

## **Discussion Paper on Member Development Accreditation**

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### **Introduction**

This paper has been prepared following discussion at Member Development Panel in February 2009 on Member development accreditation.

### **Scope**

To research what accredited programmes exist to support elected members in their development so they can carry out the duties effectively, achieve their full potential and support their continuous professional development (CPD).

### **Research Method**

The primary research source is report by North West Regional Employers, on Accredited and Non-Accredited Development Programmes for Members, obtained from London Councils. The report is a snapshot of what is offered to Members across the country.

NB\* No further research material has been sourced for the purpose of this discussion paper.

### **Options - There are 3 clear options available to Harrow**

1. To seek accreditation of our in- house member development programme. The best time for this would be post Member Charter assessment – we should seek to benchmark our programme with other accredited programmes before we apply for accreditation e.g. Halton Borough Council - ILM Accredited.
2. To provide opportunities for individual members to undertake elements of their development through accredited programmes at NVQ Level 3 & 4 or postgraduate qualifications. This options enables members to gain 'credits' and achieve a transferable recognised qualification.
3. To do both of the above -

### **Findings**

The report confirms that council's are offering is a combination of development opportunities and programmes for elected members. These include:

- In-house developed programmes which may or may not be accredited or endorsed by awarding bodies

- Postgraduate and undergraduate qualifications developed and supported by academic institutions,
- National Vocational Qualifications(NVQ) at Levels 3 & 4
- Regional and national non- accredited workshops developed and delivered by Local Government development bodies e.g. London Councils, IDeA Leadership Academy.

Almost all accredited programmes and qualifications have been recently developed therefore there is little or no evaluation data available to confirm impact and success of these programmes.

### **Considerations**

Member learning needs, abilities and career ambitions differ significantly. Therefore we need to consider providing a range of development options to take account of vocational and academic routes and member time/availability.

Indicative costs for accredited and non-accredited development activities are provided in appendix I; they range from £330 per NVQ module (we may be able to access Train to Gain funding through the council's Learning 4 programme to support this option) upto £3000 for postgraduate programmes. Consideration will need to be given to how many places can be offered/supported and to what extent these can be funded in whole or part by the Member Development budget.

### **Recommended Member Development Hierarchy**

The following diagram seeks to illustrate a development hierarchy for member development at Harrow, and incorporates the existing offering for members. Further research will be required in order to investigate specific options requested by Member Development Panel. This will need to cover programme content and selection process.

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## Harrow Hierarchy of Development for Members

