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## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR ELECTED MEMBERS**

**Report by Director Corporate Governance**

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### **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**26 October 2023**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for a Training and Development Policy for Elected Members, to support them in acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to perform their wide-ranging roles and responsibilities as Elected Members.**
- 1.2 Learning and development has a key role to play in ensuring all Elected Members have the necessary knowledge and skills to be highly effective and serve the Council and the Borders' communities to the best of their ability. Following on from the Induction Programme (May to November 2022), and in order to ensure support for all Elected Members to acquire or hone the skills and knowledge necessary to be highly effective and serve the Council and the Borders' communities to the best of their abilities, a Training and Development Policy has now been developed. This is detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 1.3 The CPD Framework for Elected Members in Scottish Local Government has been developed by the Improvement Service and it is intended that this Framework, which covers 7 roles of Elected Members, will be used as the basis for developing a Personal Development Plan for each Elected Member. The key stages in developing the CPD Framework for Elected Members are:
- (a) completion of an online survey which involves self-assessment against a range of suggested skills/behaviours;
  - (b) to hold an individual meeting with Officers to develop a Personal Development Plan;
  - (c) access to the Improvement Service CPD Framework Development Programme containing a range of development resources and other internal and external training and development opportunities; and
  - (d) an individual annual CPD Framework review meeting to discuss progress.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 I recommend that Scottish Borders Council agrees:-**

- (a) to approve the Elected Members' Training and Development Policy detailed in Appendix 1 to this report; and**
- (b) that the outcomes from the Members' skills survey be used as a starting point to inform their future Personal Development Plans and training and development needs.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Learning and development has a key role to play in ensuring all Elected Members have the necessary knowledge and skills to be highly effective and serve the Council and the Borders' communities to the best of their ability. This could take the form of gaining new skills or refreshing existing skills and improving performance.
- 3.2 Following the election in May 2022, all Elected Members were invited to attend an Induction Programme, which ran in 3 phases: May 2022 (8 sessions); June 2022 (5 sessions) and Autumn 2022 (12 sessions). This is particularly important for newly Elected Members as it allows them to gain an understanding of not only the Services of the Council, but their roles within the organisation. From September 2022 (and continuing on from that time) online monthly briefing sessions are also held for all Members to keep them updated with what is happening within the Council and also in the wider Scottish Borders.
- 3.3 Now that the newly Elected Members have had the opportunity to become embedded in their roles as decision makers and have that understanding and knowledge of Council services, it is proposed that a more formal training and development programme is put in place to ensure they are supported appropriately. As such, a proposed Training and Development Policy has been drafted to provide some parameters for future support.

### **4 ELECTED MEMBERS TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

- 4.1 In order to ensure support for all Elected Members to acquire or hone the skills and knowledge necessary to be highly effective and serve the Council and the Borders' communities to the best of their abilities, a Training and Development Policy has now been developed. This is detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.2 The purpose of the Policy is to address the skills and knowledge required for modern Member practice; to ensure that all Members build knowledge and skills to help them in their current and future roles; to ensure that all Members take personal responsibility for taking up learning and development opportunities; and to acknowledge that the role of, and demands on, an Elected Member will continue to evolve. The scope of the Policy includes equality of opportunity for appropriate learning and development to be made available to all Elected Members, addressing individual Members' needs.
- 4.3 It is important to emphasise that the training development plan for Members will be individually shaped to meet their needs, and to take into account their individual circumstances. The plans will be confidential and will not be monitored by, nor reported to, other elected members. While the programme is not mandatory, if Council adopts the policy, it should be seen as best practice and therefore highly recommended.
- 4.4 It should also be noted that training provided to Members on specific Council committees e.g. Audit, Pension Fund, etc. is out-with the scope of this Policy.

- 4.g The CPD Framework for Elected Members in Scottish Local Government has been developed by the Improvement Service and it is intended that this Framework, which covers 7 roles of Elected Members, will be used as the basis for developing a Personal Development Plan for each Elected Member. The key stages in developing the CPD Framework for Elected Members are:
- (a) completion of an online survey which involves self-assessment against a range of suggested skills/behaviours;
  - (b) to hold an individual meeting with Officers to develop a Personal Development Plan;
  - (c) access to the Improvement Service CPD Framework Development Programme containing a range of development resources and other internal and external training and development opportunities; and
  - (d) an individual annual CPD Framework review meeting to discuss progress. This should include a review of how well the process has worked for the elected Member.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial**

There are no costs associated with the Training and Development Policy itself, and any costs associated with actual training and development opportunities for Elected Members will be contained within the current budget.

### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

There is a reputational risk to the Council if it does not provide sufficient training and development support to Elected Members to ensure they are able to fulfil their roles. It is anticipated that adopting this Policy will help mitigate that risk.

### **5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached as Appendix 2. As the Policy applies equally to all Elected Members it is therefore anticipated that there are no adverse equality issues. The Policy aims to ensure equality of access to learning and development opportunities in suitable formats for individual Members.

### **5.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

Adopting the Protocol will not have any direct impact on the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### **5.5 Climate Change**

Adopting the Protocol will not have any direct impact on climate change. Where possible and appropriate, training and development sessions will be offered online to minimise travel.

### **5.6 Rural Proofing**

There is no specific impact on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

### 5.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 5.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

No changes are required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

## 6 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 The Director (Finance & Procurement), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the report.

### **Approved by**

**Nuala McKinlay**

**Director Corporate Governance**

### **Author(s)**

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**Background Papers:** Nil

**Previous Minute Reference:** Nil

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