



**North West
Employers**

SUPPORT. KNOWLEDGE. NETWORK.

North West Charter on Elected Member Development Charter Process Level 1

April 2010

NORTH WEST CHARTER

on

Elected Member Development

Municipal Journal and North West Employers

We believe that at the heart of any Local Authority dedicated to meeting the needs of its community will be a commitment to the development of its Elected Members. Members will be supported and assisted in playing their vital role in modernising local government.

Signing up to the principles of the Charter commits the local authority to work towards expressing their commitment in practice by implementing the six key points of the Charter.

- Having a statement of intent.
- Ensuring that all Members are made aware of training and development opportunities.
- Having a process to identify individual development needs which involves Members.
- Having an Officer allocated to assist Members and groups in identifying needs and providing information on resources.
- Having a strategy to meet the training and development needs of Elected Members.
- Implementing the strategy locally.

Signed by Chief Executive: _____

Signed by Leader: _____

Signed by Chair of
Employers' Organisation _____

Regional Member Development Strategy

During 1999 the Employers' Organisation agreed a regional strategy on Member development. The strategy was crafted by the regional task group which was made up of seven Elected Members who contributed not only their expertise but their energy and enthusiasm. The three elements of the regional strategy are:

- gaining commitment
- regional provision
- involving Members

The concept of a charter was born out of a desire to encourage commitment to Member development and to reward those authorities who have demonstrated that commitment. The North West Charter on Member Development will provide tangible evidence of a local authority's commitment to long-term investment in the development of its Elected Members.

The ethos of the Charter is built around the third element of the regional strategy "involving Members" in their own development. One of the ways of doing this is having a Member Development Group made up of Members from all the political groups plus the Officer responsible for Member development. One of the other things that as assessors we hope for, but something which is difficult to measure, is enthusiasm demonstrated by the Members and the Officer(s). If you have it you're half way there!

The Charter operates at two levels, similar to the Investor in People Award. Firstly, local authorities sign a declaration to show their commitment to the principles of the Charter; secondly, following external assessment, local authorities are awarded the Charter to show they have demonstrated their commitment in practice and have all the required elements in place.

We are particularly pleased that the Municipal Journal shares our interest in Member development and they are supporting the initiative by awarding a special merit prize at our celebration event.

These guidance notes have been prepared to help local authorities working towards the Charter understand the process. They will give an indication of the evidence which would support an application for a Charter.

Each local authority will have its own approach to developing Members, with some having a long tradition of providing excellent development opportunities, and others just starting.

However, irrespective of the starting point, local authorities can still sign up by giving their commitment to the principles contained within the Charter. There is no time limit between declaration and assessment. Whilst some authorities may be ready now, others may need time to put the elements in place. The intention of the Charter was to encourage the development of a learning culture, not a quick fix, and therefore Charters will be awarded annually. In addition to the guidance notes, information and advice is available from North West Employers and you can call Councillor Mike Wharton on 0161 214 7113, or e-mail mikew@nwemployers.org.uk

The Process

Stage 1 - Declaration

Local authorities need to sign the Declaration of Commitment to the principles included in the Charter; the Leader and the Chief Executive must sign this Declaration. This is an important first step as it is intended to promote a healthy discussion on the authority's needs and intention in terms of Member development. When you return your signed declaration, it will be signed by the Chair of the Employers' Organisation and returned to you, framed, and ready for display.

If you are interested in signing up to the principles of the Charter you need to contact Kelli Pickford on 0161 214 7102 or Councillor Mike Wharton on 0161 214 7113.

Stage 2 - Working towards the Charter

Each local authority will have different things in place and this stage will be an opportunity to assess the existing situation against the standards. These guidance notes are intended to offer some information on what evidence will be required.

When your authority has decided that it wishes to begin working towards the Charter please ring Mike Wharton and arrange to discuss your progress towards the Charter. This discussion can take place over the telephone but it is more usual to arrange a face to face meeting. Elected Members should be involved in the meeting.

When you feel you have everything in place all you need to do is contact North West Employers and a pre-assessment visit (a meeting involving Officers and Members) and a formal verification visit will be organised. Local authorities usually compile a portfolio of evidence (two copies of these will be needed at least three weeks before the visit). An Elected Member from the regional Member Development Committee and an Officer from North West Employers will undertake this. The visit will be in part to check that the authority meets the standards, but also an opportunity to discover different approaches which can be shared as good practice.

Some local authorities already have a tradition of Member development and may have all the elements in place for an early verification visit, but for others it may take a longer time to develop a culture which supports Member development. As always, help, advice and information can be obtained from North West Employers.

Stage 3 - Awarding the Charter

Authorities who have reached the standards of the Charter and demonstrated their commitment to Member development have cause to celebrate their achievement. Each year a celebration event will be held where all those local authorities who have achieved the standards will be invited to receive their Charter. Additionally, a special merit prize will be awarded by the Municipal Journal who will also provide press coverage of the event.

Immediately after the Celebration Event we put together a newsletter which is sent out to all Elected Members in the North West. This newsletter celebrates the achievements of the authorities who were successful and promotes good practice within Member development in the North West. Authorities will be asked to produce an article for this newsletter of approximately one page of A4.

Stage 4 - Re-assessment

Once awarded, the Charter will have a lifespan of three years, after which local authorities will be asked to submit details of how they have sustained and further developed their commitment to Member development.

**Guidance notes on evidence to support
an application for the North West
Charter.**

The following pages provide details of types of evidence which could be provided for each of the six elements.

Having a statement of intent

What could be offered as evidence?

1. A signed Declaration of Commitment to the principles of the North West Charter.
2. A written statement which has been circulated to all Elected Members, publicly expressing the local authority's commitment to developing its Elected Members.
3. Examples of this might be: copies of minutes of meetings where the decision to sign the Charter was made; copy of the Declaration of Commitment circulated to all Members; a statement made by the Leader and Chief Executive circulated to all Members; articles in newsletters to Members; emails to all Members.
4. A clear indication from a sample of Members interviewed that they "have seen a statement of intent, and feel there is a real commitment to the development of Elected Members".

[illegible]

Ensuring that all Elected Members are made aware of training and development opportunities

What could be offered as evidence?

1. Reference to training and development opportunities during new Members' induction process.
2. Examples of newsletters giving details of development opportunities available within the local authority.
3. Training and development appears as an agenda item through the political groups.
4. A process which gives Members access to information about opportunities for development outside the local authority.
5. Information displayed in Members' room or library.
6. Information on development opportunities displayed on an intranet.
7. Information about development opportunities circulated on e-mail or by post.
8. Existence of an all party member training group.
9. A Cabinet Member with responsibility for Member development who is part of the Member training group or who has a direct line of communication with the Member training group.

NOTES

1. The provision of one-to-one personal development interviews aimed at helping Members identify their development needs and how these might be best met.
2. Examples of information given to Members to help them identify their individual learning styles (individually or as part of workshop).
3. A mechanism which involves Members in analysing the information gathered from a training needs analysis exercise, eg training and development group.
4. The nomination of a lead Member who is responsible for Members' training and development.
5. Examples of completed personal development plans for Members (50% of Members need to have an individual Personal Development Plan).
6. Session plans and summaries from group TNA sessions and/or a training programme for a development needs analysis workshop for Members.

[illegible]

1. A strategy which sets clear direction, and covers identification of needs, resources to be made available, approaches to delivery, evaluation process, and success criteria (preferably which has been formally accepted through a committee or executive forum) and which can be shown to contribute to the local authority achieving its aims and objectives.
2. Records of discussions which clearly articulate the direction and key elements of the authority's approach to Member development.
3. A process to review the strategy, at least annually, which involves Elected Members.
4. Examples of development opportunities which demonstrate that the strategy is more than a list of courses, eg open learning materials, shadowing opportunities, mentoring schemes, etc.
5. A process or criteria to determine priorities.
6. A link between Member development and the corporate aims and objectives of the authority.

[illegible]

Having an Officer allocated to assist Members and groups in identifying needs and providing information on resources

What could be offered as evidence?

1. Any written reference which informs Members which Officer they can contact for information.
2. Contact details for the Officer are made available to new Members.
3. Details of the available resources in the Members' room, newsletter etc.
4. That the named Officer can advise Members on different approaches to identifying their development needs, and can provide information on internal and external training events.

[illegible]

Implementing the strategy locally

What could be offered as evidence?

1. Outcomes of a training needs analysis exercise.
2. Individual development plans for Members.
3. Schedule of development events.
4. Individual record for each Member detailing training and development activities.
5. Evaluation and review of events in terms of effectiveness.
6. A process to review and update development needs of Members.
7. Evidence of evaluating the impact the Member development has had.

NOTES	
2	

About the Assessment Visit

- Each visit will include one Elected Member from the North West Employers Regional Development Committee or Executive Board plus an Officer from North West Employers.
- The visit will be arranged in advance and will last for approximately one day. An Officer of North West Employers will liaise with the relevant Officer from the authority to make the arrangements.
- A room and refreshments will need to be made available for the assessment team.
- During the visit the assessment team will want to speak to:
 - The Leader (or Deputy)
 - The Chief Executive
 - Leader of an opposition group
 - Chair or portfolio holder
 - Chair or Member of Training Group
 - A newly Elected Member
 - Three randomly picked Elected Members
 - The officer responsible for member training
- The interviews are timetabled in 30 minute slots. There needs to be 15 minutes break am and pm and 45 minutes for lunch.
- At the end of the visit the assessment team will produce a report for the next meeting of the Regional Development Committee Chair. The authority will be advised of the decision immediately after the Committee meeting by telephone and will receive written confirmation and copies of the report.
- If it was felt that some elements of the evidence were incomplete then the authority would be advised within two weeks of the visit. They would be given the opportunity to complete the evidence and be assessed again.
- If the authority is successful then they will be awarded the Charter and invited to the Celebration Event. They will be asked to do a presentation at the event and write an article for the Celebration Newsletter.
- Authorities can be assessed at any time during the year. However, Celebration Events are only held once a year around November.

Questions that could be asked at verification visits...

- How have you made all Elected Members aware of the authority's commitment to training and development?
- How are new Elected Members informed about this commitment to their development?
- How often is information circulated to Members?
- How are new Members informed about training and development opportunities?
- How do Members know that they can get help to identify their development needs?
- Is the development planning an ongoing process, is it part of course reviews, open learning material or just once a year?
- How are Members involved in assessing the outcomes of the training needs analysis and deciding priorities?
- How was the strategy formulated?
- How were Members involved in developing the strategy?
- How has the strategy been communicated to Members?
- What has been improved since the strategy has been developed?
- How often do individuals or groups approach the Officer for advice?
- Is the Officer involved in the discussions about Members' training and development needs?
- What resources have been made available to implement the strategy?
- Who has responsibility for implementing the strategy?



**North West
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**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)

North West Charter Review Process

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**

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**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?

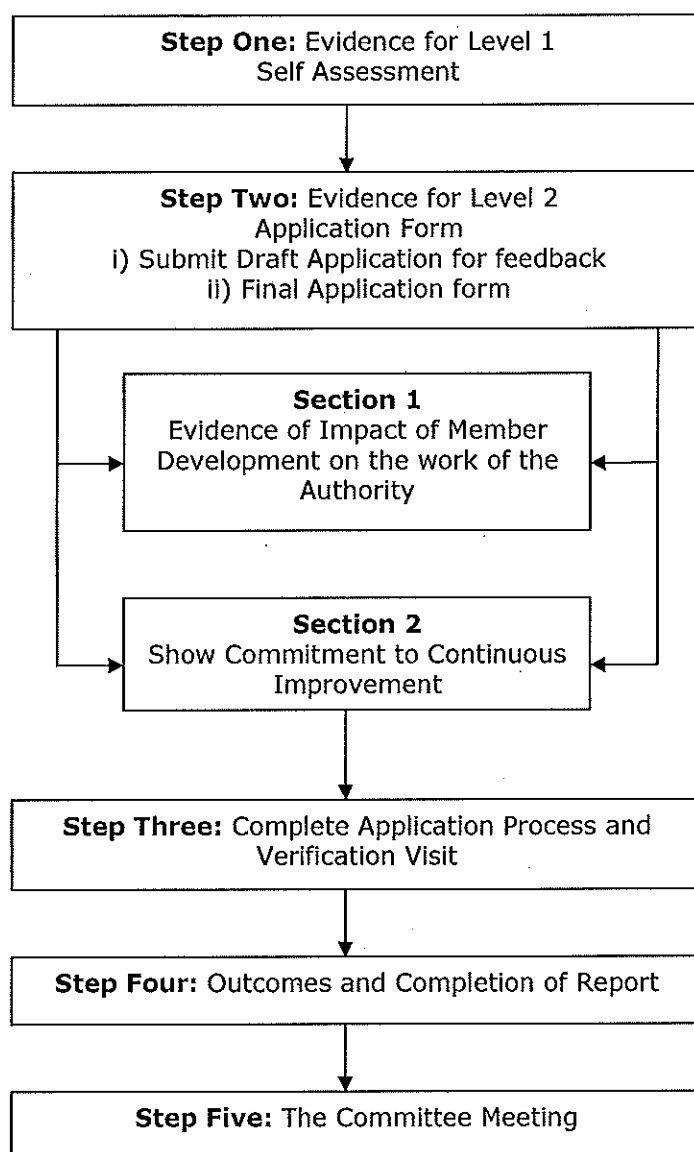
For further information, please contact Mike Wharton on 0161 214 7113 or by email mikew@nwemployers.org.uk or Lorna Krisson on 0161 214 7121 or by email lornak@nwemployers.org.uk.

North West Charter Process

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.

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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

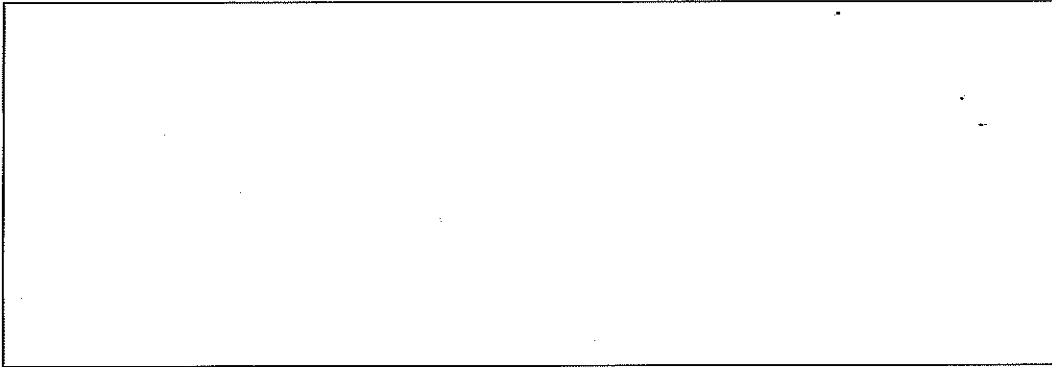
Does your entry show:

- 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?

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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.

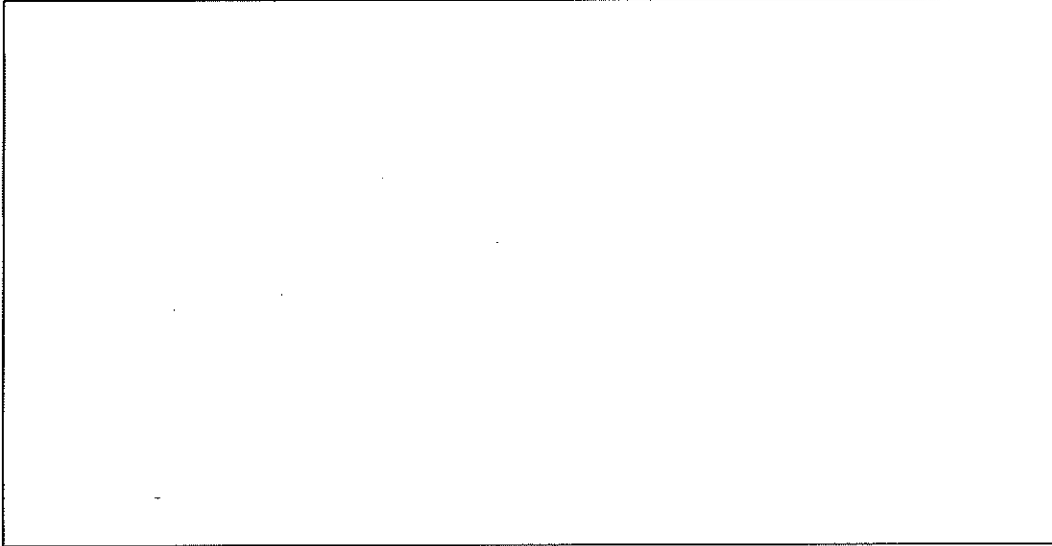
www.nwemployers.org.uk

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

North West Charter Process

1. Issues for the authority and community

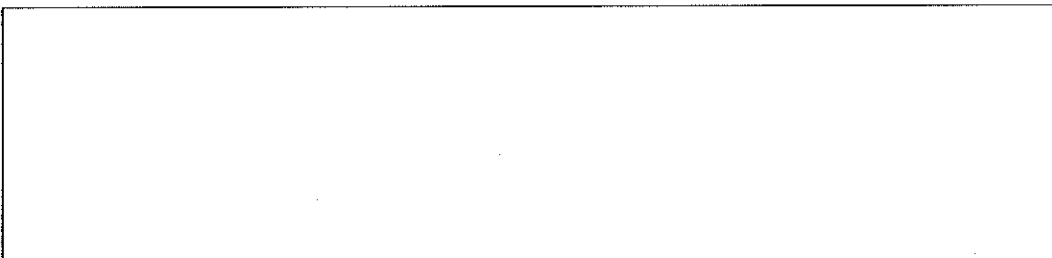
- What were the issues for the community and your authority that you wanted to tackle at the beginning? Please give evidence of these issues, as experienced by the community.



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

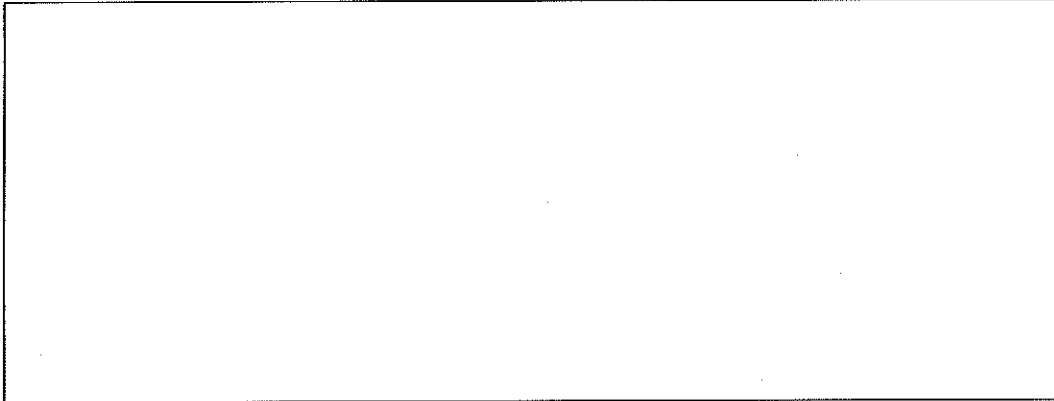
- Describe the member learning and development that took place in relation to these community issues, eg workshops, mentoring, video, role play, project work.
- How was the learning and development designed to meet the member learning and development needs.
- How did you ensure the quality of the learning 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.



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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?



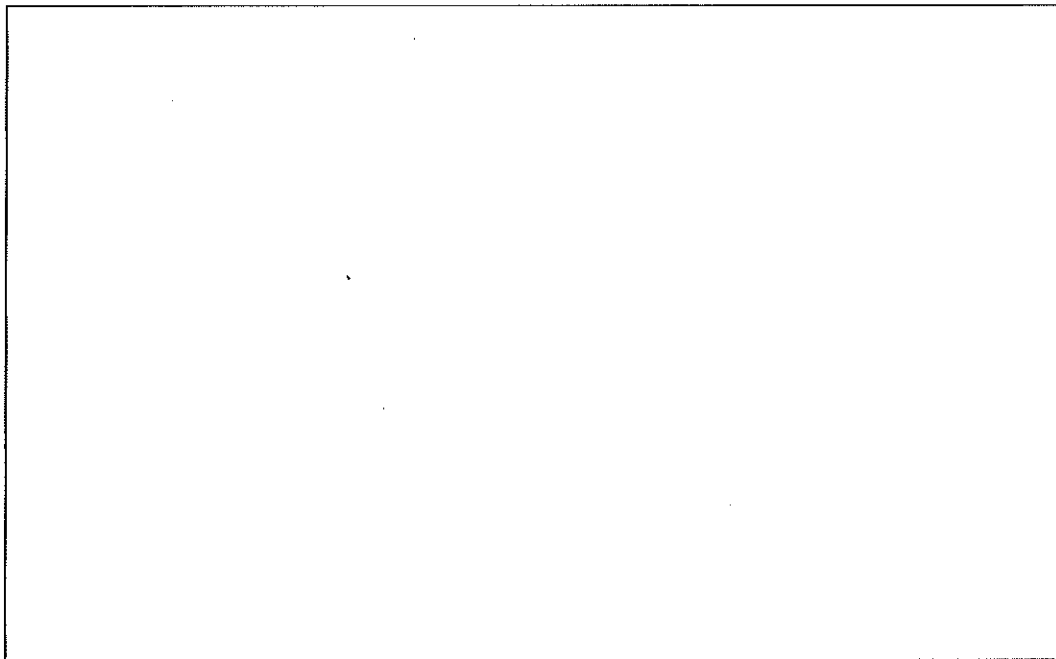
Note: If you didn't have a clear idea about the outcomes until after the development had taken place, then tell us about the learning that emerged – check the 'Suck it and see' section on page 27 of the toolkit.

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?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide examples of continuous improvement and aspirations for the next three years.

Sub Criteria	Level 1 Review (Standard Met)	Standard Not Met
1. Having a Statement of Intent		
1.1 Does the authority have a signed Declaration of Commitment to the principles of the North West Charter?	<p>The authority (including its current Chief Executive and re-stated their commitment to the principles of the North West Charter within the last three years</p>	The authority is aware of the North West Charter principles but commitment has not been demonstrated
1.2 Has the commitment to developing its members been communicated to all members of the authority	Members have been updated on the authority's re-statement of its commitment to developing its members by a circulated written statement	There is little evidence of communication to members regarding the authority's statement of its commitment to developing its members
1.3 Is there a designated group of members that are focused on supporting member development?	The designated group of members have continued to lead on support required for member training and development	There is no designated group of members within the authority that support member learning and development activity
1.4 Is there a member with responsibility for member development who is part of the member training group or who has a direct line of communication with the member training group?	There is ongoing evidence that there has been dialogue and communication between the member with responsibility development, and the member training group	There is no evidence to suggest a member with responsibility for member development is part of the member training group or has direct communication with the member training group

Sub Criteria	Level 1 Review (Good)	Standard Not Met
2. Ensuring that all members are made aware of training and development opportunities		
2.1 Is there clear reference to training and development opportunities during the induction process for new members?	The new member induction process, which gives reference to training and development opportunities and is accessible to all new members, is annually refreshed	Reference is made to training and development opportunities during the new member induction process which is accessible to all new members
2.2 Is there an appropriate communication process in place to publicise and promote the development opportunities which are available to members?	Development opportunities are communicated to members using effective processes tailored to members' communication preferences	There is an appropriate communication process in place to publicise and promote the development opportunities which are available to members
2.3 Is there take of training and development opportunities by members?	At least 75% of members have taken up training and development opportunities over the last 12 months	At least 50% of members have taken up training and development opportunities over the last 12 months
2.4 Is there involvement and commitment to the member development process shared across political parties?	The designated group, referenced in criteria 1.3, is cross party and has met at least four times in the last three years	A range of political parties are involved in shaping the member development process through the designated group, referenced in criteria 1.3

Sub Criteria	Level 1 Review (Good)		Standard Not Met
3. Having a process to identify individual development needs which involves members			
3.1 Do members complete personal development plans?	A minimum of 75% of members have completed personal development plans	A minimum of 50% of members have completed personal development plans	The authority is working towards the minimum personal development plan requirements for the North West Charter
3.2 Are members actively involved in identifying their development needs and how these might be met?	Members have actively inputted into identifying their development needs, and how these can best be met, at least once in the last three years	Mechanisms are in place for members to actively input into identifying their development needs and how these might be met	There is little evidence to show members are actively involved in identifying their development needs
3.3 Is there a mechanism in place which involves members analysing the information gathered from a training needs analysis?	The designated group, referenced in criteria 1.3, have analysed the training needs at least twice in the last three years	There is a process in place that involves the designated group, referenced in criteria 1.3, analysing information gathered from a training needs analysis	There is little evidence to show that a process is in place which involves members analysing the information gathered from a training needs analysis
3.4 Is there a link between member personal development plans and the training needs, and the development opportunities offered to members?	The training and development opportunities on offer adapt and evolve based on the evidence gathered from members personal development plans and training needs analysis data	There is evidence to show that training and development opportunities on offer are based on member personal development plans and training needs	The designated group do not connect analysis from personal development plans and training needs to the current training and development opportunities offered to members

Sub Criteria	Level 1 Review (Good)	Standard Not Met
4. Having an officer allocated to assist members and groups in identifying needs and providing information on resources		
4.1 Is there an appointed officer/s who has specific responsibilities for member development included in their job/role description?	Member development continues to be supported by an appointed officer/s	There is no evidence to show an appointed officer is responsible for member development
4.2 Does the authority inform members using appropriate communication channels which officer/s can be contacted for information on development opportunities?	Members are informed which officer/s can be contacted on development opportunities through their preferred communication channel	There is little evidence to suggest that members are informed which officer to contact regarding information on development opportunities using appropriate communication channels
4.3 Is the named officer/s able to advise members on identifying their learning styles and development needs, and provide information on suitable internal and external training events to meet these needs?	Officers regularly support members in identifying their learning styles and development needs, and offer suitable advice on available learning opportunities to meet these needs	There is no support system for members to identifying their learning styles and development needs
4.4 Besides the allocated officer support, are there financial resources available for member training and development?	Financial resources continue to meet the priority needs to support member training and development	There is little evidence to suggest financial resources are available to support member training and development

Sub Criteria	Level 1 Review (Good)		Standard Not Met
5. Having a strategy to meet the training and development needs of members			
5.1 Is there a strategy which sets clear direction for member development?	The strategy has been reviewed at least twice in the last three years, the review has been led by the designated group, and each time the review has been communicated to members	The authority has a member development strategy in place which has been formally approved and reviewed by the designated group	There is no evidence to show the member development strategy has been reviewed by the designated group
5.2 Is there a clear link between the member development strategy and the corporate aims and objectives of the authority?	The member development strategy references the authority's corporate aims and objectives and specifies how member development contributes to achieving those	There is reference to the authority's aims and objectives in the member development strategy	There is little evidence to show a link between member development and the corporate aims and objectives of the authority
5.3 Is member development opportunities evaluated and reviewed in terms of effectiveness?	There is a process of evaluating and reviewing member development and how these fulfill the specific development needs outlined from the personal development plan process and meets members' preferred learning styles	There is evidence of a process of evaluating member development	There is little evidence to show member development is evaluated and reviewed
5.4 Is there evidence of evaluation of the impact member development has on the individuals' learning, skills and knowledge?	Members evaluate and review completed member development opportunities to highlight knowledge gained and reflect on their learning	Members are able to demonstrate the impact and knowledge gained as result of member development	There is little evidence to show evaluation of the impact member development has on the individuals' learning, skills and knowledge