

---

**Council**

**2 April 2009**

Report of the Head of Civic Legal and Democratic Services

## **Establishment of a Member Development Steering Group**

### **Summary**

1. This report seeks formal approval to establish a Member Development Steering Group, to ensure that the Council takes a strategic approach to Member Development and to support and monitor the Council's progress in working towards Improvement & Development Agency/Local Government Yorkshire & Humber Charter Status.

### **Background**

2. Member development has been highlighted through the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) as an area that requires improvement in York. On the 20 January 2009 the Executive considered a report by the then Director of Neighbourhood Services, setting out a number of recommendations aimed at improving the quality and take up of Member Development events and achieving I& DeA/LGYH Charter Status.

At the above meeting the Executive agreed to

- a) Sign up the IDeA Member Development Charter
- b) Implement the outline Member Development Scheme, as set out in an annex to the report, and
- c) Delegate to the Member Development Steering Group responsibility to decide a Member Development Programme, appropriate training and development activities and budget.

### **Member Development Steering Group**

3. The first step towards achieving Charter Status is to establish a Member Development Steering Group. Council is asked to formally establish such a group on the structure. The Executive suggested the composition be on 1:1:1 basis. As a working group, proportionality would not need to be strictly applied.

## Terms of Reference

4. Suggested terms of reference are set out in Annex A to this report, to which Council approval is sought.

## Reporting Lines

5. It is suggested that the Member Development Steering Group should report three times a year to the Standards Committee in view of its ethical and standards role relating to Members. This would enable Standards Committee to feed any recommendations into Council in relation, for instance, to development funding for Members or to engagement with events/activities. Establishing these reporting lines would provide a structured approach to dealing with Member development and training issues from now on.

## Composition

6. The Executive has suggested that this Steering Group be set up on 1:1:1 basis and the Groups are being consulted on their nominations for the Steering Group. Details of nominations received will be reported to full Council on 2 April 2009.

## Consultation

7. Groups are currently being consulted on the proposed composition of this Steering Group as set out above. Full consultation with Council Management Team, Group Leaders and the Executive on developing a more structured approach towards developing Members took place prior to the submission of the report to the Executive referred in paragraph 2 above. Establishing this Steering Group formally is a response to those discussions.

## Options

- 8 (a) to establish a Member Development Steering Group with the proposed terms of reference in Annex 1 (Option 1)

or

(b) to decide not to establish the Group and to continue with the current arrangements for dealing with Member Development & Training issues (Option 2)

or

( c ) to establish the Member Development Steering Group and propose changes to the terms of reference in Annex 1 (Option 3).

## Corporate Priorities

7. The proposal to establish a Member Development Steering Group is consistent with the priority actions included in the Council's refreshed Corporate Strategy; in particular the provision of strong leadership, supporting and developing people and encouraging improvement in everything we do.

## Implications

8. The following implications have been considered:
  - **Financial** – there are no financial implications associated with the proposals in this report.
  - **Human Resources (HR)** – there are no Human Resource implications associated with this report, other than the support required from Democratic Services to support the operation of the Steering Group, once established.
  - **Equalities** – there are no Equality implications, associated with this report.
  - **Legal** – there are no legal implications associated with the proposals in this report, except to note that the legal provisions relating to proportionality of places on committees etc does not to working groups by their nature as working groups set up to advise on policy/practice with no decision making authority.
  - **Crime and Disorder** – there are no Crime and Disorder implications.
  - **Information Technology (IT)** – there are no IT implications.
  - **Property** – there are no Property implications.
  - **Other** – there are no other implications.

## Risk Management

9. If Council were to decide not to proceed with establishing this Steering Group at this stage despite the recommendations of the Executive in this regard, it would jeopardise its application for IdEA Member Development Charter status, on the basis that establishing such a Group is one of the requirements of the application process. Other local authorities achieving Charter Status have all establishing a Member Group to specifically look at member development issues.

## Recommendations

10. The Leader will propose the following recommendation as a motion to Council on 2 April 2009:

- (i) Council establishes on its structure a Member Development Steering Group on a 1:1:1 basis and appoints to it those nominees received from Party Groups.
- (ii) Council approves the terms of reference for the Group annexed to this report.

### Contact Details

**Author:**

Amanda Oxley  
Senior Member Support Officer

**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

Quentin Baker  
Head of Civic Democratic & Legal Services

**Report Approved**



**Date** 24/3/09

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

Legal: Quentin Baker, Head of Civic, Democratic & Legal Services

**Wards Affected:** n/a

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

None.

**Annexes:**

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference