
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 elected members in their development.

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Support the development of elected members

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 ensure you have up-to-date information on the current and future roles and responsibilities of elected members
- P2 provide elected members with the support they need to identify their development needs
- P3 obtain agreement with elected members on their development needs, priorities and preferred learning styles
- P4 develop an agreed development programme that:
 - P4.1 addresses the individual and collective needs of elected members
 - P4.2 contains learning activities and resources that are appropriate to elected members
 - P4.3 provides opportunities for elected members to apply what they have learned to their roles and responsibilities
- P5 check that those involved in implementing the development programme:
 - P5.1 have the skills and knowledge needed to deliver the programme
 - P5.2 receive adequate briefing and ongoing support to deliver the programme
- P6 ensure there is ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the development programme
- P7 collect feedback from elected members on the information, guidance and support you have provided and use this feedback to improve your future practice

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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 programmes for elected members
- K9 how to select people and other resources to deliver a member development programme
- K10 how to assess the kind of style to adopt when providing development opportunities for members
- K11 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
- K12 why it is important for learners to reflect on what they have learned
- K13 the importance of evaluating your own development activities and improving future practice

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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 perform an existing role
- 3 to prepare for a new role in the council
- 4 to increase knowledge in a particular area of responsibility
- 5 to use new technology
- 6 to use new procedures and systems

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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

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Links to other NOS

- 1 A51 Take effective decisions
- 2 C11 Manage your own resources and professional development
- 3 C22 Maintain and develop effective working practices in local government
- 4 C32 Facilitate the implementation of local government legislation, regulations and procedures

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