



CASE STUDY: Bracknell Forest Borough Council



At a glance

- Charter Commitment - October 2004
- Cross-party member steering group led the process
- 12 month action plan in place based on self-assessment
- Member development strategy agreed by all members of the Council
- Key initiatives implemented including a new induction process and personal development plans
- Learning and development plan and activities regularly monitored and evaluated by members and senior officers
- Charter Awarded - April 2006

Benefits for Councillors:



“The Charter Process has enabled us to build on our strong tradition of providing Members with appropriate learning and development opportunities”

Ann Moore
Head of Democratic and
Registration Services
(Charter lead officer)

- Developing a varied and challenging four year learning and development programme allows Members to develop at their own pace and to access a variety of learning styles.
- The introduction of personal development plans means that all members have an opportunity to identify their own learning needs and styles with officer support, and also to influence the choice of development opportunities and the way they are delivered.
- Following the elections in May 2007 we introduced a new induction programme, strongly led by the Member Steering Group, which supported our new members in understanding how the Council works and their role in the democratic process. Returning members were also invited to participate, providing support and sharing their experience with the new members.

Benefits for the Council

- Commitment to the Charter has helped us to strengthen and improve our arrangements for member development and training with the aid of additional advice and robust external assessment.
- We are now better able to design and deliver a programme that enables members to contribute effectively to delivering the Council's ambitious plans for the community.
- Charter status has supported the Council in the recent CPA inspection, for example by demonstrating the effective use of capacity.



“Our commitment to the Charter means that we are developing elected members who are well placed to deliver our objectives and to improve services to the community, with a good understanding of changing needs and priorities and the ability to respond to our diverse communities.”

Timothy Wheadon
Chief Executive

Benefits for Communities



“At a time when the pace of change in local government seems unrelenting it is important that elected members are given the best possible support within the resources at their disposal to enable them to be effective champions for the community.”

Paul Bettison
Council Leader

- Supporting this initiative represents a sound public investment in raising the standard of our member development arrangements
- Charter status supports us in continuing to develop a culture that promotes work life balance and encourages wider community engagement in the democratic process.
- The commitment and drive of the Member Steering Group to continuously improve member learning and development and to determine development priorities is impressive and the Council welcomes the opportunities Charter status gives to contribute directly to raising standards in other authorities.

Who can I contact?

If you want to talk about the challenges and benefits of the Charter programme, please get in touch with us:

Contact name: Ann Moore
Telephone: 01344 352260
Email: ann.moore@bracknell-forest.gov.uk