

Press Release

PR 1319

27 February 2007

For Immediate Release

National award for councillor support

East Sussex is the first County Council in the South East to win an award for the way it supports and helps to develop its councillors.

Following an external assessment, the Council has been awarded the 'Charter for Member Development' by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and South East Employers.

Much of the work to gain the award was carried out by a training and development group made up of county councillors. Support includes:

- A full induction programme for newly-elected councillors
- Ongoing training for councillors in all aspects of council business
- Personal skills development such as effective communication
- Meeting and 'chairing' skills

The programme is regularly updated with all councillors being consulted on its content so that it incorporates their needs. The support scheme also provides regular updates on changes to Council business and Government legislation.

The Council's members' training and development group was officially presented with the Charter at a recent County Council meeting by the Chairman of the County Council, John Barnes. Councillor Michael Tunwell also attended the presentation on behalf of South East Employers.

- 1 -

Chairman John Barnes said: "I was delighted to present the charter to the councillors concerned. They have steered development activities over a number of years and it is good to see their work recognised by this important accolade. The Council wants to encourage people from all sections of the community to participate in the democratic process and so a support scheme like this is extremely valuable. I know that many East Sussex county councillors are benefiting from this programme."

Notes for editors

The member development group is chaired by Eastbourne councillor David Elkin and also includes Hailsham and Herstmonceux councillor Bill Bentley, Newhaven councillor David Rogers and Hastings councillor Trevor Webb.

For further information please contact Martin Fitzgerald on Lewes (01273) 481691.