



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

**ELECTED MEMBER
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

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Introduction

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is committed to providing high quality development to its Elected Members. The Elected Member Training and Development Strategy ensures that every Member has access to the learning and development they need to effectively fulfil their roles, now and in the future. It is recognised that the role of Elected Members is becoming ever more challenging, and this strategy underpins the development available to Members to help them to act reasonably, lawfully and proportionately in their role representing residents and supporting communities.

The Elected Member Training and Development Strategy provides information on the support mechanisms that Comhairle nan Eilean Siar offers its Elected Members. The Strategy covers the development path Elected Members can engage with, from induction for newly Elected Members to continual professional development throughout the term of office.

The Elected Member Training and Development Strategy aims to enable Elected Members to update and enhance their knowledge, skills, capacity and capabilities to deliver Best Value and perform their leadership roles.

Expectations of the Elected Member Development and Training Strategy

- Promote the purpose and importance of Member development
- Ensure that every Member has access to the learning and development they need to fulfil their role and support their communities
- Outline the roles and responsibilities of Members in relation to Personal Development
- Outline the roles and responsibilities of Chief Officers in the provision of Member Development
- Ensure the needs of the Members are understood
- Strengthen Member/Officer relationships
- Enhance democracy, participation and Member diversity

Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Officer, Law and Governance

The Chief Officer, Law and Governance, supported by the Governance and Elections Team and Members Services, will produce the Elected Members Development Programme, review and evaluate the Programme and record all Elected Member training and development activities.

Political Leaders

Political group leaders should encourage all members from within their group to participate in the learning and development programme and actively support its members in doing so.

Chief Officers and Departments

All departments within the Comhairle are responsible for identifying and delivering service specific training to Elected Members. This can be delivered in different forms and examples of services informing Members include:

- Formal group training for all Members incorporated into the Induction Programme
- Delivering ad-hoc topic specific workshops/seminars to Elected Members
- Attending Committees to inform Members about specific topics
- Circulating regular updates to Elected Members

Elected Members

All Elected Members have a personal responsibility to develop and maintain their knowledge and skills that are necessary for them to perform their role effectively.

Elected Members are responsible for:

- identifying their own development needs
- Seeking opportunities to improve their effectiveness and increase their potential
- Completing/attending arranged learning and development opportunities
- Sharing their knowledge and skills with others

Support for Elected Members

Pre-Election Candidate Briefing Session

Prior to the Local Government Election briefing sessions will be held for potential candidates. The session will cover the essential processes and expectations of the election as well as an overview from the Governance and Elections Manager on the expectations and commitment required to be a Councillor. The briefing session will also be available through the Comhairle's website.

Post-Election Induction Programme

Prior to the Local Government Election, the Governance and Election Team will review a draft Induction Programme for all members to participate in following their election to the Comhairle. The induction programme will include mandatory and non-mandatory training required to support Elected Members in their role, along with less formal information sharing sessions.

Corporate Management Team will provide Members with an overview of the Comhairle and the services provided.

Outside Bodies

All Elected Members that are appointed to outside bodies are provided with contact information and, where available, provided with the induction pack for the relevant outside body.

Elected Members appointed to the Western Isles Integration Joint Board (IJB) will receive induction training prior to commencing their appointment. Induction materials are available on the IJB website.

Personal Development Review and Training Needs Assessment

Annual Reviews of the development programme and Personal Development Reviews will be conducted by the Governance and Elections/ Members Services Teams throughout the term of office to assess its effectiveness.

Ongoing Development and Training Sessions

In addition to mandatory training and development, Elected Members will be invited to a broad range of information and development sessions throughout their term of office. The expectation is that Members continue to develop, not only through on-job activity, but also by attending development sessions and through e-learning on the Comhairle's LearnPro platform. Members are also actively encouraged to bring forward ideas and suggestions for these sessions for discussion and consideration.

Regular and detailed updates are circulated to Elected Members by the Chief Executive.

Development and Training Sessions

For governance and regulatory reasons, certain training is mandatory for all Elected Members to complete. This includes:

- Members Induction Training
- Planning Training
- Harbour Board Training
- Licensing Board Training
- Equalities
- Data Protection
- IT Security

E-Learning

LearnPro

E-learning courses are made available through LearnPro, the Comhairle's online learning platform. Course completion rates will be monitored to ensure that mandatory training is being completed.

External Training

The Improvement Service (IS)

The Improvement Service which was established in 2005 as the national improvement organisation for Local Government in Scotland, was set up to deliver improvement support to help councils provide effective community leadership, strong local governance and deliver high-quality and effective local services.

The Improvement Service works with councils and other partners to provide high-quality and cost-effective training and development opportunities for Elected Members.

Further information can be found at [Improvement Service | Improvement Service](#).

Standards Commission

The Standards Commission is an independent public body responsible for encouraging high standards in public life in Scotland. The Standards Commission issues Guidance to assist councillors and members of devolved public bodies to interpret the provisions of the Councillors' and Model Codes of Conduct.

The role of the Standards Commission is to:

- Promote the Codes of Conduct covering the behaviour of councillors and those appointed to the boards of devolved public bodies.
- Issue guidance to councils and devolved public bodies on how the Codes should be interpreted; and
- Adjudicate on alleged breaches of the Codes of Conduct, and where a breach is found, to apply a sanction.

[Home | The Standards Commission for Scotland](#)

COSLA

Each week COSLA compiles key strategic updates for Elected Members in Scotland.

[COSLA | COSLA](#)

External Training opportunities are also made available to Elected Members by circulating links to any relevant online external training courses or materials.

Members Workshops/Seminars

Seminars are subject matter sessions which are provided to give Members information about important issues that the Comhairle is currently dealing with or is preparing for in the future. Seminars are usually requested by Comhairle Service Areas and are run by those services.

Remote Attendance/Meeting Recordings

The Comhairle has provided Elected Members with suitable IT equipment to enable Elected Members to attend and participate in meetings remotely if they are unable to attend in person.

Comhairle meetings are recorded and uploaded to the Comhairle's YouTube channel to allow anytime access to all Comhairle meetings. Therefore, the public and Elected Members have the ability to revisit the recording of meetings to keep up with topical issues discussed at committee.

Recording Activities

The Governance and Elections Team/ Members Services will record attendance at training activities, Committees, Sub-Committees, Boards, Member Officer Working Groups, Workshops and Seminars for all its Elected Members. Completion of LearnPro courses will also be monitored for all Elected Members. This ensures that Members can review their training and development activities.