

MJP 150211
ITEM 7



**North West
Employers**

SUPPORT KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

**North West Charter
on
Elected Member
Development**

Charter Review Process

Level 1 Review

April 2010

North West Charter on Elected Member Development

Charter Review – Guidance Notes

Introduction

We believe that at the heart of any local authority dedicated to meeting the needs of its community there will be a commitment to the development of its Elected Members. We established the North West Charter to raise the profile of Member development in the North West and reward those authorities that had demonstrated their commitment.

It was always the intention that, in order to maintain the Charter standards, authorities would have to be reviewed after three years and demonstrate that they were still committed to Member development and still met the six principles. In addition to confirming that authorities are still on track, authorities also expressed a desire to have a review process that was stretching and that recognised where authorities had significantly raised their game. As a result we have now introduced an exemplar standard to complement the existing standard.

Authorities now have the choice to be reassessed either at Level 1, Level 1 Review, Level 2 or Level 2 Review. To achieve Level 2 authorities must first provide evidence of continued achievement at Level 1 and then evidence of impact and continuous improvement.

This document provides guidance to authorities to help them make choices about the most appropriate review process. For further information, please contact Mike Wharton on 0161 214 7113 or by email [**mikew@nwemployers.org.uk**](mailto:mikew@nwemployers.org.uk) or Kelli Pickford on 0161 214 7102 or by email [**kellip@nwemployers.org.uk**](mailto:kellip@nwemployers.org.uk)

Charter Level One Review

Original Standards

If the authority wants to apply for a **Level 1 Review** only, the process is as follows:

1. Self Assessment

Undertake a self assessment to check that you have maintained your Charter status and can provide evidence under each of the six key points. Use **Checklist Level 1** to help with this.

2. Update the Portfolio

Provide evidence under each of the six principles and a short storyboard with an index to tie everything together. This is in order to demonstrate that the commitment to Member development has continued since the Charter was last awarded, eg:

- Strategy has been reviewed twice since assessment.
- Personal Development Plans have been updated once or twice since the assessment (75% of Members have a PDP).
- Two annual training programmes have been run and evaluated.

3. Assessment Visit

Similar to the initial assessment, a visit will be arranged which will involve interviews with the following people:

- A newly elected member
- The portfolio holder for elected member development
- The Chair of the Member Development Group
- Four random Members
- The Officer responsible for Member development

Outcomes

The Assessors have delegated power to make a decision on this. They will feedback to the authority within 7 days. The Assessors will also write a report that will go to the next meeting of the Regional Development Committee/Executive Board for approval. The report will be sent to the authority within 4 weeks.

North West Charter Review Process

The Assessment Panel can:

- Defer awarding the Charter and suggest a plan to ensure Member development meets the six principles.
- Re-confirm Charter status.

North West Charter Review Process
Checklist Level 1 Review

| Six Key Points | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| One | Having a statement of intent. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the authority still committed to Member development? • Do Members take a leading role in promoting development? |
| Two | Ensuring that all Members are made aware of training and development opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has induction training taken place every year, and is promoting Member development part of the training? • Has the all party Member training group met at least four times a year for the last three years? • Is development a feature of political groups' agendas? |
| Three | Having a process to identify individual development needs which involves Members. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have one-to-one development interviews for Elected Members taken place once or twice in the last three years? • Have 75% of Members got a Personal Development Plan? • Has the Member training group analysed the training needs at least twice in the last three years? |
| Four | Having an Officer allocated to assist Members and groups in identifying needs and providing information on resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is an Officer or a group of Officers still allocated to Member development? • Are resources still available? |
| Five | Having a strategy to meet the training and development needs of Elected Members. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the strategy been reviewed at least twice in the last three years and communicated to Members? • Does the authority have a clear process to determine priorities for Member development? • Is there a clear link between Member development and the corporate aims and objectives of the authority? |
| Six | Implementing the strategy locally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there outcomes of a needs analysis exercise for at least two years out of the three? • Have 75% of Members reviewed their Personal Development Plans? • Has a programme of development events been run as a result of the TNA exercise at least twice in the last three years? • Has this programme of events been evaluated? Is the evaluation process more than just 'happy' sheets? |





**North West
Employers**

SUPPORT. KNOWLEDGE. NETWORK.

**North West Charter
on
Elected Member
Development
Charter Process
Level 2**

Dec 2010

North West Charter on Elected Member Development

Charter Review – Guidance Notes

Introduction

We believe that at the heart of any local authority dedicated to meeting the needs of its community there will be a commitment to the development of its Elected Members. We established the North West Charter to raise the profile of member development in the North West and reward those authorities that had demonstrated their commitment.

It was always the intention that, in order to maintain the Charter standards, authorities would have to be reviewed after three years and demonstrate that they were still committed to member development and still met the six principles. In addition to confirming that authorities are still on track, authorities also expressed a desire to have a review process that was stretching and that recognised where authorities had significantly raised their game. As a result we have now introduced an exemplar standard to complement the existing standard.

Authorities now have the choice to be reassessed either at Level 1, against the original standards of the Charter, or at Level 2, the exemplar level. To achieve Level 2 authorities must first provide evidence of continued achievement at Level 1 and then evidence of impact and continuous improvement.

This document provides guidance to authorities to help them make choices about the most appropriate review process.

North West Charter Process

Are You Ready?

Before applying for Level 2, reflect on the following questions to gauge whether you and the authority are ready to begin the process of Level 2 Charter assessment.

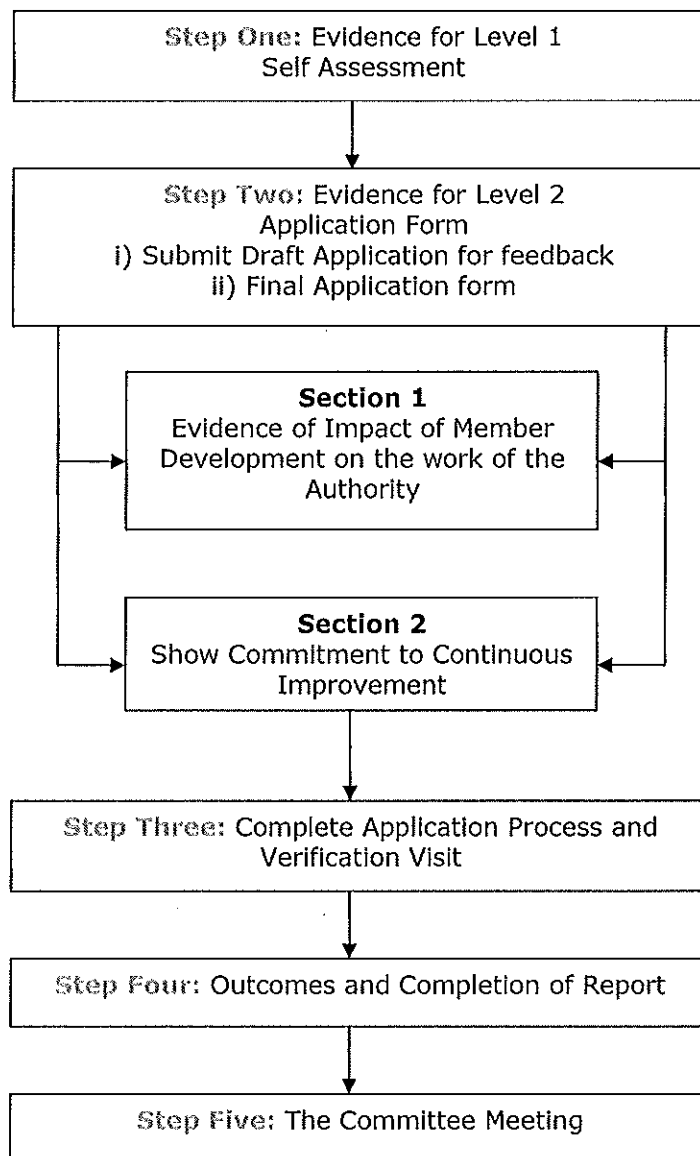
- Has the authority got an embedded culture in the organisation that is supportive of member development?
- Does the authority and its officers have the additional skills and capacity to deal with the more flexible criteria and format in Level 2?
- Has the authority looked at the level and quality of available evidence before choosing the topic for the application?
- Has the authority considered whether it will have sufficient evidence of outcomes available by the assessment date?
- Have you got other departments, services and partners involved?
- Have you got political buy-in from all parties?

For further information, please contact Mike Wharton on 0161 214 7113 or by email mikew@nwemployers.org.uk or Lorna Krisson on 0161 214 7121 or by email lornak@nwemployers.org.uk.

Charter Level 2

The Level 2 process concentrates on the **impact**, but there is also the opportunity to briefly showcase **continuous improvement**.

If the authority wants to apply for **Level 2** (exemplar level), the process is as follows:



Level 2 Process

Step One

Evidence for Level 1: Self Assessment

Undertake a self assessment to check that you have maintained your charter status. Use **Checklist Level 1** (Appendix One provided on page 10) to help with this.

Provide evidence under each of the six key points, with a storyboard to tie the points together.

There will be a pre-assessment visit to verify this evidence. This will be a meeting for three elected members and an officer from the authority and will take around 1½ hours (preferably members who are not directly involved in member development or part of the Executive/Cabinet).

If the authority was re-accredited for level one the previous year then this self assessment stage is not necessary.

Step Two

Evidence for Level 2: Application Form

Complete the Charter Review Application Form (Appendix Two provided on page 11).

Does your entry show:

- Section 1 The impact of member development on the work of the local authority and the community.
- Section 2 That the authority is committed to continuous improvement in member development?

Section 1: Provide evidence of impact of member development on the work of the local authority

There are three main sections on the application form:

- **Issue** for the authority and community: what was the community issue that you decided to tackle eg Corporate Parenting, Neighbourhood Working, Recycling, Communicating with hard to reach groups using IT and Transformation Agenda.
- **Member learning and development:** what took place and how did this link to the issue? Did the learners learn what was

North West Charter Process

expected, how did it all link to the corporate priorities, did you make any changes to anything because of the review?

- **Overall impact** on the community, the members and the authority: what changed in the community because of the member learning and development? What did the authority learn from the whole process?

Section 2: Show commitment to continuous improvement

The authority will also be expected to show their commitment to **continuous improvement** in member learning and development.

- Demonstrate progress on the 'continuous improvement' issues identified at the original assessment - evidence from Level 1 Award.
- Review processes for member development, eg Member Development Group to review strategy and agree new priorities.
- Can clearly articulate where the authority wants to improve their practice in the future.

Step Three

Complete Application Process

The electronic application form can be found at:

- ↳ www.nwemployers.org.uk
- ↳ Learning and Sharing Skills
 - ↳ Councillor Development
 - ↳ North West Development Charter
 - ↳ Charter Standards and Process

Once completed, it needs to be sent to Mike Wharton by emailing mikew@nwemployers.org.uk

After the application form has been received North West Employers will arrange an initial discussion with the authority. If there is sufficient evidence from the form, then North West Employers will proceed to arrange an assessment visit. If there are queries arising from the form then North West Employers may need to get a better understanding or more information from the authority.

An assessment visit will be arranged to verify the evidence provided in the application form. An Officer and an Elected Member from North West Employers will act as Assessors. The Assessors may ask to interview members of the public or people from outside bodies as well as Elected Members or staff.

North West Charter Process

Step Four

Outcomes

The Assessors will write a report that will go to the Regional Development Committee or Executive Board for approval.

Step Five

The Committee Meeting

The Committee can:

- Confirm successful attainment against the original standards.
- Defer awarding exemplar status and suggest a plan of action to meet the Level 2 standards.
- Award exemplar status.

Support Offered by North West Employers

Throughout your Charter process we are dedicated to providing support and guidance. We offer:

- Guidance prior to application to assess 'readiness' for progressing your project to Level 2 Charter Status
- Workshops and sharing events with other authorities working towards Level 2
- Peer support from authorities who have been awarded Level 2

If you require any further support or have any ideas that would be useful for the whole region then please do let Lorna Krisson know by emailing lornak@nwemployers.org.uk.

N.B Please note this process is being reviewed to create an e-based process to support authorities and their charter assessment. Those wishing to apply for the 2011 deadline will follow the process above. Those wishing to apply after the 2011 deadline (for 2012 onwards) will be informed of the new process in the coming months.

What We Will Look For In the Level 2 Assessment

Charter Level 2 does not have set criteria like Charter level 1. Level 2 looks at whether the authority can demonstrate that the community has benefited from member development on a specific area. Each application for Level 2 is different, and therefore the assessment will be tailored in each case. However, there are some general things the assessors are looking for in Level 2. This is a guide to what is required to make a successful Level 2 application, under three headings:

- What we are looking for with the project or example
- What we are looking for with the use of evidence
- What we are looking for in the community and authority impacts

What we are looking for with the project or example

The application demonstrates that:

- The work done relates to an issue that directly affects the community, and (ideally) is recognised by the community.
- Development of members has been explicitly targeted to address the member development needs identified around the community issue.
- Members recognise which elements of learning and development were directly related to the issue.
- Members can identify changes in their skills, knowledge and expertise on the issue before and after member development took place.
- There has been an improvement on the community issues, and there are clear links between the member development done, and the outcomes, which are recognised by members themselves.

What we are looking for with the use of evidence

- Statements and assertions must be backed up by evidence, including references for the sources of evidence.
- A range of different types of evidence is provided from a range of different sources, e.g. a mix of examples or case studies, statistics, and documentary evidence, including material from members, officers, residents, and partners.
- Evidence is provided for the situation for the authority and the community before the work took place, and afterwards.
- All evidence provided stands up to a reasonable challenge from someone not involved in the work.

What we are looking for in the community and authority impacts

- Community and authority outcomes have been experienced by the community, and (ideally) are recognised by the community.
- Any changes to strategy, policy, procedures and structures have led to a practical difference for the community.
- The impacts are advanced enough to have resolved the original issues, or can be shown to have achieved significant milestones.
- Outcomes described in the application are recognised by a range of stakeholders.

North West Charter Process

Appendix One – Level 1 Review Checklist

| Six Key Points | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| One | Having a statement of intent. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the authority still committed to member development? • Do members take a leading role in promoting development? |
| Two | Ensuring that all members are made aware of training and development opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has induction training taken place every year, and is promoting member development part of the training? • Has the all party member training group met at least four times a year for the last three years? • Is development a feature of political groups' agendas? |
| Three | Having a process to identify individual development needs which involves members. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have one-to-one development interviews for Elected Members taken place once or twice in the last three years? • Have 75% of members got a Personal Development Plan? • Has the member training group analysed the training needs at least twice in the last three years? |
| Four | Having an Officer allocated to assist members and groups in identifying needs and providing information on resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is an Officer or a group of Officers still allocated to member development? • Are resources still available? |
| Five | Having a strategy to meet the training and development needs of Elected Members. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the strategy been reviewed at least twice in the last three years and communicated to members? • Does the authority have a clear process to determine priorities for member development? • Is there a clear link between member development and the corporate aims and objectives of the authority? |
| Six | Implementing the strategy locally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there outcomes of a needs analysis exercise for at least two years out of the three? • Have 75% of members reviewed their Personal Development Plans? • Has a programme of development events been run as a result of the TNA exercise at least twice in the last three years? • Has this programme of events been evaluated? Is the evaluation process more than just 'happy' sheets? |

Appendix Two

**CHARTER PROCESS
LEVEL TWO
APPLICATION FORM**

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE ON-LINE FORM

1. The Application Form will begin with the first field highlighted. Please treat all fields as case sensitive and use upper and lower case as appropriate.
2. Use the TAB key to move through the fields. *(This key is situated above the Caps Lock key and is usually marked by two horizontal arrows pointing in opposite directions).*

NOTE:

Submissions should be sent to **mikew@nwemployers.org.uk**

Should you experience any difficulties in submitting this form, please contact Lorna Krisson on 0161 214 7121.

CHARTER REVIEW PROCESS APPLICATION FORM

About You and Your Organisation – to be completed by an Officer on behalf of the organisation. (Members **do not** need to complete individual copies)

| | | |
|---|------------|---------|
| Name of your Organisation Please ensure that this is correct as this name will be used on all PR and event related materials | | |
| Title | First name | Surname |
| Designation | Department | |
| Department address | | |
| Telephone | Fax | |
| Mobile | E-mail | |
| Charter awarded in year: | | |

General checklist for organisations

Does your entry show:

- 1 The impact of member development on the work of the local authority and the community?
- 2 That the authority is committed to continuous improvement within member development?

Description of your organisation

Please give a brief description of your organisation; for example, number of members, political make-up of the authority, aims and objectives of the authority.

Section One - Authority and the Community

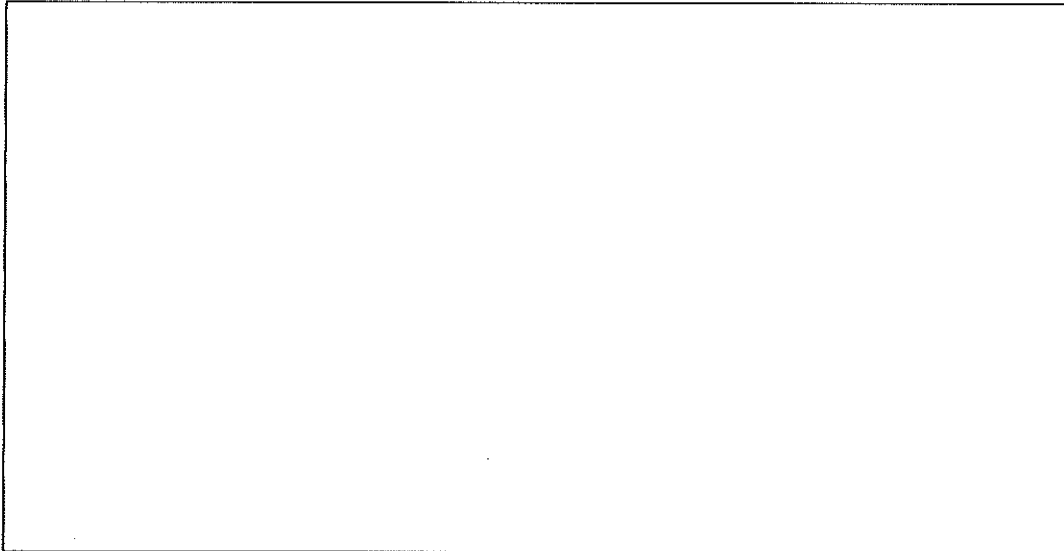
In completing this section we have some materials that may be to use to you in our 'Helping You on Your Way' section on our website. We have the 'Making a Difference' evaluation toolkit, 'North West Charter Level 2 Case Studies' booklet containing first-hand accounts from councillors and officers, as well as some useful documents from other authorities who have completed the process.

www.nwemployers.org.uk

- ↳ Learning and Sharing Skills
 - ↳ Councillor Development
 - ↳ North West Development Charter
 - ↳ Charter Standards and Process
 - ↳ Helping You on Your Way

1. Issues for the authority and community

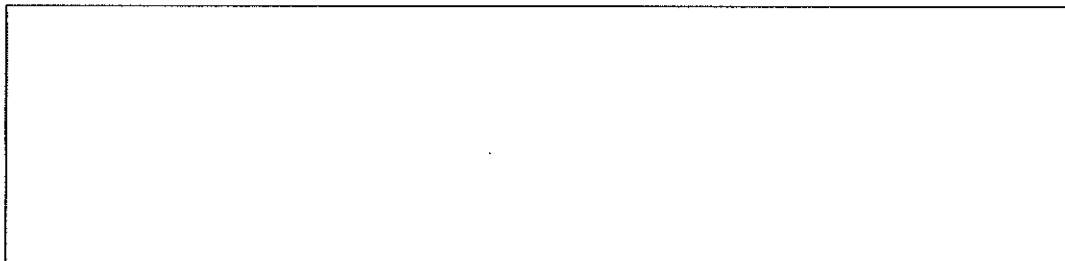
- What were the issues for the community and your authority that you wanted to tackle at the beginning? Please give evidence of these issues, as experienced by the community.



Note: For guidance on what we mean by 'evidence', please refer to 'Practical Lesson No 1' on page 10 of the toolkit.

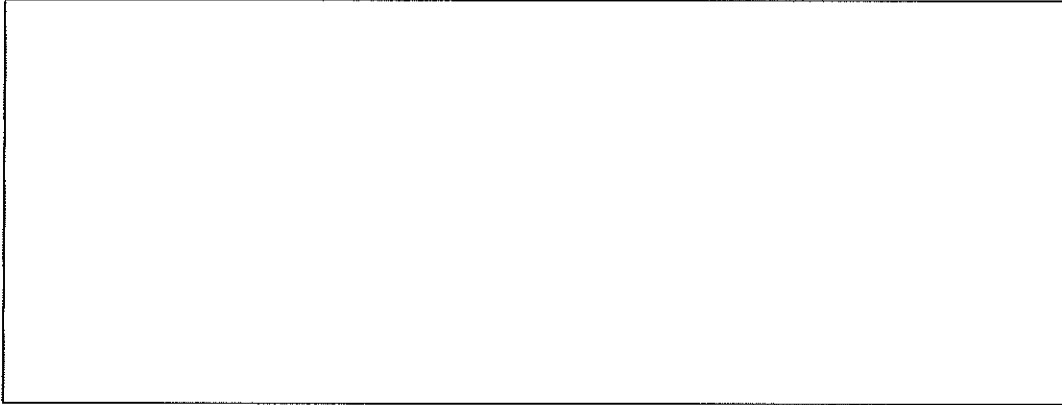
2. Member learning and development

- Describe the member learning and development that took place in relation to these community issues, eg workshops, mentoring, video, role play, project work.
- How was the learning and development designed to meet the member learning and development needs.
- How did you ensure the quality of the learning intervention?
- Tell us about what people learnt with a clear 'before and after' picture e.g. Before learning I could not do 'X', and I did not do 'Y'. Then I had 'Z' learning and development (based on my needs assessment). This then enabled me to take 'X' actions, which have helped recycling in 'Y' ways.



3. Overall Impact

- Describe the overall impact on the community, the members and the authority.
- What changed in the community because of the member learning and development?
- What did the authority learn from the whole process?



Note: If you didn't have a clear idea about the outcomes until after the development had taken place, then tell us about the learning that emerged – check the 'Suck it and see' section on page 27 of the toolkit.

Section Two – Continuous Improvement

Continuous Improvement

Give examples of how the authority is committed to continuous improvement with member development.

- In reviewing the evidence from your last assessment visit, what have been the most significant improvements?
- What are your aspirations/hopes for the next three years?

