



**MERTHYR TYDFIL**  
County Borough Council  

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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**MERTHYR TUDFUL**

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**(Draft)**  
**MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**  
**2015 – 2017**

**SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council  
Member Development Strategy 2015-2017**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council is made up of 33 elected members across 11 electoral divisions and adopts the Leader and Cabinet model of governance. Executive members of Cabinet play a key role in policy and decision making, whilst the non-executive members comprise the Council's five Scrutiny Committees that provide a valuable means of challenge.

The intention of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 is to strengthen the role of councillors in carrying out their duties and functions and requires local authorities to secure the provision of reasonable training and development opportunities for its members.

This Member Development Strategy sets out how the authority will perform the function and give each Member opportunities that will help them meet their personal objectives and deliver the Council's corporate vision.

## **CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

### **Corporate Vision**

To strengthen Merthyr Tydfil's position as the regional centre for the Heads of the Valleys, and be a place to be proud of, where:

- People learn and develop skills to fulfil their ambitions
- People live, work, and have a safe, healthy and fulfilled life
- People visit, enjoy and return

### **Corporate Priorities**

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's Corporate Plan identifies the priority areas and sets the ambition for Merthyr Tydfil's communities during 2013 to 2017.

- Priority Area 1 – Raising standards of attainment
- Priority Area 2 – Employability
- Priority Area 3 – Economic development
- Priority Area 4 – Active lifestyles
- Priority Area 5 – Promoting independence
- Priority Area 6 – Meeting the needs of vulnerable children
- Priority Area 7 – A sustainable environment

The Corporate Plan also supports the vision and priority outcomes identified for Merthyr Tydfil within the Local Service Board's Single Integrated Plan 2014 to 2017.

## **KEY PRINCIPLES**

This strategy applies to all elected members and to independent members of regulatory committees who will be included in role specific development opportunities. It sets out the Council's commitment to providing appropriate development opportunities for all councillors and describes the approach that will be followed in order to ensure that it is achieved.

The aim of the strategy is to ensure that there is a consistent and structured approach to member development, supported by a training matrix and action plan, which defines how members are supported in:

- Undertaking their existing roles efficiently and effectively
- Preparing for future roles on an individual basis
- Developing their knowledge relating to specific duties and responsibilities
- Keeping up to date with new legislation and changing policies

We will also bear in mind the Welsh Government guidance that recommends local authorities provide opportunities in what are considered essential areas for a member to perform their role effectively:

- Induction
- Role and function of the executive, the Council and its officers
- Overview and Scrutiny
- Information Technology
- Code of Conduct
- Role of a Councillor as a local Member
- Public Engagement
- Equality and Diversity

## **DELIVERING THE PROGRAMME**

We aim to follow a structured four stage approach to managing member development:

- Identify learning and development needs
- Planning programmes to meet needs
- Maximising access to those opportunities
- Evaluating the impact and outcomes of all member learning

### **Training Needs Analysis**

Each elected member will be required to complete a Training Needs Analysis. It will help identify the individual's key strengths and development needs so that they can be assisted to compile a meaningful action plan for their learning and development.

### **Training Matrix**

The outcomes from the Training Needs Analysis will be used to develop a training matrix that will categorise the training requested and enable the Democratic Services Team to source meaningful and accessible courses.

It will also allow the training to be measured on an individual basis, developing Personal Action Plans for each of the members.

### **Personal Development Review**

The Personal Action Plans created as part of the training matrix will be used to evaluate an individual's development. Senior elected members from political parties/groups will determine whether to perform these themselves or they can be completed with the support of the Democratic Services Team.

These reviews will be held either:

- Annually;
- When a Member takes on additional or changes their responsibilities;
- At the request of the Member; or
- At the request of the senior member of that persons political party/group

## **EVALUATION**

### **Training Events**

After each course or training event, Members will be asked to complete an evaluation form. An assessment of these forms will be undertaken by the Democratic Services Team and an evaluation of the training programme will be shared with the Democratic Services Committee.

### **Personal Development Reviews**

The outcome of the personal development reviews held with individual members will inform their Personal Action Plans and continually revise and update the Members' training requirements.