

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE - 28TH JUNE 2007

ITEM OF URGENT BUSINESS - COMMITMENT TO THE NORTH WEST CHARTER FOR ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

1. Background

The Council has signed a commitment that the Authority will offer support and development to elected Members in their roles. By signing up to this Charter, the Council has agreed to work towards the development of its elected Members by implementing the following six key points of the Charter:

- Having a Statement of Intent.
- Ensuring that all Members are made aware of training and development opportunities.
- Having a process to identify individual development needs which involved Members.
- Having an officer allocated to assist Members and groups in identifying needs and providing information on resources.
- Having a strategy to meet the training and development needs of elected Members.
- Implementing the strategy locally.

The aim now is to achieve success is the assessment of work undertaken in this area and be awarded the North West Charter for Elected member Development by the North West Employers Organisation.

2. Progress towards the Charter

The Council underwent an initial assessment last November to gauge the level of progress required in order to achieve success and this underpinned much of the development of the new Councillor induction programme as well as on going member development support.

3. Current Position

The original aim was to achieve Charter status in 2007. Assessments for the year are undertaken in September and in order to achieve this it is necessary to undergo an initial pre-assessment (or as many pre-assessments as it takes to be sure of eventual success). With a view to meeting the timetable for a final assessment in September NWEO have agreed to undertake a first initial assessment at 3pm on 11th July 2007. This date is not negotiable and if not convenient a delay to the process will be incurred.

Officers of Democratic Services will be interviewed and provide the evidence of achievement but it is also necessary for 3 Members to contribute to the assessment. These need to be Members who are committed to the cause of member development and are willing to talk positively about what has been achieved to date.

Clearly, there needs to be a representative of this Business Committee, being the Member Champions for Member Development and it is suggested that this be the Chairman or other representative in the case of non-availability. It is further suggested that the other two members should represent the newly elected Councillors who are best placed to comment on the induction package and a member of the smallest group who does not therefore have the support of a large group on which they can rely.