



## EERA Charter for Elected Member Development ACTION PLAN

### 1 Commitment to Member development

GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
1.1 Top political and managerial leadership commitment to development of elected Members	<p><b>Evidence:</b> The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2013 identifies achievement of the Member Development Charter as a key target. The Member Learning and Development Programme is identified as one of the Council's Key Activities and Actions (page 11).</p>		Completed
	<p>The Council's 'Key Policies and Actions 2009/10' report identifies the Member Training &amp; Development programme and working towards obtaining Charter accreditation as two of the key projects for the year (Council 26/2/09, Minute 50).</p>		Completed
	<p>The Information and Customer Services Divisional Plan details delivery of the Member Learning &amp; Development Programme as an objective and developing and implementing an Action Plan to achieve Charter accreditation as Key Actions.</p>		Completed
	<p>Certificate of Commitment signed 23/2/09.</p>		Completed
	<p>Established all-party Charter Implementation Group (CIG) to lead on the process of applying for the Charter. (Standards Committee 2/10/08, Minute 280). Minutes of CIG circulated to all Members.</p>		Completed
	<p>Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklets.</p>		Completed
	<p><b>Action:</b> Member Development Statement and Policy to be drafted for submission to CIG.</p>		Completed



#### Key of Abbreviations

CIG	Charter Implementation Group	CSM	Committee Services Manager
HICS	Head of Information and Customer Services	CA	Committee Administrator

#### Key

Items that have been completed.

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
1.2 Policy statement <div style="background-color: #cccccc; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p><b>Evidence:</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Member Development Statement and Policy to be prepared.</p> <p>(2) Place agreed Statement and Policy in Members' lounge/office/library and include reference to this in the Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklets to ensure that the Policy is easily accessible to Members.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
1.3 Equality of opportunity and access to learning and development	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Courses run in the afternoon and repeated in the evening in response to request by Members. (Report to Standards Committee 2/4/09 – agreed Minute 82/09)</p> <p>Venues for training in Rayleigh and Rochford to assist access. (Report to Standards Committee 2/4/09 - agreed Minute 82/09)</p> <p>Course handouts sent to those Members unable to attend training.</p> <p>Specialist training for Review Committee Members has included role-playing and interactive sessions. ‘Moots’ or mock hearings have been organised for Licensing Committee Members (Example course outlines - Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklets)</p> <p>Any Member unable to attend a course run by District Council officers can contact the officer concerned to request a meeting or briefing on that topic of training. (CIG 7/5/09, Minute 5)</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Re-launch ‘Modern Councillor’ e-learning facility. Include in the training booklet details of how Members can access the ‘Modern Councillor’ facility and the on-line courses that are available.</p> <p>(2) The integration of training materials available on CD, i.e. Calderdale Chairmanship training and Scrutiny training, into the training programme.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed (details of e-learning included in Members’ Bulletin and training booklet).</p> <p>Completed (details of training materials available on CD included in the booklet for Phase 2 of the 2009/10 Learning &amp; Development).</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
1.4 Budget	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Budget of £20,000 allocated specifically for Member training (as part of the Core Budget set at full Council on 27/1/09). (Report to Standards Committee 2/4/09 (5.1))</p> <p>The budget is monitored regularly. All budget demands for Member training are monitored by Head of Information and Customer Services (HICS) (CIG Minutes on 7/5/09 (Item 2.4)).</p> <p>Additional funding from Improvement East for peer mentoring of Leader, Deputy Leader and two Executive Members (Correspondence to Members’).</p> <p>Taking advantage of the Improvement East ‘Winter Menu of Support’ funding to run Member Development modules in Part 2 of the Programme (Correspondence).</p> <p>Officer time in respect of those courses run by Rochford District Council officers is not re-charged to the Member Development budget (CIG Minutes on 7/5/09 (Item 1.4)).</p> <p><b>Action:</b> None required.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Noted</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
1.5 Officer resource support	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Head of Information and Customer Services (HICS) and Committee Administrator (CA) shown as contacts on page 14 of the Member Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklets.</p> <p>Job descriptions of HICS, Committee Services Manager (CSM) and CA contain responsibility for taking forward Member learning and development. (extracts from job descriptions)</p> <p>CSM shown on page 4 of the Divisional Plan as lead officer responsible for Member development. (extract from Divisional Plan)</p> <p><b>Action:</b> None required.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
1.6 Dissemination of learning	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Peer mentoring facilitated by Improvement East and provided by IDeA for Leader, Deputy Leader and two Executive Members. (Report to Standards Committee 2/4/09 (2.4)). This mentoring is focussed and portfolio specific.</p> <p>Reports from outside body meetings – Member appointees are asked to report twice per year into the Members’ Bulletin on the work of the body. (Letter to Appointees from the Committee Services Manager.)</p> <p>Relevant learning and development courses offered to the District’s Parish/Town Councils. (Correspondence to Parish/Town Clerks and Report to Standards Committee 2/4/09 (6.1))</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) CIG to consider possibilities, for instance, encouraging Councillors attending visits, such as Southampton Airport/recycling plants, to disseminate their learning via, say, written briefings in the Members’ Bulletin.</p> <p>(2) To investigate the possibility of improving the system of feeding back information from Outside Body activity, such as utilising Full Council meetings. (CIG 25/8/09, Minute 7)</p>	<p><b>Dec 2009 CIG</b></p> <p><b>Dec 2009 CIG</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>See Officer Comment and Suggested Actions document (Appendix 1).</p> <p>See Officer Comment and Suggested Actions document (Appendix 1).</p>

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### 2. Strategic approach to member development

GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
2.1 Member led strategy	<p><b>Evidence:</b> CIG established as a Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee comprising Leaders of both political groups, other elected Members and Independent Members of the Standards Committee (Standards Committee 2/10/08 Minute 280).</p> <p>Phase 1 of the 2009/10 learning and development programme agreed by CIG. (CIG 26/03/09, Minute 2)</p> <p>Phases 2 and 3 of the 2009/10 learning and development programme (to be held in Oct/Nov and Feb/Mar) to be developed in consultation with the CIG (Standards Committee 2/4/09, Minute 82).</p> <p>Summary of end of course evaluation forms from each phase of development maintained by the Committee Section. (Summary of Phase 1 2009/10)</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Ensure that the Member Development Policy provides for Member involvement in monitoring and evaluation of training, including an evaluation by Members at the end of each phase, which is summarised and fed into the CIG and/or Standards Committee for review.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>



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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
2.2 Linkage to council corporate plan	<p>Council’s Senior Management Team provide input regarding the courses they wish to offer to Members to ensure that learning and development meets corporate objectives. (Procedure document – Member Learning &amp; Development)</p> <p>Introduction of mandatory training for Development Control, Licensing and Appeals Committee Members to strengthen knowledge of relevant law and procedures. (Council 28/10/08 Minute 305) (Council 23/4/09 Minute 101)</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) The Member Development Policy to make strong and clear links with the Council’s objectives.</p> <p>(2) Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklet needs to state that the programme has been formulated to help the Council meet its corporate objectives and show linkages between courses and corporate objectives.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
2.3 Member roles clearly set out	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Some Member role descriptions developed in 2006. (existing descriptions)</p> <p>The Council's Constitution contains Portfolio Holder responsibilities. (extract from Constitution)</p> <p>Each Committee and Sub-Committee has its own terms of reference. (sample Committee agenda and corresponding extract from Constitution)</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Review of Member role descriptions, the use of which would assist in planning Member development courses. Updated role descriptions to be bought before the CIG.</p> <p>(2) Training booklet to detail which particular Members each course is primarily aimed at (Standards Committee Minutes 2/4/09).</p>	<p align="center"><b>Feb 2010 HICS</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
2.4 Process for identification of needs at individual and Council wide level	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Self-assessment questionnaires issued annually to each Member – 85% return rate for 2009/10. Training Programme agreed by CIG and/or Standards Committee, with formal half-yearly review. (Report to Standards Committee 2/10/09) Some training is identified as mandatory (Development Control Licensing/ Appeals), or necessary for the fulfilment of the Authority’s stated corporate objectives, or induction (when appropriate). (Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklet May 2009) End of event questionnaires issued and results noted and acted upon if necessary. (End of event questionnaire.)</p> <p>Self-assessment questionnaires asked Members to detail specific individual training requirements. These individual needs will be developed in consultation with the Charter Implementation Group (Self-assessment questionnaires). Tailored training is provided for Review and Audit Committee Members. (Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklet May 2009)</p> <p>Individual Members who wish to attend courses specific to their role can contact the HICS to see if this is possible within the budget. (CIG 7/5/09, Minute 5)</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Through CIG look at individual Member training requests (detailed in self-assessment questionnaires) as part of the development of the February-March 2010 element of the Programme.</p>		<p>Completed</p>        <p>Completed</p>        <p>On-going</p>        <p>Completed (see Item 5 report into CIG 16/12/09 on Part 3 of the Programme)</p>



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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
<p>2.5 Structured and timely approach to promoting development opportunities</p> 	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Indication of training session details provided to Standards Committee in April (Report to Standards Committee 2/4/09).            Training split into 3 phases. Full course details for each phase of training contained in a booklet and sent to all Members at least 2 weeks prior to commencement of first course. (Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklet May 2009)            Members' Bulletin sent weekly with reminder of training courses for forthcoming week. (Example of Member Bulletin, showing training course that week).            Return booking form for training courses in each booklet, and returns monitored (Booking form - Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklet May 2009 – Page 16).            Letter reminder to those who have not returned the booking form (example letter).            Phone calls to those Members who have not returned booking form and a further copy sent/emailed if necessary.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Notices in Members lounge/office/library of forthcoming training.</p> <p>(2) Members/CIG to act as champions for promoting training opportunities. CIG to discuss taking this forward.</p> <p>(3) Plan of training dates made available at the beginning of each calendar year, particularly around mandatory training.</p>	<p><b>Jan 2010 HICS</b></p> <p><b>Jan 2010 HICS</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>See Officer Comment and Suggested Actions document (Appendix 1).</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
2.6 Appropriately learn with external partners	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Joint training opportunities with Basildon and Castle Point Councils have been undertaken in previous years. We continue to offer relevant courses to them. (example correspondence sent to Councils)</p> <p>Relevant courses offered to Parish/Town Councils (example letter sent to Councils).</p> <p>Programmes using external (partner) support for developing Members included courses offered by Essex County Highways, Crown Prosecution Service, Environment Agency (extracts from Learning &amp; Development booklets).</p> <p>It is accepted that it will sometimes be advantageous to both officers and Members to be trained together in joint sessions (report to Standards Committee 2/4/09, item 8 (4.4)).</p> <p>Working with the IDeA on providing Member development modules under the Improvement East 'Winter Menu of Support'.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> CIG to consider other opportunities.</p>	<p align="center"><b>Dec 2009 CIG</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>See Officer Comment and Suggested Actions document (Appendix 1).</p>

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<b>GUIDELINES</b>	<b>EVIDENCE / ACTION</b>	<b>BY WHEN/ BY WHOM</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>
2.7 Strategy for Induction	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Induction strategy – new Members invited to meet Chief Executive and Corporate Directors. They each receive an induction pack, which includes training details, Member information guide, Council procedures and code of conduct. (Induction pack for new Members)</p> <p>Induction Programme for training (May-July) contains mandatory and corporate priority related training. (Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklet May 09)</p> <p>Mentoring of new Councillors carried out on a group basis. (CIG Minute 5/09)</p> <p><b>Action:</b> None required.</p>		<p>Completed</p>  <p>Completed</p>  <p>Completed</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
2.8 Addresses political leadership and team development	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Leader and former Deputy Leader attended the IDeA Leadership Academy (Correspondence).</p> <p>Joint SMT/Executive awaydays on key corporate priorities, e.g. Recycling/Budget (Correspondence to Members).</p> <p>Peer mentoring by the IDeA for new Executive Members and the Leader and Deputy Leader (Correspondence).</p> <p>From 2009/10 Area Committee Chairmen meet with the Lead Officers to plan a consistent approach to these public meetings (Meeting notes of informal meeting 15/6/09).</p> <p><b>Action:</b> CIG to develop.</p>	<p align="center"><b>Dec 2009 CIG</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>See Officer Comment and Suggested Actions document (Appendix 1).</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
2.9 Mechanisms for evaluation, and informing future plans, identified.	<p><b>Evidence:</b> End of event questionnaires summarised and comments actioned as appropriate. Six-monthly report to Standards Committee on progress of training to date. (Report to Standards Committee 2/10/08 and Minute 280)</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Detailed approach to evaluation of training to be included in Member Development Policy.</p> <p>(2) Design an additional evaluation form to be completed by Members attending courses at the conclusion of each phase of training to evaluate the benefits from the training.</p>	<p><b>Dec 2009 HICS</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed (draft evaluation form attached for CIG consideration at Appendix 2).</p>



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**3. Member learning and development plan in place**

GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
3.1 Addresses development priorities	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Report to Standards Committee on 2/4/09 that the learning and development programme needs to be responsive to corporate priority needs of the Council. (Report to Standards Committee, Item 8 (4.2))</p> <p>Mandatory training introduced for 2009/10 for Development Control, Licensing and Appeals Committee Members. (Council 28/10/08, Minute 305) (Council 23/4/09, Minute 101)</p> <p><b>Action</b></p> <p>(1) Member Development Policy needs to set this out clearly.</p> <p>(2) Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklet needs to state that the programme has been formulated to help the Council meet its corporate objectives and show linkages between courses and corporate objectives.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed.</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
3.2 Identify what development activities should achieve	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Specific training for Review Committee Members and Audit Committee Members for 2009/10. (Extract from Member Learning &amp; Development booklet)</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Need to add stated purpose and objectives of courses in the training booklet.</p> <p>(2) Need to include more specific detail in course outlines in respect of who courses are aimed at primarily (Standards Committee Minutes 2/4/09).</p>		<p>Completed</p>  <p>Completed.</p>  <p>Completed.</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
3.3 Sets out how, when, where and who is responsible	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Standards Committee terms of reference state that the Standards Committee shall determine the annual Member Training Programme. (Paragraph 9.03 of Article 9 of the Council's Constitution)</p> <p>The proposed Member learning and development plan is contained within the report to Standards Committee in April each year. (Report to Standards Committee 2/4/09 and Minute 82)</p> <p>Job descriptions of HICS, CSM and CA contain responsibility for taking forward Member learning and development. (Job descriptions)</p> <p>Officer 'My Performance Reviews' (MPRs) identify targets relating to Member development flowing from the Council's Corporate Plan and Information and Customer Services Divisional Plan. (Recent officer MPRs)</p> <p><b>Action:</b> None required.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
3.4 Takes account of access to development opportunities	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Development opportunities are available in the afternoon and repeated in the evening to allow access by different groups, including those who work. (Extract from Members' Learning &amp; Development booklet)</p> <p>Childcare allowance available for babysitting dependant children. Carer's allowance is also available. (Extract from Constitution – 6.1)</p> <p>On-line training available via the 'Modern Councillor'. (Letter to all Members)</p> <p>Handouts provided to Members unable to attend a session. (Example of letter sent)</p> <p>Buffet provided prior to each training session (Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklet, May 2009 (Page 13)).</p> <p>Variety of learning styles employed by trainers, according to subject matter. (Example course outline)</p> <p>Any Member unable to attend a course run by District Council officers can contact the officer concerned to request a meeting or briefing on that topic of training. (CIG 7/5/09, Minute 5)</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
	<p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Integrate use of Calderdale compact disks (CDs) in Chairmanship and Success with Scrutiny into the development programme.</p> <p>(2) Re-launch 'Modern Councillor' e-learning facility. Include in the training booklet details of how Members can access the 'Modern Councillor' facility and the on-line courses that are available.</p> <p>(3) Consider learning methods as part of the 2010/11 learning and development programme.</p>	<p><b>Jan 2010 HICS</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
3.5 Linkage between Individual plans and the council's corporate and other plans	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Committee-specific training sessions for: Audit/Review/Development Control/Licensing/Appeals Committee Members that link learning to Members' role on that Committee. (Opportunities to Learn and Develop booklet May 09)</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Links between the Council's aims and objectives and specific development courses to be shown in the Learning and Development booklet.</li> <li>(2) Training needs analysis questionnaires pinpointing specific requests from individual Members to be reviewed by Charter Implementation Group as part of the development of phase 3 of the Programme.</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Dec 2009 CIG</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed (see report into CIG 16/12/09 on Part 3 of the Programme)</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
3.6 Representative elected members consulted	<p><b>Evidence:</b> CIG established with a membership as follows: Leader, Opposition Leader, District Council Members and Independent Members of the Standards Committee (Standards Committee 2/10/08, Minute 280)</p> <p>Members' Bulletin sent weekly to all Members, containing details of all the learning and development courses for the forthcoming week. (example of Members' Bulletin showing training for forthcoming week)</p> <p>Standards Committee oversees Member Development process. (Extract from Constitution – Article 9.03)</p> <p>Independent Members of the Standards Committee and Parish/Town Councillors are invited to Member Learning and Development events (Correspondence).</p> <p><b>Action:</b> None required.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

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**4. Learning and development is effective in building capacity**

GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
4.1 Members learn and develop effectively	<p><b>Evidence:</b> End of event questionnaires and yearly review of training opportunities. (Sample questionnaires and letter to Members)</p> <p>Mandatory Development Control/Licensing/Appeals training introduced to increase Members' knowledge and improve performance. (Council 28/10/08, Minute 305) (Council 23/4/09, Minute 101)</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Design an additional evaluation form to be completed by Members attending courses at the conclusion of each phase of training to evaluate the benefits from the training.</p>	<p><b>Dec 2009 HICS</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed (draft evaluation form attached for CIG consideration at Appendix 2).</p>



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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
<p>4.2 Learning is shared with other elected members and where appropriate with officers and stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Reports from Members' involvement with Outside Bodies. (extract from Members' Bulletin)</p> <p>Handouts provided to those Members unable to attend a training session. (example letter sent to Members)</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Establish a file of training material to be placed in the Members' library/office. (Copies of handouts from previously run courses)</p> <p>(2) CIG to consider possibilities, for instance, encouraging Councillors attending visits, such as Southampton Airport/recycling plants, to disseminate their learning via, say, written briefings in the Members' Bulletin.</p>	<p><b>Dec 2009 CIG</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>See Officer Comment and Suggested Actions document (Appendix 1).</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
4.3 Investment in learning and development is evaluated in terms of benefits and impact	<p><b>Evidence:</b> End of year review to Standards Committee. (Report to Standards Committee 2/4/09 and appendices 1-3)</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Evaluation strategy to be included in the Member Development Policy.</p> <p>(2) Evaluation process, linked to course objectives, to be introduced at the end of each of the 3 phases of Member Development. A form to be designed and sent to Members between the phases of the programme in respect of appropriate courses outlining the course objective and asking Members to evaluate how far they felt the course achieved its objective.</p>	<p><b>Dec 2009 HICS</b></p>	<p>Completed for 2008/09</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed (draft evaluation form attached for CIG consideration at Appendix 2).</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
<p>4.4 Identifies (and implements) improvements to learning and development activities</p>	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Minutes of Standards Committee meetings showing implementation of mandatory Development Control, Licensing and Appeals training for Committee Members. (Standards Committee 11/12/08, Minute 365 and Report item 9) (Standards Committee 2/4/09, Minute 82)</p> <p>Review Committee Minutes showing review of Area Committees, which resulted in Chairmanship training being organised to take place in first phase of training 2009/10. (Review Committee 7/4/09, Minute 84)</p> <p>More specific targeting of training to relate to specific Councillor roles, including training sessions specifically aimed at Audit Committee Members and Review Committee Members. (Report to Standards Committee 2/4/09, Item 8 (4.9))</p> <p><b>Action:</b> CIG to look at individual training requests (detailed in self-assessment questionnaires) as part of the development of the February-March 2010 element of the Programme.</p>	<p><b>Dec 2009 HICS</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed (see Item 5 report into CIG 16/12/09 on Part 3 of the Programme)</p>

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**5. Elected Member Development promotes work life balance and citizenship**

GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
5.1 Assists those with family responsibilities.	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Constitution showing childcare/carer allowances. (Extract from Constitution – 6.1)</p> <p>Independent Remuneration Panel meetings assess the support needed for Members on an annual basis. (Meeting record)</p> <p>Independent Remuneration Panel has recommended an increase in child care allowance for 2010/11 to enable Members to use professionally qualified staff.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> None required.</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

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GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
<p>5.2 Reviews how council business is conducted to allow for equality of access to key political decision making mechanisms</p>	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Timetable report shows that meetings are not scheduled for Monday evenings as this is when most Town/Parish Councils hold meetings (Report to Executive 15/4/09 Item 12 (3.8)).</p> <p>All public Council and Committee Agendas and Minutes from 1 January 2000 onwards are available online on the Council's Committee Management Information System (CMIS). In addition, extracts from the Council's Minute Books are available for each calendar year from 1973 to 1999 inclusive. These records are fully searchable.</p> <p>Timetable allows flexibility for scheduling additional meetings rather than having them scheduled (Report to Executive 15/4/09, Item 12 (3.1)).</p> <p>Council meetings generally held in the evening (Report to Executive 15/4/09, Item 12 (3.1)).</p> <p>All Committee Agendas, Minutes and Reports available in large print, and in alternative languages/formats on request (Example Agenda).</p> <p>Area Committees are held out in the community (Report to Executive 15/4/09, Item 12 (3.2)).</p>		<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

**EERA Charter for Elected Member Development  
ACTION PLAN**

GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
	<p><b>Action:</b></p> <p>(1) Investigate additional microphones and a hearing loop system for Area Committees.</p> <p>(2) Consider ways of promoting Area Committees in order to encourage attendance by more members of the public. (CIG 25/8/09, Minute 7)</p>	<p><b>Dec 2009 HICS</b></p>	<p>Completed. Additional microphones and a hearing loop system organised for every Area Committee meeting.</p> <p>See Officer Comment and Suggested Actions document (Appendix 1).</p>

**EERA Charter for Elected Member Development  
ACTION PLAN**

GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
<p>5.3 Holds events for the community to encourage people to become community leaders.</p>	<p><b>Evidence:</b> Area Committees provide an opportunity for Councillors to exercise their community leadership role. (Constitution – Article 10) Information/pen pictures on each Member on the Council’s website. (Example of pen picture) Some Councillors have visited schools in the District to hear what young people had to say about local issues. (CIG 7/5/09, Minute 5) Council meeting accommodation made available for Youth Council meeting and events. (CIG 7/5/09, Minute 5)</p> <p><b>Action:</b> (1) Suggestions by CIG.  (2) Councillors may like to visit schools to give brief talks about the role of a Councillor.</p>	<p><b>Dec 2009 CIG</b></p> <p><b>Dec 2009 CIG</b></p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>See Officer Comment and Suggested Actions document (Appendix 1).</p> <p>The Council is registered under CRB so no requirement for a CRB check for individual Councillors. Councillors will be supervised during any visit.</p>

**EERA Charter for Elected Member Development**  
**ACTION PLAN**

GUIDELINES	EVIDENCE / ACTION	BY WHEN/ BY WHOM	PROGRESS
	<p>(3) Information containing a role description and outline of duties to be made available in advance to every prospective candidate standing for election to the Council. This would provide prospective Members with information about the extent of the role of the Councillor and what is expected of them and may assist in the process of encouraging members of the public to become community leaders. (CIG 25/8/09, Minute 7)</p> <p>(4) Linkages with the Parish/Town Councils to be encouraged as this was often a learning ground for community activity. (CIG 25/8/09, Minute 7)</p>	<p><b>Feb 2010</b> <b>HICS</b></p> <p><b>Dec 2009</b> <b>HICS</b></p>	<p>See draft document attached at Appendix 3.</p> <p>See Officer Comment and Suggested Actions document (Appendix 1).</p>



## OFFICER COMMENT AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS

Detailed below are the items on the Action Plan that have actions that need to be completed by December 2009. Also included under each of the items is a section entitled Officer Comment, which details suggestions from officers that the Charter Implementation Group may like to consider.

### Item 1.6 Dissemination of Learning

**Action 1: CIG to consider possibilities, for instance, encouraging Councillors attending visits, such as Southampton Airport/recycling plants, to disseminate their learning via, say, written briefings in the Members' Bulletin.**

#### Officer Comment:-

- Members requested to provide copies of training materials obtained at courses/conferences for reference in the Members' office/library.
- Members requested to produce an article for publication in the Members' Bulletin regarding training events attended and the benefits.
- Design a 'sharing learning from external events' form, which could be a simple 2 sided form (with boxes) that is issued to any Member due to attend an external seminar. Members would be asked to complete the form, which could include the following: outline of the event; benefit gained on a 1-10 scale, with brief description; list of the main topics covered and key points that could be shared. Returned forms could be kept in the Members' office/library.
- Information in Members' Bulletins about forthcoming courses and external seminar attendance.

**Action 2: To investigate the possibility of improving the system of feeding back information from Outside Body activity, such as utilising Full Council meetings. (CIG 25/8/09, Minute 7)**

Officer Comment:-

- A letter could be sent from the CIG to all Members on a regular basis, say every 6 months, on the procedure for providing a report for printing in the Members' Bulletin.
- A mechanism is needed to enable Members to report back on Outside Body activity. See suggested process below:-
  - Retain current principle of requiring appointees to report in twice per year via the Members' Bulletin.
  - Expand the Leader's speech at Council to pick up on the outside bodies attended by the Leader - Regional Assembly, Essex Partnership Forum, Local Strategic Partnership and Thames Gateway South Essex - and through this speech link to relevant Portfolio Holders to report as appropriate on outside bodies they attend.
  - For all other outside bodies, there could be an item following 'Leaders report' on the Council agenda, entitled 'Outside Bodies Feedback'.
  - This could be trialled for 6 to 12 months.
  - Council will receive reports back on up to 4 outside bodies per meeting. In terms of process, a letter would go out well in advance of the meeting. The first 4 returnees would be selected for the meeting (if oversubscribed, they could be invited to present at the next meeting). There could be a policy that, once there has been a report on a particular body, Council would not normally expect a further report within 6 months unless there is a matter of significance.
  - A verbal report into Council would equate to one written report via the Bulletin.
  - Maximum time allowed per report to be 5 minutes.

- Members to stand when they present their verbal feedback.
- Members' questions to be allowed on the verbal feedback.
- Where there is more than one Member on the outside body, one Member could lead the presentation with contribution from the other Members on that body. However, the presentation/feedback would still be subject to the 5 minute rule.
- This could be implemented from the next municipal year 2010/11.

**Item 2.5 Structured and timely approach to promoting development opportunities**

**Action 3: Plan of training dates made available at the beginning of each calendar year, particularly around mandatory training.**

Officer Comment:- Below are the proposed dates for Member Learning and Development in 2010/11:-

**Plan of training dates for Member Learning and Development Programme 2010/11**

<b>Part 1 May to July 2010</b>	
Thurs 13/5/10	<b>Mandatory Planning training</b>
Tue 25/5/10	Training
Thurs 27/5/09	<b>Mandatory Licensing training</b>
Tue 1/6/10	Scrutiny training
Thurs 10/6/10	Training
Wed 16/6/10	Training
Tues 22/6/10	Training
Thurs 1/7/10	Training
Tues 6/7/10	Scrutiny training
Wed 14/7/10	<b>Mandatory Appeals training</b>

<b>Part 2 September to November 2010</b>	
Thurs 28/9/10	Scrutiny training
Wed 6/10/10	Training
Tues 12/10/10	Planning training
Tues 19/10/10	Scrutiny training
Thurs 28/10/10	Training
Thurs 4/11/10	Training
Thurs 11/11/10	Training
Thurs 18/11/10	Training

<b>Part 3 February to March 2011</b>	
Thurs 10/2/11	Training
Thurs 17/2/11	Training
Wed 23/2/11	Training
Thurs 3/3/11	Training
Wed 9/3/11	Training
Thurs 17/3/11	Training

**Item 2.6 Appropriately learn with external partners**

**Action: CIG to consider other opportunities.**

**Officer Comment:-**

- Presentations by Southend NHS Trust, Integrated Youth Services (including Youth Council) and NHS South Essex at Area Committees in 2009/10.
- The Essex County Council Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation attended a meeting of RDC full Council on 27 October 2009.
- Minutes of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) and Chambers of Trade (COT) regularly included in the Members' Bulletin.
- Visits to other authorities by Review Committee on an ad hoc basis.
- Chairman of the Review Committee attended a Centre for Public Scrutiny conference, 'How to Win Friends and Influence Partners' on 19/3/09.
- Vice Chairman of Review Committee attended Essex Countrywide Scrutiny Members meeting 9/12/09 at Essex County Council.
- Rochford District Council had a stand at the EERA Innovations Day Conference held on 21/10/09, where it promoted information on the Council's recycling system and the levels of recycling it had achieved. The Conference included information on innovative ideas from around the region and was attended by Members and officers.

**Item 2.8 Addresses political leadership and team development**

**Action: CIG to develop.**

**Officer Comment:-**

- Annual briefing by the Leader/Chief Executive to all staff on strategy, the Council's vision for the forthcoming year and achievements in the previous year.
- Regular majority group meetings to consider direction of Council and development of Members.
- Chief Executive meets regularly with Council Leader.
- Senior Management Team have regular meetings with Portfolio Holders.
- Member Away Days on the Budget.

**Item 2.9 Mechanisms for evaluation, and informing future plans, identified**

**Action: Design an additional evaluation form to be completed by Members attending courses at the conclusion of each phase of training to evaluate the benefits from the training.**

**Officer Comment:-**

- See draft evaluation form attached for CIG consideration at Appendix 2 (also relates to Items 4.1 and 4.3 on the Action Plan).



**Item 4.2 Learning is shared with other elected Members and, where appropriate, with officers and stakeholders.**

**Action: CIG to consider possibilities, for instance, encouraging Councillors attending visits, such as Southampton Airport/recycling plants, to disseminate their learning via, say, written briefings in the Members' Bulletin.**

Officer Comment:-

- Mentoring provided by Improvement East for Leader, Deputy Leader and two Executive Members.
- Rochford District Council had a stand at the EERA Innovations Day Conference held on 21/10/09, where it promoted information on the Council's recycling system and the levels of recycling it had achieved. The Conference included information on innovative ideas from around the region and was attended by Members and officers.

**Item 5.2 Reviews how council business is conducted to allow for equality of access to key political decision making mechanisms.**

**Action: Consider ways of promoting Area Committees in order to encourage attendance by more members of the public. (CIG 25/8/09, Minute 7)**

**Officer Comment:-**

- Specific detail relating to which parts of the District each Area Committee is concerned with is now included in the Area Committee Agendas and news releases.
- News releases to be regularly redrafted to include examples of 'You asked – we did' 'success stories'.
- Communications officers to liaise with media partners, eg NHS South East Essex, Essex County Council, to maximise contributions and ideas in respect of promoting Area Committees, eg putting up revamped Area Committee posters in Southend hospital and doctors' surgeries in the District.
- Explore possibilities of advertising via Post Office publicity monitors.
- Council's Communication officers will explore the possibilities of advertising Area Committees at the Community Involvement Group (which is under the umbrella of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)).
- Area Committee publicity posters to be revamped – different posters to be developed with suitable wording and using a variety of eye-catching colours. These can also be emailed to the Council's partners involved in particular meetings, e.g. Essex County Council, the NHS Trust, to enable them to assist in advertising.
- Explore the possibility of using Citizens Panels to further involvement in Area Committees, i.e. building use of on-line consultations.
- Communication officers to explore the possibility of putting up posters advertising Area Committees in local supermarkets with high footfall.

**Item 5.3 Holds events for the community to encourage people to become community leaders.**

**Actions:**

**(1) Suggestions by CIG.**

**Officer Comment:-**

- Presentation by Integrated Youth Services (including Youth Council) to Area Committees in March 2010.
- A day in the life of a Councillor in Rochford District Matters
- Area Committee meetings held in locations across the District that would otherwise be held at the Civic Suite. Feedback in terms of suitability/accessibility of venues is acted upon where appropriate.
- Potential involvement in Local Democracy Week.
- Information on the Council's website on the role and responsibilities of Councillors.

**(2) Councillors may like to visit schools to give brief talks about the role of a Councillor.**

**(3) Information for prospective candidates standing for election.**

**Officer Comment:-**

- A draft document is attached at Appendix 3.

**(4) Linkages with the Parish/Town Councils to be encouraged as this was often a learning ground for community activity.**

**Officer Comment:-**

- Parish/Town Councils appointed to Area Committees and attendance at meetings



## Opportunities to Learn & Develop Follow up Evaluation - Part 2 (October-November 2009)

### Post Course Evaluation Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Part 2 2009/10 of the Opportunities to Learn and Develop Programme was completed recently. The courses held in Part 2 of the Programme were as follows:-

- Planning Development Management
- Effective Communication with the Public
- Introduction to Social Media
- Community Leadership
- Introduction to the Budget Process and Government Finance
- Effective Ward Councillor

We found the immediate feedback at the time to be extremely useful and have endeavoured to use this information to ensure that we are delivering an effective training programme and can continue to improve upon future sessions. The Charter Implementation Group would like us to evaluate whether you have been able to put the skills you learnt from these courses into practice; therefore, would you consider the following questions:-

**Q1. What aspects of the programme did you find most beneficial?**

**Q2. Were the course objectives met?**

Yes

No

Not sure

Comments:

**Q3. Have you been able to put the information/skills learnt into practice?**

Yes

No

Not yet but I plan to

Comments:

**Q4. Looking back, how could we have improved on what we delivered?**

Comments:

**Q5. Have you found the handout material (where provided) useful after the event?**

Yes

No

Comments:

**Q6. Would you find a more in depth/advanced follow up session useful?**

Yes

No

If so, what?

Comments:

**Q7. Have you identified additional development needs as a result of any of the courses?**

Yes

No

Comments:

**Q8. Do you have any other feedback you'd like to give in relation to the training?**

Comments:

Thank you for your help.

Please return your completed form as soon as possible to:-

Committee Section  
Rochford District Council  
Council Offices  
South Street  
Rochford SS4 1BW

If you have any queries please contact:

Sarah Fowler  
(Head of Information and Customer  
Services)  
Address as above

Michelle Power  
(Committee Administrator)  
Committee Section  
Address as above

Tel: 01702 318135  
Email: [sarah.fowler@rochford.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.fowler@rochford.gov.uk)

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# Guide for Candidates on being a Member of Rochford District Council



## INTRODUCTION

Each Rochford District Councillor is elected for a four-year term to represent their interests and be the voice of their community.

Rochford is a District located in southeast Essex. It is bounded by the River Crouch to the north and the urban areas of Southend and Castle Point to the south. The District has three main towns, Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley. Much of the remaining area is green belt with a large area around Foulness under Ministry of Defence control. London Southend Airport straddles the District's southern boundary with Southend.

Rochford holds a special place in the hearts of its residents. The people who live here enjoy a quality of life among the best in the country, proven by the fact that in a recent survey undertaken by the Halifax Bank PLC, Rochford was voted the seventh most pleasant place to live in the UK. There's a great deal of pride among the people who live here too; in July 2008 we launched our Maximise Recycling Scheme and won a National Recycling Award for increasing our recycling rates from below 20 per cent to nearly 70 per cent. Along with initiatives such as Shop at my Local, our Charter Mark accredited Revenues and Benefits team or our Leisure Services team who organise the hugely popular Wild Woods Day and Rayleigh Arts Festival, Rochford District Council strives to make a real difference to our people, our community, our local environment and our local economy.

By standing as a candidate in the District Council elections in 2010 and, if elected as a District Councillor, you have an opportunity to contribute to the work and priorities of Rochford District Council.

This guide aims to explain a little of the work of a Councillor and how Rochford District Council operates. It is intended to provide candidates with a useful starting point as to the nature of the commitment they would be taking on.



## What is Rochford District Council and how does it relate to other Councils in Essex?

Local Government can be either unitary or two-tier. Rochford is one of 12 District Councils in a two-tier structure with Essex County Council. Unitary councils, such as Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, manage all local authority services in their area.

Rochford District Council is an independently-elected Council operating autonomously with its own separate responsibilities. However, it is important that Rochford District Council works closely with its partners to provide high quality services for residents. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) operates within Rochford District and involves the main statutory agencies and key partner agencies. The main statutory agencies of the LSP are Rochford District Council, Essex County Council, South East Essex Primary Care Trust and Essex Police. Along with these, the voluntary and business sectors and key interest groups also work together to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the District.

The principal responsibilities of District and County Councils are set out below:-

<b>DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>COUNTY COUNCIL</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collecting Council Tax</li> <li>• Strategic Housing</li> <li>• Planning, Local Plans &amp; Development Control</li> <li>• Economic Development</li> <li>• Leisure and Tourism</li> <li>• Building Regulations</li> <li>• Cemeteries &amp; Cremation</li> <li>• Parks &amp; Open Spaces</li> <li>• Environmental Health</li> <li>• Local Land Charges</li> <li>• Waste and Recycling Collection</li> <li>• Elections and Electoral Registration</li> <li>• Benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Childrens Services</li> <li>• Adult Social Care</li> <li>• Strategic Planning including structure plan, minerals planning</li> <li>• Highways including lighting, traffic &amp; transport planning</li> <li>• Refuse Disposal</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• Consumer Protection</li> <li>• Public Rights of Way</li> <li>• Strategic Emergency Planning (i.e. major incidents such as oil spills, avian influenza etc.)</li> </ul>

## Governance and Decision Making

### **The Constitution**

Rochford District Council has a constitution that sets out how the Council works. The Constitution is approved by full Council and describes the roles, functions and responsibilities of the Councillors and those of key officers. It contains information on how decisions are made and provides detailed guidance about rules and procedures.

### **The Council**

The Council comprises 39 Councillors representing 19 Wards. All Councillors meet together as the Council 8 times a year to decide the Council's overall policies and set the budget for each year. The Council appoints the Leader of the Council. The Leader appoints 7 other Councillors, each with a specific portfolio of responsibility, who, together with the Leader, make up the Executive. Full Council appoints Members to the Review Committee, which is concerned with overview and scrutiny of the actions of the Executive.

### **Executive**

The Executive makes decisions, either collectively or individually on matters relating to their specific areas of responsibility, on matters of policy across the range of services delivered by the Council (subject to some decisions that are reserved for all Councillors meeting as 'Full Council'). The more significant decisions (known as 'key decisions') are published in a Forward Plan. Decisions made by the Executive, or by individual portfolio holders, are published and are subject to both 'call-in' by the Council's Review Committee or referral to Full Council for a five day period prior to being enacted. The Executive meets roughly once a month.

## Governance and Decision Making continued

**Appeals Committee:** exercises functions in relation to appeals, licensing and registration.

**Area Committees:** There are three geographically-based Area Committees covering the whole of the District; each Councillor is a member of whichever Area Committee their ward is in. They meet five times a year at a local venue and bring together local partners to consider issues relevant to the local area. They have been constituted to provide the public with an opportunity to raise matters of local concern.

**Audit Committee:** involved in matters of internal audit, governance and risk management arrangements and consideration of matters referred to it by the External Auditor.

**Development Control Committee:** exercises the Council's functions in relation to the granting of planning permissions, dangerous, neglected or derelict premises and building control regulation.

**Licensing Committee:** exercises functions under the Licensing Act 2003, the Gambling Act 2005 and associated legislation.

**Overview and Scrutiny:** The Overview & Scrutiny function at Rochford District Council is carried out by the Council's Review Committee. The Review Committee supports the work of the Executive and the Council as a whole. It allows citizens to have a greater say in Council matters by reviewing areas that have been suggested or are causing concern with respect to the operation of the Council, and that of its Partners. It can also scrutinise decisions made by the Council's Executive and Policy Committees to ensure that best practice and best value is provided at all times for the benefit of Council Tax payers, and develop recommendations relating to Council Policy and activity.

The Review Committee is chaired by a Member of the Opposition. Councillors appointed to the Review Committee are expected to adopt a deliberative, investigative and evidence based approach while casting aside party politics. Scrutiny should work in an open, transparent, inclusive, and accountable manner adopting an outward looking focus. The Committee meets approximately 10 times a year.

**Standards Committee:** the Standards Committee exercises functions in relation to promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted Members, dealing with allegations that a Member has failed to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct and determining the annual Member Learning & Development Programme. It is chaired by an Independent person.

## Councillors and their work

### **The role of the Councillor**

Councillors either represent political parties or are independent. Nevertheless, their common interest is to see their community improve and develop a better quality of life for local residents. Councillors play a vital role in shaping and directing the effectiveness of local services for the benefit of local people. Councillors are elected by the community to represent the interests of local people.

Their work normally involves:

- attending Council and Committee meetings to make or help shape decisions on local services;
- representing the Council on other organisations;
- helping the Council to achieve its corporate aims;
- championing the needs of local people and local communities;
- and taking up issues on behalf of constituents.

Being a Councillor requires you to care about your local community, be willing to give up some of your time and be keen to learn.

### **Standards of Conduct**

On taking office Councillors have to sign that they will abide by the Code of Conduct to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties. Councillors must be scrupulous in observing the rules on expenses and allowances, and they have to declare personal and prejudicial interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

### **Facilities available to a Councillor**

A range of facilities is provided for Councillors to assist them in undertaking their role. At the Civic Suite, Rayleigh there is a Members' lounge, a library and an office with computers. Councillors are provided with an e-mail address for Council business. An induction programme is available to new Councillors along with a range of mandatory and optional learning and development opportunities open to all Councillors throughout their term of office.

### **The mandatory training dates for 2010/11 are:-**

Planning training: Thursday 13/5/10

Licensing Committee training: Thursday 27/5/10

Appeals Committee training: Wednesday 14/7/10

If Members are not able to attend the mandatory training they will not be able to take part in decision making the Development Control, Licensing or Appeals Committees.

## Are there any payments or allowances for councillors?

Councillors are not paid in the sense that they do not receive a salary for being a Councillor. However, allowances are paid to cover the costs of being an elected Member; these are divided into two main categories:

- basic and special responsibility allowances and
- travelling and subsistence allowances.

An annual basic allowance is paid to each Councillor in 12 monthly instalments. This basic allowance is intended to recognise the time devoted by Councillors to their work, including such inevitable calls on their time as Council meetings and meetings with constituents, and also to cover incidental costs (such as the use of their homes and private telephones) for which other provision is not made.

A special responsibility allowance is paid to certain designated post holders (such as the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Executive Portfolio Holders and Committee Chairmen and Vice Chairmen).

A travelling allowance is also payable to recognise the reasonable travel expenses incurred by Councillors in the course of their duties.

Childcare and Dependant Carer's allowances are also available.

## Who may stand for election to the Council?

To qualify as a candidate you must satisfy the following criteria on nomination day and polling day –

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a British citizen, a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union.

A candidate must also meet at least one of the following four qualifications on nomination day and polling day:–

- Be registered as a local government elector for the Council; or
- Have been an owner or tenant of any land or premises in the Council's area; or
- Their main or only place of work has been in the Council's area; or
- Have lived in the Council's area for the last 12 months.

## Who may not stand for election to the Council?

A person is disqualified from being a member of or a candidate for a local authority on various grounds, which include holding a paid office or employment under the Council, bankruptcy, composition or arrangement with creditors or having been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (during the five years before election day). (An elected Member would be disqualified from being a Councillor for these reasons and for failure to attend a meeting throughout a period of six consecutive months unless failure was due to some reason approved by the Council before the expiry of that period.)