



## **COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

To promote the purpose and importance of councillor development and ensure buy-in from all levels of councillors and officers.

- promote a positive and inclusive culture of learning, development, and continual improvement.
- ensure the needs of councillors are understood.
- provide high quality training and learning through needs assessment, reviews, and evaluations.
- provide an engaging programme of learning and development to ensure councillors can be effective and confident in their role.
- strengthen councillor-officer relationships.
- enhance democracy, participation, and councillor diversity.
- celebrate achievements and impact.

### **Councillor development checklist**

#### **Aims and purpose of the strategy.**

- Values and vision of the council and the integral role councillors play in achieving these.
- Importance of councillor development and continual improvement.
- Inclusion of senior buy-in, for example, council leader and group leaders, and chief executive write and sign the introduction, are quoted on the importance of councillor learning and development, or share the impact of their own learning experiences.
- Important context such as recent elections, challenges facing wider local government, or the latest milestones achieved for the councillor development strategy.
- Priority development needs and how these link to council objectives, as well as horizon-scanning and anticipating future needs.
- Accessibility underpinning the strategy – ensuring equal access (for example, reasonable adjustments, timings of training sessions, and different learning styles) and support for councillors at every stage of their journey and tenure.
- Signposting to all relevant strategies, policies, plans and programmes – can be appended in a pack or linked to electronically.

## **Mechanisms to drive, review and deliver councillor development.**

- Set out who is involved in councillor development, for example, a cross-party councillor development group, councillor task and finish groups, champions – and signpost to the remits and roles of each.
- Detail how needs are identified and reviewed (for example, training needs analysis, personal development plans (PDPs), and learning styles analysis), decision-making processes related to councillor development, and methods of evaluation.
- Risk management process, and the flexibility and resilience to adapt the offer in response to challenging times or disruption to business as usual.
- Importance of sharing learning between councillors and officers at the council, and with other local partners on a place-based approach.

## **The councillor development offer and programme**

- Set out the full learning and development support package available for councillors.
- Note that there is support for councillors at every stage of their journey and tenure – promoting the role and democratic participation with the Be a Councillor campaign, right through to being a senior member of the council.
- Include the programme of mandatory and non-mandatory training, seminars, and briefings; induction programme; personal needs discussions for reasonable adjustments; personal development plans; courses run by the council, regionally or external providers such as the LGA; mentoring and coaching; one on one support available from specific officers such as councillor services or directors.
- Include the other resources available, for example on the council intranet (for example, councillor role profiles); video tutorials (for example, IT or casework); e-learning; service area specific resources; wellbeing and personal safety support.
- Signpost to the induction package.
- Checking in with new councillors four to six months after election to ensure needs have been met and set up PDPs.

## **Include throughout.**

- Named officers and councillors involved.
- Case studies and quotes to bring the strategy to life and demonstrate the benefits and impact.