



### At a glance

- Charter Plus Commitment - 2009
- Established cross-party member steering group directed process
- Embedded commitment to member development from both politician and senior leadership team
- Member development strategy agreed by all members
- Commitment to assessing training needs through 360 degree feedback process or Personal development Plan discussions
- Established initiatives including valued induction process, 360 degree feedback process, regular events to promote democracy and the role of councillor, revision of councillor role profiles and sharing learning with parish and town councils.
- Member development plan prioritised against the Council Plan strategic themes.
- Learning and development plan and activities regularly monitored and evaluated by members and senior officers
- Charter Plus Awarded – February 2011, January 2015 and April 2018

### Benefits for Councillors:



- Evaluated induction process to support newly elected and returning members to effectively undertake their role
- Developing a varied and challenging four year learning and development programme which allows Members to develop at their own pace and to access a variety of learning styles
- Member development programme developed through suggestions from members themselves and prioritised against need and urgency by Steering Group

*“The Charter Plus Process has enabled us to build on our strong tradition of providing Members with appropriate learning and development opportunities and maintain momentum to continuously improve the offer we provide to our elected members”*

**Ann Moore**  
**Head of Democratic and Registration Services**  
**(Charter lead officer)**

- Responding to busy work or home life demands a range of more flexible development activities have been included such as web-based learning and more choices over session dates and times. This has ensured that Councillors are not prevented from having the chance to access development activities.
- Varied approach to collecting feedback about development opportunities so that all members have an opportunity to influence the type of development opportunities they are offered.

### Benefits for the Council

- Member development activities are now clearly focused on the Council’s corporate priorities.
- Retaining Charter Plus status is a demonstration of the effective use of resources and building capacity within the council.
- The processes and procedures put in place give the Council a robust framework for responding to future challenges and legislative changes.
- Councillors are equipped with the right skills to respond effectively to increasingly challenging situations.



*“Officers recognise the value of member development in the decision making process and continue to support the delivery of the development programme. It has become automatic for officers share their professional expertise, identify briefing topics and use various methods to keep Members informed”*

Timothy Wheadon,  
**Chief Executive**

## Benefits for Communities



*“Bracknell Forest Council continues to be proud of its commitment to member development, the financial pledge will be maintained and the support of its councillors remains an ongoing priority”*

**Councillor Bettison OBE,  
Leader of the Council**

- Supporting this initiative represents a sound public investment in raising the standard of the Council's member development arrangements
- Charter Plus status supports the Council in continuing to develop a culture that promotes work life balance and encourages wider community engagement in the democratic process.
- Increased public awareness about the role of the Council and Councillors.
- Public resources spent on Member Development more efficiently and effectively.
- Councillors have access to the knowledge and support they need to respond to constituent enquiries.

## Who can I contact?

If you want to talk about the challenges and benefits of the Charter programme, please get in touch with us:

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