North West Charter for Elected Member Development

Self-Assessment Tool

NW EMPLOYERS

People. Leadership. Growth.

ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

To help bring the charter principles to life, we've set out the assessment framework here along with more information on what level of evidence is needed to meet the assessment criteria. You can use this at any time as a mini self-assessment to gauge where your council is now in relation to councillor development and identify any particular areas you might like to concentrate on over the coming months.

You could share this with your Member Development Steering Group and invite members to do a review using the framework. This can be really helpful in providing some focus and developing a forward plan for your councillor development strategy.

If the self-assessment puts you in a strong position, it might be worth considering going for the charter award. If so, let us know and we'll be delighted to support you!

You can contact us here if you would like to have a further conversation about this.

Sub-Criteria	Level 1 Review (Standard Met)	Level 1 (Standard Met)	Standard Not Met
1. Clear commitment to councillor development			
1.1 Does the council have a signed Declaration of Commitment to the principles of the North West Charter that has been shared with all councillors?	The council has reviewed and re-stated their commitment to the North West Charter within the last three years and councillors have been updated on this continued commitment to developing its councillors. The request for review is supported by a statement from the development group that sets out progress made since the last assessment and why they are now ready for re-assessment.	The council has a Declaration of Commitment to developing its councillors which reflects the political make-up of the organisation and reflects strategic 'buy-in' from the top (i.e. signed by the current Chief Executive, Leader and political group leaders) and has been communicated to all councillors through a variety of methods.	The council is aware of the North West Charter principles, but commitment has not been demonstrated and there is little evidence of communication to councillors regarding the council's statement of its commitment to developing its councillors.
1.2 Is there a cross party designated group of councillors that is focused on supporting councillor development, that takes into account the changing role of the councillor and shares development opportunities outside of the group?	The designated cross-party group meets regularly and continues to lead and inform on councillors' learning and development. The group is actively engaged in the decisions that take into account the changing role of the councillor and ensure development opportunities are shared outside of the group. (A member of the NWE assessment team to attend a group meeting).	The designated cross-party group meets regularly and is involved in supporting and shaping councillor development that takes into account the changing role of the councillor.	There is no cross-party designated group of councillors within the council that supports councillor learning and development activity.
1.3 Are there financial resources available for councillor learning and development and are these used in a cost-effective way?	Resources are used in a creative and cost-effective way to ensure that they are utilised to full effect i.e. financial, in-house expertise and partnership arrangements.	There is designated financial resources available to support councillor learning and development that are used in a cost-effective way.	There is little evidence to suggest financial resources are available to support councillor learning and development.

Sub-Criteria	Level 1 Review (Standard Met)	Level 1 (Standard Met)	Standard Not Met
2. Promoting learning and development opportunities			
2.1 Is there clear reference to learning and development opportunities during the induction process for new councillors?	The induction for new councillors makes reference to learning and development opportunities, is accessible to all new councillors and is annually refreshed to reflect the current climate. e.g. 21st Century Councillor	Reference is made to learning and development opportunities during the new councillor induction process and is accessible to all new councillors.	There is little evidence that there is an induction process for new councillors that gives reference to learning and development opportunities.
2.2 Is there an appropriate communication process in place to publicise and promote the development opportunities that are available to councillors? Does it actively encourage take up and engagement? Are councillors informed of who to contact for information on development opportunities?	Development opportunities are communicated to councillors using effective methods to encourage engagement and take-up that is tailored to councillors' preferences. Councillors know who to contact for information on development opportunities.	There is an appropriate communication process in place to engage councillors that publicises and promotes the development opportunities that are available to councillors. Councillors know who to contact for information on development opportunities.	Appropriate methods of communication to promote development opportunities for councillors have not been developed, with little evidence to suggest that councillors are informed of who to contact regarding information on development opportunities.
2.3 Is there take up of learning and development opportunities by councillors with evidence to show how councillors are actively engaged and is this shared across all political parties? How is non-engagement by councillors in respect of development opportunities actively dealt with?	At least three quarters of councillors have taken up learning and development opportunities over the last twelve months, with a plan in place to actively engage all councillors across all parties on a continued basis. There is evidence in place to show how councillors are actively engaged to take up development opportunities.	At least half of all councillors have taken up learning and development opportunities over the last twelve months. There is evidence in place to show how councillors are activity engaged to take up development opportunities.	There is limited evidence to show the take up of learning and development opportunities by councillors with little attempt to encourage engagement.

Sub-Criteria	Level 1 Review (Standard Met)	Level 1 (Standard Met)	Standard Not Met
3. Having a councillor led approach to developing learning and development			
3.1 Are councillors actively involved with officers in identifying their development needs and how these might be met to ensure they suit their preferred ways of learning and take into account their changing role? There is a continued drive to increase the quality of development planning.	There is a process in place that looks to engage all councillors in a development conversation at least once a year i.e. through PDP'S. This supports councillors in identifying development activities that suit their preferred way of learning and takes into account their changing role. At least three quarters of all councillors are engaged in this process. Evidence includes testimonials from councillors on how they are involved in identifying their own development requirements.	Officers are able to support councillors in identifying development activities that suit their preferred way of learning and take into account their changing role. At least half of all councillors are engaged in this process.	There is no supportsystem in place to identify how councillors prefer to learn with little evidence to show that they are involved in identifying their development needs.
3.2 Is there a mechanism in place which involves councillors analysing the information gathered from a training needs analysis or personal development plan?	The designated group, referenced in criteria 1.2, reviews training needs on an annual basis and uses this to inform a forward plan of development. (Evidence to include a questionnaire from the NWE assessment team to a sample group of councillors, to gain feedback on their development experience).	There is a process in place that involves the designated group, referenced in criteria 1.2, analysing information gathered from a training needs analysis.	There is little evidence to show that a process is in place that involves councillors analysing the information gathered from a training needs analysis.
3.3 Is there a clear link between councillors' personal development plans and their learning needs, and the development opportunities offered to councillors?	The learning and development opportunities on offer support personal development plans and adapt and evolve in response to external, national and local drivers.	There is evidence to show that learning and development opportunities on offer are based on councillors' personal development plans and learning needs.	There is no evidence to show how the development opportunities available are connected to the personal development plans.

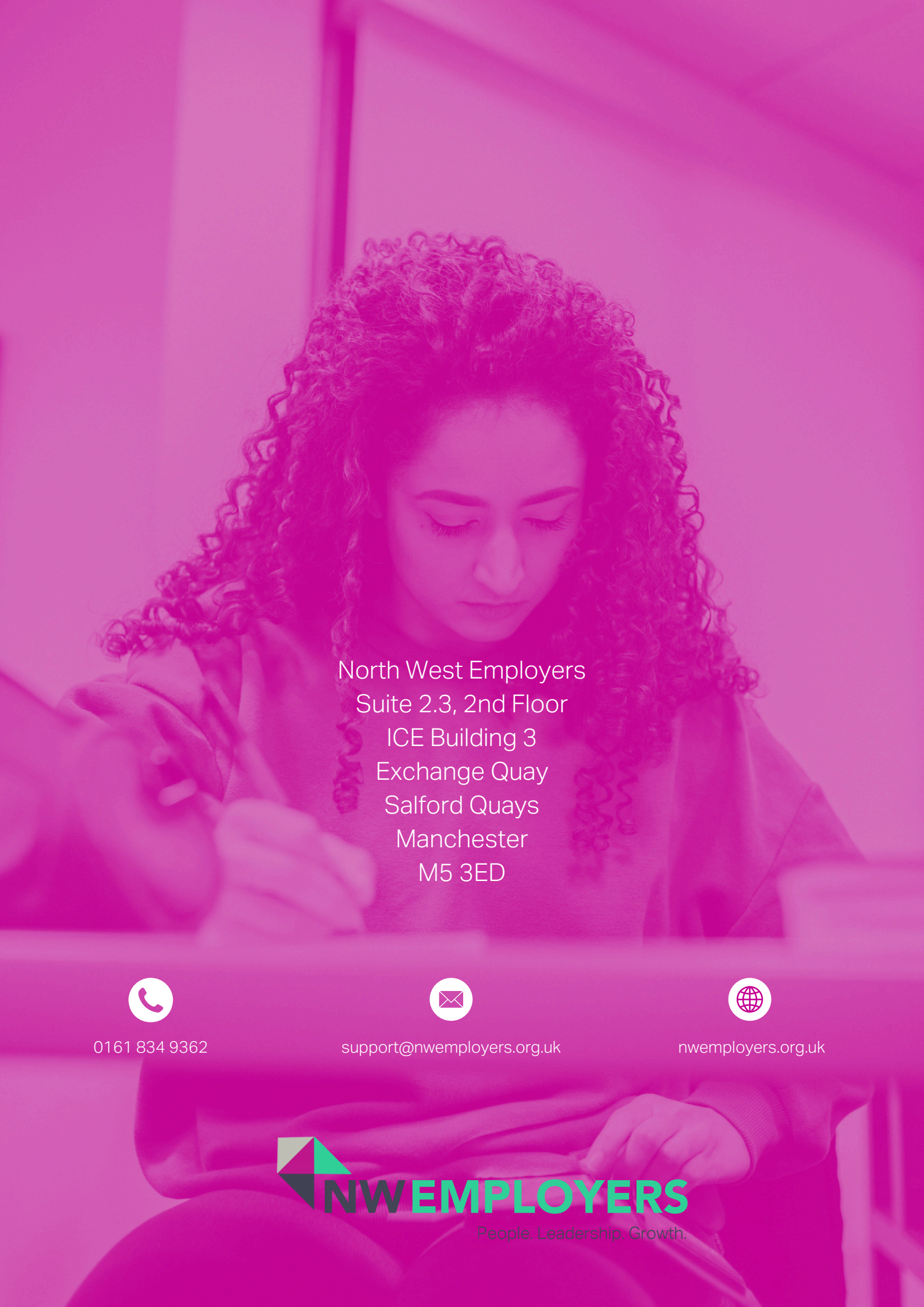
3.4 In what way are councillors supported in their role as leaders of their local community? Does the support take into account citizens' expectations and the current climate, e.g. technology, links to digital champions and the 21st century councillor?	Councillors are developed to maximise their changing role within their community. Development opportunities are in place to equip them with the foundational and relational skills and behaviours required. Learning is promoted through knowledge sharing and case studies. Digital champions are in place and receive development to support them in their role	Councillors are able to demonstrate an understanding of their changing role; the practical and relational skills required when working with citizens in their community together with their council wide role and are able to access the relevant learning.	There is little evidence of development activities reflecting the changing role of the councillor.

Sub-Criteria	**Level 1 Review (Standard Met)**	**Level 1 (Standard Met)**	**Standard Not Met**
4. Have a strategy that includes impact measures within a continuous improvement framework			
4.1 Is there a strategy which sets a clear direction for councillor development? The strategy takes into account the impact of councillor development and is reviewed regularly to ensure there is a focus on continuous improvement.	To ensure a focus on continuous improvement, the strategy and impact measures in respect of councillor development have been reviewed by a designated group at least twice in the last three years and communicated to all councillors. There is an action plan in place to drive forward continuous improvements.	The council has a councillor development strategy in place which has been formally approved and reviewed by the designated group.	There is no evidence to show the councillor development strategy has been reviewed by the designated group.
4.2 Is there a clear link between the councillor development strategy and the corporate aims and objectives of the council, including integrated services and combined authorities? (Where applicable).	The councillor development strategy is updated regularly, in line with changes to the council's corporate aims and objectives and includes integrated services and combined authorities (where applicable) and specifies how councillor development contributes to achieving these outcomes.	There are links to the council's aims and objectives, including integrated services and combined authorities (where applicable) in the councillor development strategy.	There is little evidence to show a link between councillor development and the corporate aims and objectives of the council.

4.3 Is there evidence of an evaluation process to assess the impact and effectiveness that councillor development has on their learning at a number of levels and does this evaluation include practical and knowledge-based skills development?	There is a robust approach to measuring the impact of learning at a number of levels; individual, decision-making and community, and this includes an evaluation of practical and knowledge-based skills development. Evidence to include testimonies from councillors.	Councillors are able to describe why they did certain activities, what they learnt and what they have done differently in their role as a result, and this is used to inform future activities. Evidence to include testimonies from councillors.	There is little evidence to show councillor development is evaluated and reviewed to assess the impact councillor development has on their learning, skills and knowledge.
4.4 Show how councillor development is scrutinised.	Councillor development is scrutinised by a designated group at least once a year, with a process that enables feedback to the development group.	There is a process to show that councillor development is scrutinised once a year.	There is little or no evidence to show that councillor development is scrutinised.

If you would like further information around our formal assessment and receiving the award, you can contact us here.

Alternatively, you can take a look at what is involved in the process here.



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