

Report of Elected Member Development Steering Group of Mid Ulster District Council held on 19 October 2023 at 7.30pm

**Attendees Members:** Councillors McLernon, Johnston, Corry and Carney

**Officers:** J McGuckin, HoSSE E Forde, Committee & Member Services Manager, S McAleer Corporate L&D Manager

<b>AGENDA</b>	<b>MATTERS AGREED</b>	<b>ACTIONS &amp; RESPONSIBILITY</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	
	Councillors Mallaghan, Groogan	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Nomination of Chair</b>	
	Deferred until full Working Group Members was appointed.	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Time/Frequency of Future Meetings</b>	
	<b>Noted:</b> Meetings: minimum of four per annum Time: 5.30pm Location: Cookstown & Hybrid	<b>HoSSE &amp; CMSM</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Update to Terms of Reference</b>	
	<b>Noted:</b> Updates to Terms of Reference as outlined in appendix A to be agreed when full Working Group is appointed.	<b>HoSSE &amp; CMSM</b>

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Update on Current Charter Status</b>	
	<b>NOTED:</b> that Charter Status would be due to be reassessed	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Councillor Development Charter: Charter &amp; Charter Plus</b>	
	<p><b>AGREED:</b> that officers explore Charter Plus to be considered at a future meeting. Considerations to include cost, officer and Member commitment.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Northern Ireland Local Government Association now complete the Charter Assessments and Reviews. To read on what all is involved see <a href="#">Charter for Councillor Development   NILGA</a> .</p>	<b>HoSSE &amp; CMSM</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Training Needs Analysis</b>	
	<p><b>NOTED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The Training Needs Analysis which is a requirement of Charter Plus linked to the Local Government Political Skills Framework. Appendix B</li> <li>(ii) That over 50% member participation in Training Needs Analysis is required from across the Council.</li> <li>(iii) Members preference for either in person or online training and E Learning to be re-offered as an option for training;</li> <li>(iv) Profile of Training to Date and Councillor Service Experience Profile. Appendix C</li> </ul>	
<b>8.0</b>		
<b>Meeting concluded at 6.05 pm</b>		



## **Elected Member Development Charter Steering Group**

### **Terms of Reference**

The Elected Member Steering Group has been established to progress the following:

- Achievement of Elected Member Development Charter, and make regular progress reports to the Policy and Resources Committee.
- Responsible for Member Development and to develop a policy and the amount of entitlement for development of each Member over the Council term.

### **Objectives of the Steering Group**

1. To establish priorities for the Learning and Development of Members, linked to the Council's Corporate Plan.
2. To maintain and encourage commitment to the continuous learning and development of all Members and acknowledge the pivotal role which Member Learning and Development plays in the effective operation of Council business.
3. To ensure that Member Learning and Development is Member led.
4. To ensure and promote accessibility for all Members to Learning and Development opportunities.
5. To approve the annual and subsequent amendments to the Elected Member Continuous Professional Development Strategy and Implementation Plan.
6. To assess and approve the application of the Member Learning and Development Policy.
7. To review the effectiveness of Member Learning and Development to identify positive impact.
8. To provide updates to Council and raise pertinent issues on learning and development matters.
9. To strive for best practice and be a leading Council in the area of Member Learning and Development.
10. To ensure effective utilisation of available budget.
11. To demonstrate continuous improvement.

### **Frequency of meetings**

The Group will meet a minimum of four times per year.

## **Membership**

Councillors Bell (SF), Carney (SF), Corry (SF), Groogan (SF), Mallaghan (SF), McLernon (SF), Johnston (SDLP), \_\_\_\_\_(DUP), \_\_\_\_\_(DUP), \_\_\_\_\_ (DUP)

## **Quorum**

The Group will be quorate when at least 3 of the Elected Members are present.

## **Support to the Group**

Attending the meetings and supporting the group will be:-  
Head of Strategic Services & Engagement, Committee and Member Services Manager and Corporate Learning and Development Manager.

## **Location of Meetings**

The meetings will be held when possible at 5.30 pm in the evening in Cookstown with Hybrid option.

## **Reporting**

Notes from the Elected Member Development Group will be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **Deliverables**

- Elected Member Continuous Professional Development
- Elected Member Development Policy
- Elected Member Personal Development Plan
- Elected Member Learning and Development Needs Analysis

October 2023

**Member Personal Development Plan**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Time Served</b>	
<b>Positions of Responsibility held</b>	
<b>Are you likely to hold a position of Responsibility next year? If so please specify.</b>	

<b>Training Completed - Review Training Completed to Date</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Member's Training Record attached</b>	

<b>Preferred Learning Style</b>	<b>I prefer</b>	<b>I do not prefer</b>
<b>Group facilitated training.</b> Information provided by a trainer/facilitator via verbal information/hand-outs/slides		
<b>E Learning – On line Training</b>		
<b>Mentoring by another Councillor</b>		
<b>One to one training</b>		
<b>Practical training.</b> Learning by doing. Site visits and Demonstrations		
<b>External Seminars and Conferences</b>		
<b>Training provided by In House Officers</b>		

## When do you prefer development activities to be scheduled?

<b>Monday morning</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Monday afternoon</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Monday evening</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:
<b>Tuesday morning</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tuesday afternoon</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tuesday evening</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:
<b>Wednesday morning</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Wednesday afternoon</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Wednesday evening</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:
<b>Thursday morning</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Thursday afternoon</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Thursday evening</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:
<b>Friday morning</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Friday afternoon</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Friday evening</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:	Ideal Times:

## Assessment of Core Political Skills

The following assessment relates to the Local Government Association's Political Skills Framework, which sets out the key knowledge and skills needed to support new and experienced Councillors to ensure that they are fulfilling their role effectively.

For each skills area, please indicate the level which you believe accurately represents your current level of competency in that area; based on the following scale:

<b>1</b> My knowledge and skills are very minimal or non-existent	<b>2</b> I have a minimal level of knowledge and skills.	<b>3</b> I have a basic level of knowledge and skills	<b>4</b> I have an adequate level of knowledge and skills	<b>5</b> I am fully competent and confident in this skill and knowledge area
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**Local Leadership:** *The need for Councillors to engage with the members of the community to learn about issues of local concern and help to facilitate a vision for the locality. It involves encouraging trust and respect between individuals and groups by mediating fairly and constructively between different organisations and sections of the community.*

	Training Requirements		
	It is a priority that I undertake training to assist me in my role	I would like to undertake training to further enhance my skills	I am competent
I <b>engage with</b> the local community; I seek their views and look for ways to represent them effectively.			
I <b>keep up to date</b> with local concerns by talking to different groups of people, including 'hard to reach' groups.			
I encourage trust and respect by being <b>approachable, empathising</b> and finding new ways to engage with others.			
I <b>establish good working relationships</b> and partnerships with different groups and people and <b>ensure their involvement in decision making</b> .			
I <b>mediate</b> fairly and constructively between people and groups with conflicting needs.			
I work with others to <b>develop and champion a shared local vision</b> .			

### Comments

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**Partnership Working:** *The need to build on good relationships with others (i.e. colleagues, officers, community groups and other organisations) by identifying and working collaboratively to achieve shared goals. The need to recognise and value different contributions, delegate or provide support as required and to take a long term view in developing partnerships.*

	Level of Skills and Knowledge		
	It is a priority that I undertake training to assist me in my role	I would like to undertake training to further enhance my skills	I am competent
I <b>work proactively to build good relationships</b> with colleagues, officers, community groups and other organisations.			
I focus on <b>achieving shared goals</b> by maintaining focus and mobilising others.			
I know when to <b>delegate, provide support or empower others</b> to take responsibility.			
I can make people from all backgrounds feel <b>valued, trusted and included</b> .			
I understand and play a role in <b>building and shaping key partnerships</b> at local, regional and national Levels.			
I understand how and when to <b>assert authority to resolve conflict</b> or stalemate effectively.			

**Comments**

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**Effective Communication for Influence:** *This skill recognises the need for Councillors to demonstrate excellent communication skills across many different settings, including the ability to listen sensitively and use appropriate language with different groups. Councillors must also communicate regularly and effectively with all parts of their community using different forms of media.*

	Level of Skills and Knowledge		
	It is a priority that I undertake training to assist me in my role	I would like to undertake training to further enhance my skills	I am competent
I provide <b>regular feedback</b> to people, making sure they are kept informed and ensuring that expectations are realistic.			
I regularly <b>inform and communicate</b> with the community using all <b>available media</b> , such as internet, email, newsletters and social media.			
I <b>listen to others, check for understanding</b> and <b>adapt my own communication style</b> if required.			
I <b>create opportunities to communicate</b> with different sectors, including vulnerable and hard to reach groups.			
I <b>speak confidently</b> in public settings such as in Council meetings, community meetings and the press.			
I <b>communicate clearly in spoken and written forms</b> , using appropriate language and avoiding jargon.			

**Comments**

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**Political Understanding:** *This skill recognises the need for Councillors to develop a range of political skills in order to communicate their values, promote a political vision and encourage democratic process and public engagement. It recognises that Councillors need to work across group boundaries at times, yet still be able to maintain their own political integrity.*

	Level of Skills and Knowledge		
	It is a priority that I undertake training to assist me in my role	I would like to undertake training to further enhance my skills	I am competent
I <b>demonstrate consistency</b> in my views and values through my decisions and actions.			
I help to <b>develop cohesion</b> within and between different groups and between different groups and the Council.			
I <b>clearly communicate political values</b> through canvassing and campaigning.			
I actively <b>develop my own political intelligence</b> through an understanding of the local and national political landscape.			
I look for ways to <b>promote democracy and increase public engagement</b>			
I am able to <b>put aside party politics</b> and work across political boundaries when required, without compromising my political values.			

**Comments**

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**Scrutiny and Challenge:** *Scrutiny and challenge is an important day to day aspect of the Councillor role. Councillors need to act as a critical friend by identifying opportunities for scrutiny inside and outside of the Council and by providing constructive challenge and feedback to others. To be effective in this role, Councillors need to analyse information quickly and present arguments that are concise, meaningful and easily understood.*

	Level of Skills and Knowledge		
	It is a priority that I undertake training to assist me in my role	I would like to undertake training to further enhance my skills	I am competent
I identify areas which are <b>suitable for scrutiny</b> and ensure that residents are involved in the process.			
I am able to <b>understand and analyse complex information</b> .			
I can <b>speed read</b> through large volumes of information.			
I can present <b>concise arguments</b> that are meaningful and easily understood.			
I understand <b>the scrutiny process</b> , ask for explanations and check that recommendations have been implemented.			
I am <b>objective and thorough</b> when challenging processes, decisions and people.			
I ask <b>challenging but constructive questions</b> .			
I am <b>knowledgeable</b> on all the key functions, commitments, policies and responsibilities of Council.			

**Comments**

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**Regulating and Monitoring:** *This skill relates to the more judicial aspects of the role that require Councillors to understand their legal responsibilities and follow protocol when evaluating arguments and making decisions. Not only do Councillors need to balance public needs and local policy, they must also monitor progress and seek feedback on their own learning needs.*

	Level of Skills and Knowledge		
	It is a priority that I undertake training to assist me in my role	I would like to undertake training to further enhance my skills	I am competent
I understand all the <b>statutory requirements</b> associated with the functions of Council.			
I act on <b>my judicial role</b> in meeting legal responsibilities.			
I use evidence to <b>evaluate arguments</b> and make independent, impartial judgements.			
I <b>chair meetings effectively</b> , follow protocol to make sure all views are explored and keep process on track.			
I <b>follow legal process</b> , balancing public needs and local policy.			
I <b>monitor others' performance</b> and intervene when necessary to ensure progress.			
I am committed to <b>self-development</b> , seek feedback and look for opportunities to learn.			

Comments

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**Effective use of Digital Technologies and Social Media:** *This skill area places digital at the heart of what a councillor can do to increase the efficiency of public service delivery, making resources go further and meeting the key challenges facing your local area.*

	Level of Skills and Knowledge		
	It is a priority that I undertake training to assist me in my role	I would like to undertake training to further enhance my skills	I am competent
I understand the role of digital technology in improving my local area.			
I identify how digital technologies can bring about new sources of revenue for my area.			
I work in partnership with the private sector to consider investment opportunities			
I am able to use digital technologies to enhance engagement levels via multiple digital channels.			
I effectively use social media as a tool to engage with my electorate alongside traditional ways of working.			

**Resilience and Wellbeing:** *This skill relates to an individual's ability to effectively deal with the challenges, problems, pressures and set-backs.*

	Level of Skills and Knowledge		
	It is a priority that I undertake training to assist me in my role	I would like to undertake training to further enhance my skills	I am competent
I am able to <b>deal with challenges and pressures</b> and can manage stress effectively.			
I <b>evaluate and learn</b> from challenging incidents.			
I am willing to <b>seek support</b> to build personal resilience			
I effectively manage the volume and quantity of my <b>constituent casework</b> .			

Comments

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<b>ACTION PLAN</b>		
<b>Learning and Development Need</b>	<b>Means of Delivery</b>	<b>Deadline</b> To be completed throughout Council term 2019 - 2023 Learning and Development Programme. If priority please specify.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Elected Member)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Officer – If Applicable)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Profile of Training to Date

Training Name	Planning Training	Induction Training	NILGA Induction Program	Audit Training	Core HR	On line Training Licensing	Cookstown Audio Visual Training Session 26.09.23	NIFRS Visit	Blue Green Algae	Tourettes
<b>Location</b>	Magherafelt	Magherafelt	various	Online	Various	zoom	In Person	Desertcre	Chamber	Online
<b>Internal/External/</b>	Internal	Internal	External	External	Internal	Internal Council	Internal	External	External NIEA/NI	External Tourettes
<b>Provider</b>	SMT	CE & SMT	NILGA	NILGA	Officers	Officers	Rae Sound	NIFRS	Water	NI
<b>Date:</b>	7.6.23	6.6.23	Various	6.10.23	various	8.9.23	various	15.9.23	11.9.23	17.10.23
<b>Time</b>	6pm	6pm		12.30-2pm		1-2pm		2pm-4pm	4pm	6.30pm
<b>Attendance Numbers</b>	8	14	5	4	16	9	24	8	24	6
<b>Participation By Party</b>	2	3	3	3	3	2	4	4	4	2
<b>Participation By Independents</b>	2	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	0

## Profile of Councillors

Service Experience		
0-4 Years	4-8 Years	8-12 Years
14	8	18

Individual Participation

**Individual Training Participation.  
Maximum Opportunity to Date: 10**

<b>No of Courses</b>	<b>No of Members</b>
0	3
1	8
2	8
3	7
4	5
5	3
6	4
7	2