

## **Draft Training and Development Policy for Elected Members**

1. Scottish Borders Council recognises the crucial role of Elected Members in setting the overall policy of the Council and ensuring the effectiveness of its overall governance arrangements. This role is integral to achieving the strategic goals, vision and values of the Council.

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.

While those Members who are aligned to a political group may receive support and guidance from within that group, the Council aims to support all Elected Members to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to perform their wide-ranging responsibilities to the best of their ability and to be efficient and effective in their role as a Councillor. It is recognised that Elected Members often have a range of interests out with the Council and the training offered under this policy may also be of assistance in developing their wider careers. The policy seeks to maximise the potential of every Elected Member.

### **2. Introduction**

The purpose of this Policy is:

- (a) to address the skills and knowledge required for modern Member practice;
- (b) to ensure that all Members, new and experienced, build knowledge and skills to help them in their current roles and prepare them for future roles;
- (c) that all Members take personal responsibility for engaging and participating in learning and development opportunities; and
- (d) to reflect that the role of and demands on an Elected Member will continue to evolve in line with societal, public sector and technology changes.

By regularly evaluating Member development, this will ensure that it continually evolves to meet individual and Council needs and deliver on Council objectives. The Policy aims to ensure equality of access to learning and development opportunity, the achievement of Best Value in all learning and development activities, and to outline the support available to Elected Members.

### **3. Scope**

Scottish Borders Council is committed to equality of opportunity for all Elected Members and this will be reflected by systematic and planned development of training opportunities for all Members according to their development needs.

Appropriate learning and development opportunities will be available to, and accessible by, all Elected Members and will address individual needs. It should be noted that training and development will also be provided to Members on specific committees e.g. Planning & Development, Local Review Body, Audit, Licensing, Pension Fund, etc. This latter training is out-with the scope of this Policy as it is dealt with separately.

#### 4. **Improvement Service Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Framework for Elected Members**

The CPD Framework for Elected Members in Scottish Local Government has been developed by the Improvement Service in consultation with local authorities. The Framework is based on 7 roles of Elected Members which include a number of responsibilities and indicators of effective practice. The roles are:

- Community leadership
- Strategy and Policy Development
- Decision Making
- Scrutiny
- Partnership Working
- Regulator
- Party Political or Group Role (for some)

This Improvement Service Framework will be used as the basis for developing a Personal Development Plan for each Elected Member. The aim of the individual development plan will be to support Elected Members to develop and enhance their skills, knowledge and behaviours to perform these various roles.

#### 5. **Development and Training Sessions**

It is intended that any development and training sessions will be flexible enough to accommodate the different levels of experience and responsibility of Members and focus on behaviours i.e. the way in which Elected Members display and practice the skills that they have. Behaviours can be learned or acquired by virtue of increasing experience, gaining knowledge and participating in development opportunities.

#### 6. **CPD Framework**

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.

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