



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 18 NOVEMBER 2020**

**SUBJECT: ELECTED MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to consider and approve the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers)

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy (Appendix 1) and encourages all members to engage with developing their personal development plan and to continue to optimise their uptake of development and training opportunities.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Best Value Report in 2012 identified that the Council needed to continue to build on the improvements in leadership and culture by: *'Maintaining progress of leadership development and Member development programme, specifically by improving elected member training and take up of opportunity'*. In response, the Council undertook to provide opportunities for all Elected Members to undertake a personal development meeting and encouraged members to improve their uptake of learning and development activities. Since then, information has been gathered and reported upon to provide assurance on the activities on offer and member participation.

- 3.2 There is now an established programme of member development within the Council beginning with induction for all new and returning elected members following each local government election and continuing through a range of structured learning and development opportunities, conferences and service briefings provided by Council officers, external providers and through attendance at events. In response to demands on members, development has been condensed to shorter sessions where possible and provided at a time convenient to the majority, which has assisted in securing attendance. Members attend at their individual discretion based on learning needs, the relevance of the activity and availability of Councillors' time. Participation levels have been positive across the programme of activities.
- 3.3 Support has also been provided to members by the Organisational Development team to prepare personal development plans with information relating to development activity recorded by Members' support to assist in maintaining personal development logs.
- 3.4 The 2020 Best Value report found that the council provides training and support for elected members, including a comprehensive 100 day induction in 2017, and is developing a more comprehensive learning and development strategy and framework, although the formal approval had been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The report also found that elected members were generally happy with the training provided and that they can contact officers for information and support as required.
- 3.5 The Best Value report recommended that the planned elected member development strategy should be implemented through programmed activity and personal development plans.
- 3.6 **Appendix 1** sets out the proposed Learning and Development Strategy for Elected Members. The strategy provides a clear leadership commitment to ongoing member development. It continues to build on experience and commitment to date by establishing a competency framework for elected members, linked to the role of a councillor and based on the national competency framework from the Improvement Service. The aim is to create a strong and consistent foundation against which members can consider their individual development requirements and the options to address these.
- 3.7 It is proposed to implement the Strategy through a programme of planned activity and review of personal development plans to support the strategic and corporate roles of members. This will be supported by the Organisational Development team as required. As part of the Council's Best Value action plan an outcome measure has been established of 75% of (relevant) members attending organised training and development activities. The Committee is asked to support this objective by encouraging all members to engage with developing their personal development plan and continuing to optimise their uptake of development and training opportunities.

3.8 The planned next steps of implementing the Strategy if it is approved are:

- Undertake a diagnostic activity with members using the CPD elected members behavioural framework;
- Progress work on political leadership, strategic decision making and continuing to build trust and relationships through workshop activity;
- Offer and arrange individual personal development meetings with OD Advisor to capture plans and establish the outstanding need particularly aligned to corporate priorities and competency framework to scope and identify appropriate development opportunities.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy supports the Council in achieving the aims set out in the 10 year plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

None

(c) Financial implications

Any costs associated with learning and development for Elected Members' will be contained within the budget.

(d) Risk Implications

It should be noted that participation in activity and proper recording outcomes is all at the discretion of the individual Councillors. Should development activity be inadequate this has implications for both individuals and collective competence and the leadership of the Council.

(e) Staffing Implications

No additional resources are anticipated.

(f) Property

None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

None.

(h) Consultations

The Corporate Management Team and Group Leaders were consulted on the development of the proposed Strategy in late 2019 and were supportive.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Council has well established arrangements in place for elected members' development, including induction and there is good participation in these activities. The Elected Members strategy (Appendix 1) builds on this by providing a framework for Elected members to develop a learning plan and development opportunities linked to Council priorities, nationally established competency framework, Elected Members' role and individual learning needs.**
- 5.2 The implementation of the strategy will be progressed through diagnostic activity and personal development plans to help inform the scope and nature of the future development programme for elected members.**

Author of Report: Karen Sinclair/Denise Whitworth
Background Papers:
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