

To: CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE		Subject: CONSULTATION ON DRAFT NATIONAL ELECTED MEMBERS STRATEGY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
From: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES		
Date: 10 July 2009	Ref: JOH/BN	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the findings of an Improvement Service Consultation on a Draft National Elected Member Development Strategy for Local Government.

2. Background

- 2.1 Corporate Services Committee considered and approved the response to the Improvement Service consultation on a Draft National Elected Member Development Strategy for Local Government at the meeting on 8 January 2009.
- 2.2 For ease of reference the consultation questions and North Lanarkshire Council response is outlined in the Appendix to this report.
- 2.3 Twenty two responses were received by the Improvement Service. Nineteen of the twenty two responses received were from local authorities.

3. Summary of Findings

- 72% of respondents felt that the strategy's vision and strategic aims were appropriate to support the development needs of elected members in Scottish local government.
- 72% of respondents agreed that the strategic aims set out in the strategy were sufficient to meet the development needs of elected members
- 82% of respondents felt that the benefits underpinning the strategy were clear and comprehensive.
- 88% of respondents were in favour of developing national and regional co-ordinated development programmes on a collaborative basis to support elected members' development needs, and four-fifths supported the delivery of such development programmes on a cross-council basis where appropriate
- 89% of respondents felt that it would be desirable for councils to offer a local development programme to their elected members, which would provide access to relevant national and regional programmes, with many noting that this was already in place within their council.
- 59% of respondents were in favour of exploring opportunities between local government and the university sector for accreditation. Of the remainder, 29% did not think accreditation should be sought and 12% were unsure.
- 94% of respondents felt that it was desirable that the IS and councils should develop a national standard for Elected Member development.

The area of the strategy where there was least agreement on was in relation to the desirability of accredited leadership programmes for elected members.

- 59% of respondents were in favour of exploring opportunities between local government and the university sector for accreditation. Of the remainder 29% did not think accreditation should be sought and 12% were unsure.
- The majority of respondents agreed that a key factor in progressing the development and implementation of the Draft National Elected Member Development Strategy for Local Government would be the identification of full and stable sources of resourcing from both local and national government.

4. Next Steps

4.1 The Improvement Service will revise the draft strategy to reflect some of the feedback received as part of the consultation exercise.

4.2 On 26 June 2009 COSLA agreed to establish two groups to progress this further

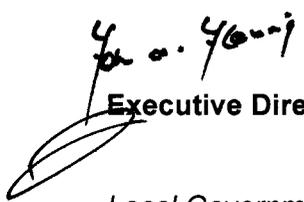
- A political reference group within COSLA to oversee and direct the work of the national elected member development working group to ensure that the strategy remains relevant to the needs of Elected Members.
- A national Elected Member Development working group consisting of between 6 and 8 councils will be established. The group will be facilitated by the Improvement Service and its role will be to further develop and support the implementation of the national elected member development strategy.

4.3 The Improvement Service and COSLA will establish both groups in the summer of 2009.

5. Recommendations

5.1 It recommended that the Committee notes

- (a) progress made to date and
- (b) that further updates will be reported to Committee


Executive Director of Corporate Services

Local Government Access to Information Act: For information on this report please contact John Fleming, Head of Central Services - Telephone No 01698 302228.

North Lanarkshire Council response to Consultation Questions/Issues

Draft National Elected Member Development Strategy for Local Government

Question 1	Is the vision set out in this document appropriate to support the development needs of elected members in Scottish Local Government?
Response to Question 1	<i>Yes, the vision highlighted in the consultation document "to encourage through collaboration among Scotland's councils high quality and cost effective development programmes and opportunities that support elected members in developing their skills to better govern Scotland's local communities" supports the development needs of elected members in Scottish local government</i>
Question 2	Are the aims set out in this document sufficient to support the development needs of elected members in Scottish Local Government?
Response to Question 2	<i>Yes. The strategic aims to provide national direction, expertise, advice, support, promote excellent standards, encourage collaboration to provide high quality and cost effective development opportunities for elected members are sufficient to support the development needs of elected members in Scottish Local Government?</i>
Question 3	Are the benefits as set out sufficient to encourage councils to participate in the implementation of this strategy?
Response to Question 3	<i>Yes – the Council welcomes the opportunity to save time, money and effort, improve availability of high quality development opportunities for elected members.</i>
Question 4	Are the benefits as set out clear and comprehensive?
Response to Question 4	Yes
Question 5	Should the development of a skills based CPD framework for elected members in Scotland local government be carried out on a collaborative basis or is it best left to individual councils to develop for themselves?
Response to Question 5	<i>Yes. The development of a skills based CPD framework for elected members should be carried out on a collaborative basis with the flexibility retained by Councils to develop specific items for their own specific needs.</i>
Question 6	Is it desirable to have a skills based CPD framework that is capable of offering 360 degree feedback to elected members who wish to receive it?
Response to Question 6	<i>Yes. 360 degree feedback has already successfully included in the Political Leadership Programme.</i>
Question 7	Is it desirable to develop on a collaborative basis national and regional co-ordinated development programmes to support elected members development needs?
Response to Question 7	Yes.
Question 8	Is it desirable that any such programmes deliver development on a cross council basis where appropriate?
Response to Question 8	<i>Yes – where appropriate - some areas lend themselves to a cross council approach and other areas may be programmes/sessions may be specific to meet Council requirement.</i>
Question 9	Is it desirable that all councils offer a development programme to their elected members, including access to relevant national and regional programmes?

<i>Response to Question 9</i>	<i>Yes it is desirable that all councils offer a development programme to their elected members, including access to relevant national and regional programmes?</i>
Question 10	Is it desirable that all councils should share the development of materials, knowledge and learning with respect to elected member development with other councils, the Improvement Service and other relevant national bodies?
<i>Response to Question 10</i>	<i>Yes, this has the potential to save time, money and effort</i>
Question 11	Is it desirable that the Improvement Service continues to offer the PLP and other programmes to senior elected members and that this is recognised as a major component of their CPD?
<i>Response to Question 11</i>	<i>Yes however the latest dates for the PLP were withdrawn</i>
Question 12	Is it desirable that the Improvement Service continues to work with Councils to further develop relevant development opportunities for senior elected members?
<i>Response to Question 12</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Question 13	Is it desirable that accreditation is sought for elected members' development opportunities, where appropriate?
<i>Response to Question 13</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Question 14	Is it desirable that the Improvement service and councils develop a proportionate self assessment framework to support councils in meeting elected members development needs?
<i>Response to Question 14</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Question 15	Should the Scottish government apportion resources to support elected member development across Scotland?
<i>Response to Question 15</i>	<i>The Council would fully support and welcome Scottish Government providing additional resources for elected member training and development not the ring fencing of existing resources.</i>
Question 16	Should COSLA apportion resources to support elected member development across Scotland?
<i>Response to Question 16</i>	<i>This is a question to be determined by COSLA in the light of available resources and competing demands.</i>
Question 17	Should the Improvement Service apportion resources to support elected member development across Scotland?
<i>Response to Question 17</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Question 18	Should individual councils provide dedicated resources to support the development needs of their elected members?
<i>Response to Question 18</i>	<i>This is a matter for individual Councils to determine. North Lanarkshire Council will continue to support elected members training and development.</i>
Question 19	Is it desirable that a working group should be established to further develop and support the implementation of this draft strategy?
<i>Response to Question 19</i>	<i>Possibly – the desirability would depend on a range of factors, for example, specific remit of group, representation on the group, time commitment, budget available and timescale.</i>