



Member Development Strategy 2013-2016

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Strategy is to ensure that Authority Members, Officers and staff are aware of the approach to the development of Members, why it is important and the roles they play in making this happen. This document brings together the aims of Member Development and the medium term priorities of the Authority. It also details how Members will be supported to fulfil their roles and contribute to the quality of our services.

2. Authority Priorities

The Member Development Strategy strives to contribute to the delivery of the Authority's Core Purpose, which is to 'provide our communities with sustainable, high quality firefighting, rescue and preventative services'.

This will be achieved by linking Member Development with the following foundations on which our core purpose is built:

- Fleet & Equipment: we will provide and maintain the right fleet, tools and equipment to ensure our staff can do their jobs effectively
- People: we will ensure we have the right people, with the right skills and training to carry out the right job at the right time
- Building & Infrastructure: we will provide appropriate premises in the right locations that enable our staff to carry out their roles effectively
- Resourcing for the Future: we will ensure that our actions now will secure our long term future
- Services: we will deliver targeted and quality services with the resources available to us
- Fire & Rescue Authority: we will engage with FRA Members in strategic matters affecting the Service

3. Member Development Aims & Objectives

The Member Development Strategy has the following 3 key aims:

- i) to maintain effective leadership of the Authority through on-going and continuous Member development;
- ii) to provide Members with the support, knowledge, skills and information necessary to enable them to effectively carry out their role, as set out below:

- to ensure that the Fire Authority provides an efficient and effective Fire and Rescue Service, taking into account the needs of all sections of the community;
 - to contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the Fire Authority's decisions, policies, priorities, plans, targets, budget and service delivery;
 - to ensure that the Fire Authority delivers value for money; and
 - to ensure that the Fire Authority is an equal opportunity employer that focuses on the safety of employees, and considers the needs of all sections of the community.
- iii) To ensure Members are made aware and kept up to date with developments impacting on the organisation through seminars, workshops and bulletins.

These aims will be realised through ensuring that:

- a Member Development Working Group is appointed by the Authority;
- key competencies are identified for Authority Members;
- access to training and development activities is guided by the Authority's Ethical Framework and Equality Scheme;
- this strategy derives from and contributes to the Authority's strategic objectives;
- training activities are provided in response to identified organisational, individual and statutory needs; and
- development opportunities provided by constituent authorities are incorporated in to the development programme developed by the Authority.

4. Member Development Policy

Member Induction

All newly appointed Members should attend the Induction session which will cover the basic areas of knowledge necessary, such as the key roles and responsibilities of Authority Members, the legislative framework for the fire and rescue services and the financial context. Members will be provided with training on the Code of Conduct by their constituent authorities and attendance at these sessions will be monitored.

The Induction session will be open to existing members whose experience will prove invaluable to new Members.

Member Development Programme

All Authority Members will be provided with the opportunity to put forward their training needs which will be fed in to the Member Development Programme. The programme will be compiled by the Committee & Members' Service Team, in conjunction with the Member Development Working Group, Group Leaders and the Senior Management Board. The Programme will be approved by the Audit & Standards Committee.

The programme will include core sessions for all Members, with a key theme being identified for each year. In addition, essential training for Members will be provided on the role and function of their respective Committees. Opportunities for all Members to remain up to date with developments in service delivery will also be provided.

The Programme for Authority Members will be Fire and Rescue specific and will be developed with the constituent authorities to prevent unnecessary duplication.

Opportunities to provide joint training events with other Authorities will be explored where possible.

Support

The majority of seminars and briefings will be delivered in-house. Officers with specific knowledge in key areas will be expected to provide sessions and/or demonstrations for Members. The Committee and Members' Services Team will provide information and support to Officers holding briefings and delivering training seminars.

Committee & Members' Services will also:

- support the Member Development Working Group;
- consult with Members and officers to identify key competencies for Members;
- identify learning opportunities for Members;
- co-ordinate the Member Development programme;
- liaise with constituent authorities to ensure development opportunities are complimentary; and
- analyse feedback from Members.

Review

The Member Development Programme will be evaluated annually by the Member Development Working Group through assessment of areas such as Member feedback, attendance levels and feedback from training facilitators, Group Leaders and SMB.