

# Councillor Development Handbook 20011/12

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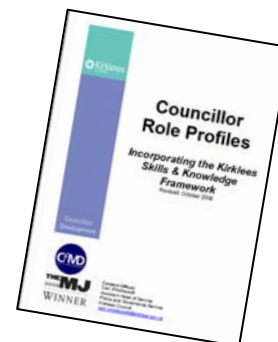
# Introduction to Councillor Development

## Why do we have Councillor Development activities in Kirklees?

The role of a local councillor is a complex one. To support you in this role, you will be invited to participate in the Councillor Development programme. In Kirklees, we have a rolling programme of development activities for councillors – and individually tailored development opportunities - to ensure that you are equipped with the skills and knowledge you need to carry out your many roles effectively.

## How do I know what I need to know?

In Kirklees, we have 'role profiles' for each of the roles which receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. For each of the roles, there is an accompanying list of skills and knowledge deemed necessary (by councillors formerly in those roles) to effectively carry out that role. So, if you are thinking about a change in role, you will be able to find out what that role entails. The [role profiles](#) are available on the Kirklees Council website.



## What is a 'PDR'?

Once a year, councillors are invited to undertake a Personal Development Review (PDR), to look at their skills, experience, personal goals and areas for development. The PDR is a discussion carried out by your Group Business Manager (or Group Leader) and/or the Councillor Development Officer, with each individual Councillor. The process is led by Councillors.

## Why should I have a PDR?

This is an opportunity for you to consider your skills, knowledge and development. You can find out more about the development opportunities on offer to you as a Kirklees Councillor and discuss a programme of activities tailored to your individual needs.

The PDR process also enables political Groups to look at succession planning for the Group, matching councillors with the right skills and interests, to the right roles – and planning the skills and knowledge development needed for proposed future roles

There may be skills and knowledge you already have, which could be shared with other councillors. This is your opportunity to discuss these with us.

You can also let us know if you have any needs relating to your health or disability and we can discuss a referral to Employee Healthcare team to ensure you get the support you need.

## What happens at a PDR?

In order to understand how best to meet your development needs, the Councillor Development Officer needs to know a little more about you, your skills, roles and areas of interest. In your first PDR, you will have the opportunity to discuss your work history and political background. (A copy of your CV would be useful.)

At the end of the PDR, you will be able to agree your priorities for action for the next 12 months (and beyond). These will be drawn up into a personal development plan. You can add requests for development activities at any time of year. Please notify your Group Business Manager and the Councillor Development Officer if your priorities or personal circumstances change.

## Development opportunities

When looking to identify appropriate development activities to address councillors' needs, there is a need to be mindful of ensuring that they represent value for money. In the current economic situation, wherever possible we will look to address development needs through in house provision and by accessing free resources.

Throughout the year, you will be invited to undertake development activities tailored to your needs and, you will also be invited to some general development sessions. You will be offered a range of development activities including one-to-ones with officers, workshop sessions, short courses, audio learning materials, regional development sessions or courses delivered by external providers such as LG Improvement and Development.

From time-to-time, council services may also advertise development sessions for councillors on key topics, changes in legislation, eligibility criteria, etc. You are encouraged to attend these especially if they link to the roles you have or would like to have in the future.

Councillors do not have to wait for their PDR or an invitation to a specific activity to request development activities: you can contact the Councillor Development Officer or your Group Business Manager at any time to discuss your development needs.

## Monitoring

Attendance at development sessions will be recorded, as will non-attendance. All development sessions are provided free to councillors. However, we do ask for 48 hours' notice of non-attendance at any pre-booked session. Failure to give notice, in the event of non-attendance, results in notification to the Group Business Manager and a re-charge fee to your Group's development budget. Group Business Managers (of Groups participating in the PDR process) receive regular updates about attendance at development sessions.

## Evaluation

You are encouraged to give feedback on all development sessions organised by the Councillor Development Officer. There is a generic evaluation form for you to complete. Evaluation reports on key councillor development activities are made available to all councillors on the password protected area of the website.

In your PDR discussion, you may also give feedback about the quality and impact of the development activities you have undertaken. Feedback is used to inform our commissioning process and enables us to achieve continuous improvement in the services we deliver.

# Personal Development Opportunities 2011/12

## Induction/General topics

- Political decision-making structures (Role of Committees and Panels)
- Understanding Council meetings
- Strategic priorities and key policies of Kirklees
- Knowledge of organisational structure – (Directorates)
- Understanding of ethics and standards/Code of Conduct/declaration of interests
- Overview and Scrutiny process
- Planning process
- Area Committees
- Corporate Parenting responsibilities
- Safeguarding
- Equality and diversity
- Understanding local government finance/scrutinising budgets
- Procurement policy
- Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act
- Online learning: Using the Members' area of the Council website and accessing Councillors' Guides/IDeA Workbooks/Ashridge Virtual learning resource/MORE/ModernCouncillor.com, etc

## Communication skills

- Making a speech (Sight reading, voice exercises, posture, eye contact, etc)
- Speaking 'off the cuff' (How to deliver a three minute speech)
- Making a presentation/Ability to communicate with a range of audiences
- Media skills: press interviews; radio; TV
- Assertiveness/Self confidence
- How to deal with aggressive people
- How to break bad news/handling case work relations
- Community engagement
- Team-working
- Motivating people/Managing change
- Ability to develop effective relationships with officers
- Partnership working

## Effective meetings

- Effective contribution to meetings
- Chairing skills
- Facilitation skills
- Managing conflict/mediation in meetings
- Negotiation skills
- Influencing and persuading
- Effective Scrutiny

## Self management

- Managing casework
- Project management
- Time management (Work/life balance)
- Managing Stress
- Awareness of Employee Healthcare
- Ability to identify risky situations
- Preparing a CV/preparing for an interview
- Getting ready for retirement

## Training relating to additional roles

- Planning Committee and Sub-Committees
- Licensing Committee/Regulatory panel
- Appeals Panel
- Standards Committee
- Overview and Scrutiny Panels
- Adoption Panel/ Fostering Panel
- Mayor/Deputy Mayor

## Leadership courses (accredited and non-accredited)

- Introduction to Community Leadership  
Delivered by KNH. (Non-accredited.)
- Certificate in Leadership and Management/Certificate in Leadership  
Delivered by Northern College. (Institute of Leadership and Management Accredited – Level 3 and Level 4)

## IT skills

- E-mail - Outlook
- Internet/Intranet
- File management
- Word
- PowerPoint
- Spreadsheets
- Databases
- Members' area of the Council website
- Online learning resources
- Using social media:
  - Twitter
  - Facebook
  - Blogs
  - MyKirklees

# Online learning resources

## 1. Members' Area of the Kirklees Council Website

As a Kirklees councillor, you have access to a secure area on the Council's website specifically for Elected Members. Go to: [www.kirklees.gov.uk/members](https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/members), where you will be required to enter your password.

The screenshot shows the 'Members Login' page in Microsoft Internet Explorer. The browser title is 'Members Login - Microsoft Internet Explorer'. The address bar shows 'https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/secure/meetings/membersArea/memberLogin.asp'. The page features the Kirklees Council logo, a search bar, and a navigation menu. The main content area is titled 'Members Login' and includes a 'Login details' form with fields for Name (a dropdown menu) and Password, and a 'Login' button. A warning message states: 'If you do not know your username and password please complete the password reminder form.'

If you do not know your password, use the password reminder form and you will receive an e-mail of your password.

Once you are logged on to the site, you will have access to a range of information:

- Councillor development information
- Strategy for Councillor Development
- Councillor Development Handbook
- Training presentations and workbooks
- Evaluation reports
- Councillor role profiles
- Guides to roles on panels and committees
- Calendar of councillors' activities (link to Intranet)
- Councillors' guides
- Councillor Bulletin
- Corporate parenting
- Useful websites
- Winter update (Priority gritting routes, etc)
- Allowances, expenses and pensions (including downloadable claim forms)

- General information for councillors
  - Support to councillors (booklet)
  - Details of Council meetings
  - Codes and protocols
  - Gifts and hospitality register
  - Decisions in your area
  - Section 106 agreements
  - Hazard warning database and incident reporting
  - Outside bodies
  - Raise an issue
  - Useful information (on the Kirklees Council website)

The site has a series of councillors' guides to roles on panels and committees with information about their functions, the roles of chairs and members of the committees, and the skills and knowledge required to carry out those roles effectively. When you are logged on, you can click on any of the titles to view the content. These guides will be useful if your Group Business Manager discusses with you the possibility of you taking on an additional role.

The web pages also host the ever-expanding library of councillors' guides to key topics and services. These give concise information for councillors on key topics and initiatives such as the council's corporate complaints procedure.

If you have missed a development session, the presentation and handouts should be available on this site.

If there are topics you would like to see covered in a guide, please send your suggestions to your Group Business Manager or the Councillor Development Officer.

The site also provides information about the Councillors' Allowance Scheme and the pension scheme.

## 2. Member Online Resource Environment

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This is a new resource for Councillors in Yorkshire and Humber. Go to: <http://www.more.lgyh.gov.uk/> and click on 'Member Development' for a list of resources and courses.

**MORE**  
Member Online Resource Environment



### 3. LG Improvement and Development

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LG Improvement and Development (formerly the IDeA) supports improvement and innovation in local government, focusing on the issues that are important to councils and using tried and tested ways of working. They work with councils in developing good practice, supporting them in their partnerships through networks, online communities of practice and web resources, and through the support and challenge provided by councillor and officer peers. There are many resources available at:

<http://www.idea.gov.uk/>

#### Links to Councillor Work Books

[Chairing skills \(PDF, 24 pages, 1.2MB large file\)](#)

[The effective ward councillor \(PDF, 20 pages, 1.3MB large file\)](#)

[Handling casework \(PDF, 23 pages, 260KB\)](#)

[Influencing skills \(PDF, 22 pages, 355KB\)](#)

[Media and communications \(PDF, 24 pages, 343KB\)](#)

[Neighbourhood and community engagement: \(PDF, 19 pages, 349KB\)](#)

[Performance management \(PDF, 22 pages, 387KB\)](#)

[Scrutiny of finance \(PDF, 25 pages, 1.1MB large file\)](#)

[Facilitation and conflict resolution \(PDF, 24 pages, 5.2MB large file\)](#)

[Effective member and officer relations \(PDF, 24 pages, 5.4MB large file\)](#)

[Supporting constituents with complex issues \(PDF, 28 pages, 1.6MB large file\)](#)

[Working with town and parish councils: Lola councillor workbook \(PDF, 24 pages, 1.1MB large file\)](#)

[Community leadership \(PDF, 20 pages, 362KB\)](#)

[Community safety \(PDF, 32 pages, 1.2MB large file\)](#)

[Introduction to business planning and strategic management \(PDF, 24 pages, 1.2MB large file\)](#)

[Joining the chain gang: preparing for the role of civic mayor \(PDF, 32 pages, 3.0MB large file\)](#)

[Climate change \(PDF, 20 pages, 1.7MB large file\)](#)

[Creating a fit for the future organisation: the political dimension \(PDF, 34 pages, 1.5MB large file\)](#)

[Stress management and personal resilience \(PDF, 32 pages, 1.5MB large file\)](#)

[Health and safety in the council \(PDF, 30 pages, 543KB\)](#)

[Engaging young people \(PDF, 30 pages, 392KB\)](#)

The list of Councillor workbooks is available electronically at:  
<http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=11055406>



## 4. Ashridge Virtual Learning Resource Centre

The Ashridge Virtual Learning Resource Centre provides access to a range of development materials on leadership competencies, covering the LG Improvement and Development political skills framework for Councillors.

Please register for a username and password at: <http://www.local.gov.uk/register>

Once you are registered, you can access the learning resource here: <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=5221549>

Then click on: '[Enter the Ashridge Virtual Learning Resource Centre](#)'

You will then be taken to this menu page:



Leadership competencies

Contact

Accessibility

Back to LG Improvement

### POLITICAL AND MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

This model outlines the core competencies for effective leadership. Select a competency to view the development resources available in that area.



Click on the competency you wish to explore and you will be directed to relevant online learning resources and pocket books.

## 5. Modern Councillor

Modern Councillor is an online networking, support and learning service for local democracy, which is provided by Learning Pool. Their free-to-join online community brings together councillors, prospective councillors, co-opted members, local government officers, activists and residents to connect, share and learn together. They also offer an e-learning suite for elected members in the UK:

<http://www.moderncouncillor.com/> We need to pay a subscription fee to access this service. If you are interested, please contact your Councillor Development Officer.

### Online learning catalogue

[http://www.moderncouncillor.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/MC-e-learning-catalogue-05\\_05\\_11.pdf](http://www.moderncouncillor.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/MC-e-learning-catalogue-05_05_11.pdf)



#### Induction

Introduction to Local Government	Designed to give an insight into the purpose of local government, how it operates, who it involves and how it came about. Whether you're new to local government or already working in the sector, this module gives you interesting facts and information, plus links to other resources.
Your Role as a Councillor	<p>Introduces newly elected councillors to your role and explores your motivations for becoming a councillor and looks at the personal attributes needed for you to be successful for your community.</p> <p>The key aspects of your role as community leaders and representatives of the citizens in your wards are examined, along with how decisions are made within different councils.</p>
Code of Conduct	<p>An introduction to the requirements of the Code of Conduct for elected members.</p> <p>The existing and 2007 Codes are covered in outline together with what you need to do to comply. It also identifies the consequences for councillors and their authorities in breaching the Code.</p>

#### Media

Technology and Change	<p>Information technology is at the heart of delivering better and more citizen-centred services.</p> <p>This module explains the Transformational Government vision and how that is expected to shape the services that local authorities provide for the future. It also explores the many benefits that fully engaging with technology can bring to your work as an elected member.</p>
Getting Started with Social Media	<p>Understand what social media is and how it can benefit your council.</p> <p>Learners will know what is meant by social media and what the most popular tools are as well as how to develop a strategy for best use of social media to support their work.</p> <p>The module also covers how to create profiles, pages, sites or content using the tools to promote what you are doing.</p>
Writing for the Web	<p>Explore Writing for Web 2.0. You'll learn about the different types of online readers and how they're motivated.</p> <p>Discover the differences between print and web content and learn how to write simple, easy-to-understand web content that is clearly formatted and laid out.</p>
Working with the Media	<p>Essential learning for new and experienced councillors alike. Exploring best practice around media interviews, this module guides you through preparation and the interview itself, and helps you to understand the interviewer's motivation.</p> <p>It examines the process for dealing with crisis situations and equips you to approach interviews with broadcast or published media confidently.</p>

## Legislation

Equality and Diversity	<p>Summarising the 9 protected characteristics legislation and reminds councillors of the importance of respecting differences and providing services to everyone without discrimination.</p> <p>Various scenarios in the module help councillors to explore their obligations under the legislation.</p>
Risk Management	<p>How to identify and assess risk in your organisation. Introducing the risk cycle and providing guidance on how you can develop strategies to reduce, avoid and manage risk. Also identifying Member roles in the process of managing risk.</p>
Best Practice Procurement	<p>What procurement means for councillors and local government, this module helps you recognise the types of procurement and covers why good practice is essential for successful procurement.</p>
Licensing and Regulation	<p>Introducing the Licensing Act as it applies to licensing decisions with scenarios that explore the four main areas of licensing and regulation: licensing, gambling, hackney carriages and sex shops.</p> <p>The course focuses on the way in which councillors should participate in meetings and arrive at decisions, as well as on the legislation itself.</p>
Data Protection	<p>Summarising the key data protection principles and exploring scenarios in which the security of data can be compromised.</p> <p>The module provides guidance to councillors on working securely with the data that they encounter.</p>
Transformational eDemocracy	<p>This module provides an overview of eDemocracy and how it can be delivered. It also outlines the challenges and benefits to implementing an eDemocracy strategy and how to make a case for using eDemocracy.</p>
Localism Bill	<p>Following the 2010 General Election, the Coalition Agreement stated: "The time has come to disperse power more widely in Britain today."</p> <p>The Minister of State for Decentralisation, Greg Clark MP, undertook to change the law to shift power away from central government and towards local people, resulting in the publication of the Localism Bill in December 2010. This learning module looks at each of the Localism Bill's proposals in turn.</p>

## Community

Community Leadership	<p>Focusing on Understanding Community Leadership, Achieving Effective Leadership and Community cohesion, this module covers what it means to lead a community and explains where the new focus on leading communities has arisen from.</p> <p>The module touches on how Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements contribute to community leadership and considers how Councillors can help make their communities more cohesive.</p>
Public Speaking	<p>Public speaking skills don't come naturally to everybody; many people would rather not stand up and speak in public. As a councillor it's a key part of your role. This module shows you how to give yourself the best chance of success.</p>
Chairing Meetings	<p>Examining the key skills involved in chairing meetings effectively, including pre-meeting preparation, how to ensure that everyone is heard and ensuring that the meeting's objectives are achieved. Also addressing the importance of political neutrality for the role of the chair.</p>

The Modern Councillor e-learning catalogue contains online training for newly elected members' inductions as well as updated resources for more experienced councillors wishing to brush up on their existing skills.

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