected members are supported with their development.

## **A2.2 Remaining risks**

A2.2.1 There are no remaining risks.

## **A3. Other Options**

A3.1 Not to adopt the Policy or to adopt an alternative.

## **A4. Summary of resource implications**

A4.1 The delivery of the Policy is provided within existing resources and the budget allocated for member development.

## **A5. What impact will there be on equalities, environmental sustainability and crime and disorder?**

A5.1 The Policy will support the Council with building members' capacity which in turn will contribute towards strengthening these areas.

## **A6. Consultation and Customer Focus**

A6.1 The Members' Development Group has taken a lead role in developing the Policy to ensure it is member-led. All members were consulted and provided with a copy of the Strategy.

A6.2 By adopting the Policy, the Council will ensure that we are building members' capacity in a structured way in order that members are better placed to serve our communities.

## **A7. Are there any implications for other Business Units?**

A7.1 No.

## **Appendices**

**Background Papers:**

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

Making a Difference – A Development Strategy for Torbay Council Members 2008 to 2011