

# **COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

## **Member Development Charter Level 2 2 September 2010**

### **Report of Head of Democratic Services**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update Members on progress regarding the choice of a suitable topic for the Council's submission for Charter Level 2 status.

**This report is public**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) **That Members note the progress made and approve, in principle, that the Council's submission for Charter Level 2 be based on the induction programme for new Councillors following the elections in May 2011.**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

At the meeting on 24 June 2010, Members will recall that the Committee considered potential topics for the authority's Charter Level 2 submission to be made to the North West Employers Organisation (NWEO) in November 2011. Members resolved:

- (1) That Officers undertake further work around a possible level 2 submission on the suggested areas of Community Engagement and the role of Councillors as Community Leaders.
- (2) That Group Administrators request ideas for a level 2 submission from their political groups.
- (3) That a decision on the project for a level 2 submission be delegated to the Head of Democratic Services in consultation with the Chairman once the views of the Committee had been sought by e-mail.

Since that meeting however, officers have spoken with NWEO and talked through some of the issues regarding the suitability of Community Engagement and the Role of Councillors as Community Leaders for Level 2. The feedback from the NWEO was that the ideas around those topics would be unsuitable to develop into a Level 2 submission because they were difficult to directly link back to Member Development or learning activities. They would also be challenging to measure to give a useful 'before and after' picture.

The Democratic Support Officer involved in Member Development has since talked informally with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee to look at the potential for the induction training programme to be used as the basis for the Council's Level 2 submission. This would seem to be a more suitable option with

more easily identifiable ways to measure the 'before and after' picture both anecdotally and in terms of performance, and the topic is directly linked to Member Development and learning activities.

Elsewhere on this agenda there is an update on the special Council meeting planned for 13 October 2010 on the theme 'Would *you* like to be a Councillor?'. If the Committee is minded to take forward induction training as the basis for the Council's Level 2 submission, then baseline information could be gathered at the special Council meeting and, should any of the prospective candidates be elected to the Council, officers could follow their progress through the induction programme for one strand of the submission.

With the Induction being purely Member Development and support, it would meet the criteria for NWEO.

Members are reminded that the Corporate Plan 2010-13 sets out a key Corporate Indicator, CH11, for the Council to achieve level 2 of the Charter next year.

## **5.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)**

Achieving Level 2 of the Member Development Charter during 2010/11 is listed as a Key Corporate Indicator in the Corporate Plan and a suitable topic must be found as soon as possible in order to progress the work that will need to be undertaken.

The options are:

- (1) To approve, in principle, the induction programme for new Councillors following the elections in May 2011 as the basis for the Council's Level 2 submission to NWEO.
- (2) To approve another topic, or suggest that officers carry out more work to suggest some other suitable topic, for the Level 2 submission.

The officer preferred option is option 1 because it would appear to satisfy the requirements of a Level 2 submission well and would run alongside the work officers must do to plan and deliver effective induction training for new Councillors.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

Members are asked to discuss and consider approving, in principle, the induction programme for new Councillors following the elections in May 2011 as the basis for the Council's Level 2 submission to NWEO. This would provide a steer for officers to take further and report back to the Committee after talking again with NWEO and undertaking some initial preparatory work.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The work of Member Development supports Councillors in delivering the corporate Vision and priorities. The Corporate Plan 2010-13 sets out a key Corporate Indicator, CH11, for the Council to achieve level 2 of the Charter next year.

**CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

All financial expenditure for induction training will come from existing budgets.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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