



## **ALTON TOWN COUNCIL MEMBER DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

The Learning and Development Programme for Members will provide a range of different opportunities for attendance at a range of informal and formal learning events. These will include conferences, seminars, training courses, briefings and forums. E-learning courses are also available via the internet.

The purpose of the Member Learning and Development Programme is to ensure Members are able to fulfil their role as representatives for Alton, along with any other council roles they have, whether inside or outside the council, and to enable Members to feel confident in understanding the issues facing local Government in general. The programme is based on priorities defined in the Corporate Strategy adopted by Members on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016

The Lead Councillors for Member Development and Support will be the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee together with the Town Mayor as Chairman of Alton Town Council. The Town Hall will be the lead council service in the co-ordination and delivery of Member Learning and Development, supported by officers at Hampshire ALC.

### **2. Member Learning and Development Policy.**

#### Declaration

The council will ensure its Members are equipped with the knowledge and skills to fulfil their role as a councillor in all its many aspects. The council appreciates the important and often complex role Members have in representing the community, influencing policy development and working with partners to achieve shared goals. The member Learning and Development programme will ensure that all members have the opportunity to develop the skills to fulfil this role.

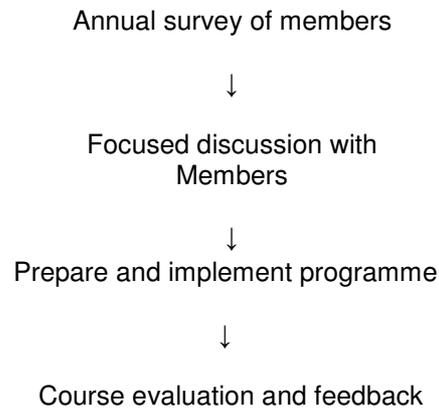
There are many different aspects to the Member role and additional support and guidance to obtain other relevant skills and knowledge may be needed by everyone from time to time. All Members are encouraged to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the council.

### **3. Member Development Programme**

Development of the Programme begins with an annual review of Members in which they will identify their own training and development priorities for the following year. Members will be advised of other suitable opportunities for training that arise throughout the year.

#### The Learning and Development Model

The Policy and Resources Committee will approve the annual review and delivery programme. They also receive the course evaluation to assess the effectiveness and value for money delivered by course events.



### Induction Programme

Alton Town Council will provide a comprehensive induction package for incoming Members. The induction package will include personal briefings, written material and access to IT facilities. All councillors will be issued with the Good Councillors Guide, produced by NALC.

Mentoring will be organised and overseen by members, supported by officers as appropriate.

The Induction Programme will provide information on -

- the functions of the council , including duties and powers
- the legal requirements, roles and responsibilities of Members
- the Code of Conduct, Policies, and requirements in respect of ethics and behaviour.
- an overview of council services and the key aims and objectives of Alton Town Council.

Induction sessions will also be open to re-elected members so they can refresh their knowledge and share their experience with newly elected Members.

### Member briefings

The council recognises the need for knowledge as well as training. There will be a number of briefings, seminars and workshops that will provide information in respect of local and national issues. There will also be a range of other events that Members may wish to nominate themselves to attend, or be invited to attend by officers: these events might include external conferences.

### Joint Working

The council will develop arrangements in partnership with other authorities to deliver joint member development sessions. The council has formal and informal links with

Hampshire ALC, Hampshire County and East Hampshire District Council all of whom offer Members places at training sessions.

### Attendance Records

The council will maintain a member training attendance database.

### The responsibilities of Members

Councillors will fulfil their responsibilities by undertaking the following:

- All newly elected Members will attend the Induction Programme that the council provides.
- All members will be required to attend at least one training or briefing event each year.
- Supporting each other through mentoring and advice
- Members are required to undertake training or attend briefings in respect of certain roles. Attendance at these training or development events is essential before Members can serve on certain committees, such as Planning.
- Completion and submission of a training evaluation and feedback form when they have attended training and where appropriate creation of a briefing note for circulation to other members.

#### **4. Member Support**

The Policy and Resources Committee will oversee all Member training and development issues, with officer support. The council will provide the following to support councillors:

- An annual budget for Member Development
- An annual budget for councillor expenses incurred through the fulfilment of their role, including mileage, caring and subsistence.
- An induction programme to include training, briefings and written material
- Access to training and refreshers for all members.
- The opportunity of a discussion with peers or officers to identify individual learning and development needs.
- An annual review of councillors to establish their training priorities and general views on the support provided.
- Annual evaluation of learning and development events by the Policy and Resources Committee.
- Mentors for new councillors to assist them in their role.
- Regular briefings on important topics to ensure members are well informed.
- Access to a Town Council e-mail address to enable Members to communicate online and access to I.T equipment for use at the Town Hall to undertake their own research.
- Support to representatives on outside bodies and partnerships
- Support from the Town Hall.

#### Promoting Local Democracy

The Council will publish information on how to become a councillor and hold a prospective councillor event in advance of each local town council election.

## Equalities and Access

The Council will ensure that the diverse needs of all members are taken account of, and that all members have an equal opportunity to develop, and fully partake in council business.

This will be accomplished in a number of ways eg by providing training opportunities at a variety of times, by providing caring allowances and by responding to member requests for different types of training and information.

The Policy and Resources Committee will review annually when meetings are held so as not to sacrifice family or employment time but to enable participation by all members in the democratic process.

The Council will ensure processes are in place for Members to properly evaluate the impact of decisions on its services, policies and procedures on different sections of the community. The impact is considered with reference to age, disability, gender, race, ethnicity and colour, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Alton Town Council Web: [www.alton.gov.uk](http://www.alton.gov.uk) Phone: 01420 83986

*The document was created with the assistance of the Canterbury City Council, based upon their Member Development Strategy.*