



Member Development Strategy 2017-2020

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 objectives of the Authority. It also sets out how Members will be supported to fulfil their roles and contribute to the quality of our services.

2. Authority Objectives

The Authority's Core Purpose is to 'provide our communities with sustainable, high quality firefighting, rescue and preventative services' which is built on three driving principles:

- firefighter safety;
- community safety; and
- the delivery of quality services

The Authority's ability to secure these objectives is assisted by:

- the continued collaboration and joint working with emergency service partners, local authorities and voluntary organisations;
- the 2020 Vision Programme which aims to build new relationships and new ways of working, including co-operating with others to achieve our aims; and
- valuing and recognising diversity in the Service and the community.

3. Member Development Aims

The Member Development Strategy is a key part of the Authority's governance framework to develop the capacity and capability of Members to be effective. The Strategy also strives to contribute to the delivery of the Authority's core purpose, principles and objectives by maintaining effective leadership through continuous Member development.

This will be achieved by providing Members with the support, knowledge, skills and information necessary to achieve and maintain their key competencies which will enable them 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;

- the Fire Authority is an equal opportunity employer that focuses on the safety of employees;
- the Fire Authority delivers value for money; and
- all Members contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the Fire Authority's decisions, policies, priorities, plans, targets, budget and service delivery.

4. Members' Induction

An induction will be provided for all newly appointed Members following constituent authority elections i.e in 2017 and in 2019. Existing members will be encouraged to take part in induction activities as their experience will prove invaluable to new Members.

Where ad-hoc appointments are made by constituent authorities outside an election year, opportunities for Members to be brought up to speed will be provided on a one-to-one or small group basis.

5. Annual Development Programmes

A fire and rescue specific programme will be devised each year by Committee and Members' Services, in conjunction with Group Leaders and the Senior Management Board. The development of the annual programmes will be undertaken in consultation with constituent authorities to prevent unnecessary duplication.

Each annual programme will focus on the theme; **"Adding Extra Value"** with sessions adjusted on annual basis in response to organisational, statutory and identified individual needs.

As a combined authority made up of two constituent authorities there will be two elections undertaken during the life of this strategy. This will require some duplication in the programme to enable newer Members to attain the same level of knowledge as their more experienced colleagues.

As Member Development is a key part of the Authority's governance framework each annual programme will be put forward to the Audit and Standards Committee for approval

6. Delivery

The main methods of delivering the development programme will be through:

- seminars and briefings;
- site visits;

- Members' Bulletin; and
- meetings.

Seminars and briefings will usually be delivered in-house, however external training will be considered on a case by case basis. Officers with specific knowledge in key areas will be expected to provide sessions and/or demonstrations for Members. Committee and Members' Services will provide information and support to Officers holding briefings and delivering seminars.

7. Review

At the end of each year, all Members will have an opportunity to review their development and identify any future development needs that could be fed into future programmes. However, Members are encouraged to make suggestions for future development at any point throughout the year.

Committee and Members' Services will assess each programme annually by analysing areas such as Member feedback, attendance levels and feedback from training facilitators, Group Leaders and SMB.

Committee and Members' Services will also continue to identify learning opportunities for Members and will examine additional media through which such opportunities could be delivered to Members.