

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Member Development

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Authority's Member Development arrangements provide opportunities to further support Members in their fundamental role in shaping and delivering fire and rescue services across the area covered by the Authority.
- 1.2 It is a personalised opportunity for individual Members to raise any specific areas of clarity; additional support; or thoughts about strengthening the workings of the Authority.
- 1.3 The arrangements are complementary to Member roles in respective local Authorities and will be both an individual and collective experience.
- 1.4 Where appropriate, development will be individually targeted to Members who have so requested, but where it is beneficial to do so, these needs may influence the content of wider seminars or training events.

2 Member Induction

- 2.1 All new Members to the Authority will be offered core induction development specific to their role. Thereafter induction is tailored according to the committees and groups on which they serve. The induction will include the following:
 - Duties under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004
 - Composition, powers and duties of committees
 - Standing Orders, procurement rules, financial regulations & delegations
 - Member/Officer protocol
 - Code of conduct

3 Member development meetings

- 3.1 Every two years all Members should attend a development meeting, held on an individual basis.
- 3.2 Member development meetings are not aligned to any form of appraisal or performance process and is not a test.
- 3.3 Member development meetings are an informal conversation, providing an opportunity for Members to meet individually and in confidence, with the Members Group Leader or the Chair and a representative of the Strategic Leadership Team to raise any issues of concern; areas where further clarity might be discussed; or areas of personal development.

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- 3.4 The conversation at the meeting may be framed by questions aligned to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFRA) Good Governance Standard for Public Services, which the Authority has agreed to follow.
- 3.5 Typical questions to help guide the informal conversation might include:
Are there specific areas where you would like to provide more information; or have better support; or an improved approach towards:
- *what the Service is trying to achieve or the values that it has adopted*
 - *the workings of the Authority or role and responsibilities of Members and Senior Officers*
 - *the code of conduct and the Member/Officer protocol*
 - *the sufficiency of information provided to enable Members to make informed decisions and manage risk*
 - *the effectiveness of communications with Members and with the public*
 - *support in partnership working*
 - *the value of seminars and learning events provided and suggestions for future seminars*
 - *any other particular areas of frustration or improvement to support your role*
 - *any personal development ambitions*
- 3.6 In order to capture the key points and actions, a brief note will be agreed with each Member and kept confidential. This note will be used to reflect development needs and ensure progress has been made for addressing these needs.
- 3.7 The Head of Democratic Services & Corporate Assurance will develop a consolidated action plan and seminar schedule that seeks to address common themes, which will be formally discussed at the Finance & Governance Committee. In this way a more efficient process of Authority wide learning may take place.

4 Additional Member Development Opportunities

- 4.1 From time to time Members are encouraged to attend and observe the other committees and working groups that ordinarily they are not members of.
- 4.2 ***Specific training or awareness***
- 4.2.1 Committee Chairs will consider the development needs of new and existing Members and, where appropriate, hold specific training events for the committees for which they are responsible to steer, providing Members with training specific to their role.

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4.2.2 These events will be put on by the Service or their constituent Authorities through external meetings, seminar and conference attendance. In some cases this is a requirement of the Authority (e.g. Appeals) and in other cases, is a demonstration of good governance.

4.3 **Workplace contact – Member Champions/Buddies**

4.3.1 Members are aligned to Service workplaces and/or one of the Service's Priorities to act as advocates within these areas.

4.3.2 Members are invited to visit staff to understand key aspects of the Service. These visits allow introductions and relationships to be established with the officers responsible for specific workplaces

4.3.3 Where role appropriate conferences/seminars are identified, Members can request attendance via the Democratic Service Officer who, in consultation with the Chair will confirm approval.

4.4 **Seminars and workshops**

4.4.1 In certain circumstances, it is necessary to include items of specific interest within the annual seminar schedule. These may be in response to changing pressures or expectations and can include:

- National policy changes specific to public services
- Local issues associated to key partners
- Legislative change specifically aimed at the Fire and Rescue Service
- Awareness raising of key consultation issues
- Emerging issues identified within the strategic assessment

4.4.2 Where appropriate, relevant partners are invited and encouraged to attend development seminars to both learn from and contribute to the discussions.

5 **Training and Development records**

5.1 The Service's Democratic Services Officer will capture, and hold centrally, a record of training and development undertaken individually for each Member of the Authority.