

West Midlands Charter for Elected Member Development

Supporting continuing professional
development for councillors

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a patterned top, is sitting at a desk with a laptop. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background is a blurred office setting with large windows. The overall image has a blue tint.

Charter for Elected Member Development

How effective is your member development?

We believe that at the heart of any council dedicated to meeting the needs of its community there will also be a commitment to the development of its Councillors. This core principle underpins the Member Development Charter.

Using an established framework, councils undertake a self-assessment to review their good practice supporting and developing councillors to fulfil the vital role they play working with and supporting local communities. Each council will have its own approach to developing councillors, with some having a long tradition of providing excellent development opportunities, and others just starting.

Irrespective of the starting point, councils can sign up by giving their commitment to the principles contained within the Charter. There is no time limit between declaration and assessment. While some councils may be ready now, others may need time to put the elements in place.

To start the accreditation process, councils sign a declaration to show their commitment to the principles of the Charter and using the charter framework, build a portfolio to practically demonstrate their commitment and that they have met all the requirements. This is followed by an external assessment before being awarded the charter.

Benefits

The following benefits have been reported by councils through the regional local government organisations which assess and award the Charter.

Processes and Strategies

- Concise and clear guidance on how to achieve the charter without being too onerous or overly bureaucratic.
- Flexible and focuses positively and supportively on councils already have in place – a local approach to a national framework.
- Helps councils decide what to prioritise and improve.
- Councillor development needs are better understood and supported.
- Demonstrates the value placed on councillors carrying out their important and complex role.
- Helps set aside time to reflect and celebrate the good practice already happening.

Impact on Councillors

- The quality of councillor development is improved.
- New councillors are better prepared for their roles and responsibilities.
- Councillor progression is better enabled.
- Helps ensure councillors can operate at their most knowledgeable, skilled and effective.
- Increases councillors' competence and confidence.
- Helps councillors navigate the ever more complex and demanding role and local government landscape.
- Self-care and reflection for councillors through development and growth.

Impact on All Partners

- Strengthens member-officer relationships.
- Helps ensure effective top team political and managerial leadership.
- Encourages robust and accountable decision making.
- Helps ensure proactive succession planning.
- Helps improve councillor diversity Enhances democracy and participation.

What is required?

- ✓ The process will take on average 6-12 months, to suit the councils availability
- ✓ Councils will build a portfolio of processes
- ✓ Access to interactive Feedback and Discussion with the assesment team
- ✓ Complete the pre-assesment checks
- ✓ External assessment visit to your offices
- ✓ Confirmation of the award or recommendations to complete the award

Interested in learning more?

If you are interested in learning more, please get in touch to arrange a brief discussion at your convenience



Programme Costs

A breakdown of the activities has been included below. Costs are based on NWE carrying out all aspects of the support. The costs are per individual organisation accessing the Charter with an annual fee for accessing the online portal.

Level 1

Undertaking Charter for the first time

0.5 day presentation and introductory meeting - £700

Review of evidence and feedback - £1500

0.5 day assessment visit - £750 x 2 for each assessor

Report write-up and recommendations - £700

Charter award - £80

Total £4,480

Level 1

Undergoing reassessment

Review evidence and feedback - £1500

0.5 day assessment visit - £750 x 2

Report write-up and recommendations - £700

Charter award -£80

Total £3,780

Level 2

Delivered in collaboration with the University of Manchester

Higher standard

0.5 day presentation/meeting - £700

Review evidence and feedback - £1500

Site visit – focus groups/interviews - £700 x 2

0.5 day assessment feedback - £700 x 2

Charter award - £80

Total £5,180

Contribution to annual licence fee cost for access to online portal to capture evidence

Total £750



Delivered in partnership with North West Employers

Further information

E: info@wmemployers.org.uk T: 0121 281 3558

W: www.wmemployers.org.uk