

### At a glance

- St Edmundsbury first made a commitment to working towards Charter status in 2005, and was one of the first councils in the East of England to attain Charter status, in March 2007. Re-commitment was made by full Council in February 2010.
- The process was led by the Council's Democratic Renewal Working Party.
- As part of the re-commitment process, the Council's Member Development Policy was refreshed and circulated to Members and officers.
- Key initiatives implemented included an extensive post-election induction process of 11 sessions within the first three months, with a total of 24 sessions planned before the end of this election year.
- Charter re-awarded – October 2011

### Benefits for Councillors:



"Member development helps participating members to add value to all their work as councillors."

**Councillor Dave Ray**  
**(Portfolio Holder for**  
**Organisational Development)**

- A more extensive range of development activities, in particular induction activities during this election year, which has been invaluable to new Councillors in particular.
- Members attending external conferences and courses are now asked to report back and "share the learning" with other Members.
- Highest-ever response to our annual Training Needs analysis means that training is tailored to the needs of all Members of the Council
- All training activity is now co-ordinated through a cross-party Members' Working Party, which also closely monitors the budget for development activity.

## Benefits for the Council

- Each development activity is now clearly linked to the Council's corporate priorities, and national/local priorities.
- Charter status does not just lead to improvement in the development of Members, but in whole Council improvement.
- Our revised Member Development Policy clearly outlines the Council's commitment to developing its Members, and to continue to do this to Charter level.
- The increased role of the Democratic Renewal Working Party ensures that all sessions are planned by Members, based on analysis of their own assessment of their needs, and monitored for effectiveness at every meeting, hence ensuring a Member lead on every aspect of their own development.



"Having a well-trained team of Councillors who eagerly participate in development activities has been of great benefit in developing a true Member/officer team."

**Geoff Rivers, Chief Executive**

## Benefits for Communities



"If Councillors fully participate in development activities, this can only result in making us more effective in working with our communities."

**Councillor J Thorndyke**  
**Ward Member for Stanton**

- The public can rest assured that those who represent them have access to all the training they need to assist them in effectively carrying out their role as community leaders.
- An intensive induction programme means that Councillors get the essential information and training they need at as early a stage as possible.
- During the Charter assessment process, assessors were impressed with the work being undertaken to promote local democracy, particularly with young people.

## Who can I contact?

For information about St Edmundsbury's experiences in gaining Charter status, please contact Adriana Stapleton, telephone 01284 757613, email [adriana.stapleton@stedsbc.gov.uk](mailto:adriana.stapleton@stedsbc.gov.uk).