



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Member Development Steering Group - Update
Date:	Friday, 15 April, 2011
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext. 6314) Jill Minne, Head of Human Resources (ext. 3220)
Contact Officer:	Julie Lilley, Democratic Services Officer (ext. 6321) Lisa Rogan, Senior HR Advisor (ext. 3251)

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 24 September, 2010, agreed that a Member Development Steering Group be established comprising one Member from each of the Party Groups supported by officers from the Democratic Services and HR Sections.
1.2	The purpose of the Steering Group is to oversee the development and implementation of an integrated revised Member Development Strategy.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The Steering Group, which has met monthly from November, 2010, has progressed the following:
2.2	<u>Member Development Charter</u>
2.2.1	The Member Development Charter, a framework currently being used by over 200 Local Authorities in England, has been identified as the most effective tool to develop the Council's revised Member Development Strategy.
2.2.2	The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) in conjunction with the South East Employers Organisation (SEE) will be piloting the Member Development Charter in Northern Ireland.
2.2.3	NILGA agreed to support up to four Councils or clusters of Councils to help them achieve charter status and to subsidise 75% of the normal £3,000 costs, resulting in a one of charge of £750. NILGA invited Councils to submit a bid to be considered for one of the four pilots. The Committee agreed, at its meeting on 18 February, that the Council should adopt the 'Charter Framework' and submit a bid to NILGA.

2.2.4	The Council's bid was successful and and the Northern Ireland Charter for Elected Member Development was formally launched in Belfast by the Lord Mayor on 23 rd March. Work will continue in the new Council term, with the support and direction of a reconstituted Member Development Steering Group, to aim to achieve charter status for the Council by May 2012.
2.3	<u>Members Induction Programme</u>
2.3.1	One remit of the Member Development Steering Group is to take responsibility for the revision of the Council's Member Induction Programme which will be implemented following the Local Government Elections in May. The group considered best practice and Members also took part in one-to-one structured meetings with officers from the Human Resources and Democratic Services Sections in order to develop a new Member Induction Programme. Resulting from these exercises, and other associated work, a revised induction programme, which is enclosed as Appendix 1, was agreed by the Steering Group
2.3.2	In addition to the Member Induction Programme, the Steering Group agreed that each department should produce service information packs which will provide Members with information which will be useful to them when dealing with issues which may be raised by the Council's key stakeholders, such as, individual constituents, businesses, community/voluntary groups etc.
2.4	<u>Women Leaders programme</u>
2.4.1	The women leaders programme is a bespoke three day programme which brings together female elected Members and senior officers from the Council. The programme was developed as part of our gender action plan and is aimed at addressing the under-representation of female members and senior female officers.
2.4.2	The main purpose of the programme is to increase the effectiveness of each woman's leadership in her area of influence but also to facilitate joint Member-officer development.
2.4.3	The steering group agreed that a further programme should be delivered before the elections and one following the elections. A joint Member-officer programme was delivered between March and April.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> Provision has been made in the Member development budget for the delivery of an induction programme for Members following the local government elections. The costs of the women leaders programme are being met from the workforce development budget.
3.2	<u>Human Resources</u> The Democratic Services Section and Human Resources Service will jointly co-ordinate the actions required in relation to the attainment of the Northern Ireland Charter for Elected Member Development and the delivery of the Members Induction Programme.

4	Equality Implications
	N/A

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Committee is asked to note the content of the report and agree to the implementation of a Members Induction Programme as set out in Appendix 1 and the production of the service information packs.

6	Decision Tracking
<p>Officers responsible:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Jill Minne, Head of Human Resources</p> <p>May 2011</p>	

7	Key to Abbreviations
<p>NILGA – Northern Ireland local Government Association</p> <p>SEE – South East Employers</p>	

8	Attachment
Appendix 1 – Members Induction Programme	