
Overview

The success of local democracy depends greatly on the knowledge and skills of elected members. Elected members' roles and responsibilities are changing now, and are likely to continue to change in the future. New systems and techniques – such as information technology – are also impinging on the work of councillors. All of this places a responsibility on local authorities to assist elected members to continue to develop in their increasingly demanding roles.

Target Group

This unit is appropriate to the work of local government staff working, for example, in Committee Services, Democratic Services, Scrutiny or other departments that have an important role in assisting the local authority to achieve the most effective and appropriate democratic and decision making processes.

SFJB39

Assist the development of elected members

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 Ensure you have a clear brief on:
 - P1.1 elected members' development needs
 - P1.2 the information, guidance and support they require
 - P1.3 the way in which you should provide information, guidance and support
 - P1.4 the times and places that you can provide information, guidance and support
- P2 identify whether the information, guidance and support you provide:
 - P2.1 meets their requirements
 - P2.2 is accurate and up-to-date
 - P2.3 is presented in a style appropriate to them and at an appropriate time and place
- P3 check elected members' understanding of the information, guidance and support you have provided and clarify any necessary points, where necessary varying the style and materials you have used
- P4 support elected members' work and provide any further information, guidance, or reinforcement they may require
- P5 collect feedback from elected members on the information, guidance and support you have provided and use this feedback to improve your future practice

SFJB39

Assist the development of elected members

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the differing roles and responsibilities of elected members, for example: committee members, cabinet and executive members, overview and scrutiny members, chairs and other roles
- K2 why it is important to understand individual learning styles
- K3 the importance of treating elected members on an individual basis
- K4 methods of collecting information on members' development needs and learning styles
- K5 how to identify and access existing development resources that may be appropriate to members' development needs
- K6 the different ways in which development resources can be presented and how to select ones that are appropriate to your elected members
- K7 how to evaluate the effectiveness of the information, guidance and support and why this is important
- K8 how to design and deliver development activities for elected members
- K9 how to assess the kind of style to adopt when providing development opportunities for members
- K10 the importance of giving learners the opportunity to practise the skills they have learned and consider how they can put them into practice during their work
- K11 why it is important for learners to reflect on what they have learned
- K12 the importance of evaluating your own development activities and improving future practice

SFJB39

Assist the development of elected members

Additional Information

This unit covers the following types of elected members development needs:

**Scope/range
related to
performance
criteria**

- 1 induction to the role
- 2 to prepare for a new role in the council
- 3 to increase knowledge in a particular area of responsibility
- 4 to use new technology
- 5 to use new procedures and systems

SFJB39

Assist the development of elected members

Behaviours

You must show that you work in the following way

- 1 you demonstrate political neutrality
- 2 you model behaviour that shows respect, helpfulness and co-operation
- 3 you identify people's preferred communication media and styles and adopt media and styles appropriate to different people and situations
- 4 you present information clearly, concisely, accurately and in ways that promote understanding
- 5 you analyse and structure information to develop knowledge that can be shared
- 6 you show sensitivity to internal and external politics that impact on your area of work
- 7 you encourage and support others to make the best of their abilities
- 8 you give feedback to others to help them improve their performance

SFJB39

Assist the development of elected members



Links to other NOS

- 1 B22 Research, analyse and report information
- 2 C15 Carry out your responsibilities at work
- 3 C21 Establish and maintain effective working relationships in local government
- 4 C31 Contribute to the implementation of local government legislation, regulations and procedures

SFJB39

Assist the development of elected members

Developed by	Skills for Justice
Version number	2
Date approved	January 2012
Indicative review date	December 2016
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating organisation	Skills for Justice
Original URN	SFJB39
Relevant occupations	Business, Administration and Law; Government and Related Organisations; Secretarial and Related Occupations; Public Service and Other Associate Professionals
Suite	Democratic Services
Key words	development needs; guidance; information