

**REPORT OF ADMINISTRATION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER
AND DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER**

**SUBJECT: WALES CHARTER FOR MEMBER SUPPORT AND
DEVELOPMENT**

Purpose of report

To update Members on progress made on the Advanced Charter criteria.

Background

The National Park Authority has previously reconfirmed its commitment to providing Members with a robust support and development programme to enable them to better undertake their duties and responsibilities as Members of the Authority. Consequently, it also resolved to apply for Advanced Charter status of the Welsh Local Government Association's Wales Charter for Member Support and Development.

To date, the Authority has reviewed and adopted:

- (a) Member role descriptions and person specifications (25 July 2019);
- (b) a Member development strategy (25 July 2019);
- (c) a Personal Development Review framework and guidance (06 May 2020), and
- (d) a Member development training plan (30 September 2020).

Charter criteria

Attached at Appendix A is the Charter criteria checklist, which has been updated since the last meeting.

Risk considerations and compliance

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 places increased requirements on all local authorities in Wales in relation to corporate governance and Member support and development. The Authority has developed a strong ethos of Member development over the years, ensuring that it continues to have informed Members who can make decisions based on understanding, skills and experience. Building upon, and developing, the good work carried out to date will re-emphasise the fact that the Authority works to a high standard of governance.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members note the attached criteria document and determine what additional steps need to be taken to make a submission to the Welsh Local Government Association for Advanced Charter status.

(For further information, please contact Janet Evans, Administration & Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer by e-mailing janete@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk)

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Criterion	Charter Requirement	Charter Expansion and Clarification	Advanced Charter Requirements	Description of authority approach and actions	Additional work required to achieve this criterion
A. Member Roles and Responsibilities					
1. Members are supported with role descriptions.	Role descriptions are adopted for the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of the Authority • Vice Chair of the Authority • Committee Chairs • Member of the Authority • Chair of the Standards Committee • Chair of the Planning Committee • Member of the Standards Committee • Member of the Planning Committee • Chairs of the Performance and Scrutiny committees as applicable 	What does adopted mean? Role descriptions exist and have been formally adopted for all the roles listed. There is no need at this level for Members to evidence that they perform the roles outlined in the descriptions but they should understand what their role is and what is expected of them. What can be defined as a role description? See <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the WLGA model role descriptions for Welsh Authorities, and 	Role descriptions are available for all Members covering all aspects of their role. Members are undertaking the responsibilities described in the role descriptions. Role descriptions inform the PDR process. Every Member has a role description which matches what they do. Including guidance for Members of a working or task and finish group – not a role description as such but some information to help Members understand what is expected of them.	Draft suite of role descriptions (RD) agreed by Member Support and Development Committee (MSDC) on 08 May 2019 and adopted by National Park Authority (NPA) on 25 July 2019 following Members’ suggested additions. Each RD outlines all aspects of that Member’s role. Role description and protocol for Members serving on outside bodies included in this suite. Planning Code of Good Practice adopted, which sits alongside	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the Performance and Scrutiny committees as applicable • Member Champion <p>Guidance is provided to Members on their role on outside bodies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the WLGA document <i>The Role of Councillors in Collaboration</i> <p>Outside Bodies Where Members are responsible for formally representing the Authority or making decisions that could impact on the Authority or have legal obligations as – for example, trustees of an organisation, they should be provided with a role description. In all instances Members should be provided with guidance on their role on the outside body. Officers should secure (where available) terms of reference from outside bodies.</p>	<p>All Members need to be undertaking their roles in accordance with their role descriptions evidenced by having individually developed and/or agreed their RD.</p>	<p>the Members’ Code of Conduct, provides a guide to Members on their role as Development Management Committee Members.</p> <p>When Working/Task and Finish Groups have been established in the past to look at specific areas, Terms of Reference have been agreed at the outset in order that Members understand what their role on the Group is and what outcomes are expected.</p>	

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<p>2. Members are supported in undertaking their duties according to high standards of conduct.</p>	<p>All members are provided with training and development in the detail of the Authority's Code of Conduct, taking into account any changes in the model or local code as they emerge.</p>	<p>What can be interpreted as training and development? Any activities which help members understand what the code is and how they need to work within it. This could include written guidance, induction sessions, workshops, Q&A sessions.</p>	<p>Training is updated and delivered regularly. Potential breaches are addressed internally, as set out in the Ombudsman's report concerning local resolution. There are few justifiable referrals to the Ombudsman because members do not understand the code.</p>	<p>No Code of Conduct refresher training session was undertaken in 2018 due to change in Monitoring Officer and subsequent sickness of that officer.</p> <p>New MO appointed in October 2019 and brief session for newly appointed Welsh Government Members held on 04 December 2019, although all Members were invited to attend.</p> <p>Code of Conduct training session held on 29 January 2020 for all Members. This will continue to be an annual event.</p> <p>Any presentations and/or materials given at a training session</p>	

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				<p>are made available to those Members who were unable to attend. Should further information be needed, Members are aware that they can contact the officer responsible for delivering the session.</p> <p>Members are aware of their duties / responsibilities and some have applied to the Standards Committee for dispensation to speak at NPA/Committee on certain matters. Members concerned have the opportunity to address the Standards Committee if they so wish.</p> <p>Local resolution protocol adopted in 2013 to deal with</p>	<p>Local resolution protocol to be reviewed.</p>

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				Member against Member complaints, although it has never been needed to date.	
3. The Authority's Scheme of Delegation supports strong corporate governance by clearly defining the role of the different member functions and their interrelationship.	<p>All members have received training on and understand the Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>It clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities of committees and individual members and officers.</p>	Training has been made available to all members and take up of this has been high.	The Scheme of Delegation changes in line with requirements.	This is covered in the main during induction.	Need to develop a session for all Members on an annual basis. Monitoring Officer (Chief Executive?) to deliver session. This will be done virtually after an NPA or DM Committee meeting.
B. Member Development					
B1. A member learning and development strategy has been adopted.	A member development strategy is in place. The strategy sets out the approach that the authority takes to member development. It includes:		All aspects of the strategy are in place and functioning effectively, with an effective methodology for monitoring and reviewing the strategy over time.	Member Development Strategy reviewed as PDR process wasn't working. Revised Member Development Strategy agreed by MSDC on 08 May 2019 and adopted by NPA on 25 July 2019.	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a commitment to and methodology for undertaking development needs analyses through a PDR and or TNA scheme, which identifies the local and national, collective and individual development needs of all members. • a commitment to and methodology for developing members according to the needs of the organisation. • a commitment to and methodology for creating personal development <u>plans</u> for all members. 			<p>A training needs analysis and training plan was agreed by the MSDC on 29 July 2020 and adopted by NPA on 30 September 2020.</p> <p>The training plan will be reviewed regularly by MSDC.</p> <p>Any new areas for development will be considered as they arise.</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a methodology for responding to the development needs of members identified in their personal support and development reviews or TNAs. 				
<p>B2. Arrangements are in place for <u>all</u> members to be offered a PDR which covers the requirements of their role on a National Park Authority.</p>	<p>Personal support and development reviews which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> based on role descriptions contribute to personal development plans conducted by senior members or other deemed suitably qualified <u>made available</u> for all members and <u>must</u> be undertaken by members in receipt of a senior salary. 	<p>What is a PDR? An opportunity for a member to discuss with any senior member or other suitably qualified person their own requirements for training and development.</p> <p>This should include some examination of current duties as set out in the role descriptions listed above and may include some self or supported reflection on current</p>	<p>The majority of members undertake PDRs annually according to the requirements set out in the first level. The PDR provides opportunities for members to identify the level at which development is required.</p> <p>The outcomes effectively and regularly inform the member development strategy and programme.</p>	<p>PDR guidance agreed by MSDC on 06 November 2019, with positive support and feedback given.</p> <p>PDR guidance document training delivered by WLGA on 05 February 2020 in preparation for new PDR process.</p> <p>Following WLGA training session on PDRs delivered on 05 February 2020, process rolled out to Members on 27 February 2020. As a result of COVID-</p>	

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		<p>performance as a starting point. The outcomes of the discussion should feed into a personal development plan held by the member with the required development activities and also be recorded by the authority so that development activities can be arranged to support every member's needs.</p> <p>The WLGA document 'Guidance for Authorities Planning to Implement Personal Development Reviews for Members' provides guidance in this area.</p> <p><u>Anyone</u> conducting reviews should have received training in</p>	<p>Members report that the process is useful and that their needs are, where possible, being met in terms of content and level.</p>	<p>19 government advice regarding no face-to-face meetings, Members encouraged to use Lifesize video conferencing system to complete PDRs.</p> <p>Chair of Authority undertook an appraisal with Deputy Director of Land, Nature and Forestry prior to re-appointment in 2017.</p> <p>Three Members (currently Chair and Deputy Chair of NPA and Chair of MSDC) undertake the Chief Executive's performance review. Two reviews take place; one to set objectives for the forthcoming financial year and the other to review performance against the targets set.</p>	

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		their purpose and methodology.			
<p>B3. A development programme for members is in place with a mechanism for its annual review.</p> <p>All members are made aware of, guided to and are able to access the development activities equally.</p>	<p>An annual development programme informed by the member development strategy is in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual development programme is planned and publicised in advance. • Members are made aware of development opportunities provided in response to their needs. <p>The timings and settings of activities are varied to enable equal access by all, including those</p>	<p>There is an annual programme of events and learning opportunities for members both collectively and individually. This programme is informed by the organisational priorities set out in the strategy and in any requirements identified in the personal development plans which emerge from PDRs and TNAs. The programme should be developed by relevant officers and members for example the MDWG/ MD Champion, DS/HR officers and directors/service heads.</p>	<p>The development programme is updated every year following monitoring and evaluation of the previous year and is demonstrably in line with member needs and the MD strategy.</p> <p>The content of the programme is made available to suit the needs of members with different skills and experience. i.e. there is some <u>levelling</u> to development activities.</p>	<p>A Member support and development plan was agreed by MSDC on 29 July 2020 and adopted by NPA on 30 September 2020.</p> <p>The plan offers a variety of training opportunities for all Members and they are advised of these in advance. However, not all opportunities are set out in an annual development programme, as some training opportunities arise that have not previously been identified by Members, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Workshop on enforcement was arranged following 	<p>Pre-identified training opportunities to be included in the calendar of meetings</p>

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	<p>members who are working, are carers or have child care responsibilities.</p>	<p>The programme includes 'specialist' areas of development reflecting the needs of members in developing skills and understanding in both corporate governance and thematic or service areas.</p> <p>The programme is provided to members giving sufficient notice for attendance.</p> <p>Members are notified of specific events in which they have expressed an interest.</p> <p>The programme is designed to offer choice or variety of opportunities to attend.</p>		<p>questions raised by Members at a meeting of the Development Management Committee;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Workshop on Nitrate Vulnerable Zones was arranged following a Welsh Government consultation on the topic, to better inform Members of the subject prior to a response being made, and • opportunities arise on occasion for joint Member/Officer Workshops, particularly when the NPA hosts Planning Officer for Wales training session, e.g. lighting seminar and value of planning seminar. 	

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				A Dark Skies seminar was arranged on 11 September 2018 where all Community Councils were invited to attend along with Members.	
B4. Prospective and new members are informed of their role and responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prospective members are informed of the role they will be expected to perform. ▪ All new or returning members are provided with a programme of induction. 	<p>Information about the role and the expectations and commitment placed on members whilst on the Authority is provided to constituent authorities.</p> <p>What constitutes an induction programme? This will vary between authorities but should at the base level be any activity that introduces new members to their roles and the work of the National Park Authority.</p>	Every member moving to a new role has received an induction for that role for example Chair, Vice Chair and Champions..	<p>A document "Information for prospective Members 2017" was distributed to all County Councillors following the local government elections in 2017.</p> <p>Induction training provided for all new Members and also offered to returning Members.</p> <p>Chairs' training held on 15 January 2018 with Brecon Beacons NPA and a new Chairs' training session held jointly with Pembrokeshire County</p>	Information document can be revised and updated in preparation for next local government elections in 2022

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		Use is made of the national induction materials provided by the WLGA.		<p>Council on 03 March 2020.</p> <p>Overview of Social media given by Monitoring Officer on 6 December 2019 and follow up session held on 29 January 2020.</p> <p>All new Members are encouraged to attend a National Parks UK induction programme. Three Members attended the New Forest session in September 2018 and three attended the Brecon Beacons session in March 2019.</p>	
B5. Development activities are relevant and of high quality.	Learning activities are provided in appropriate styles and settings based on the learning needs and styles of individuals and committees. The	What are appropriate styles and settings? A mix of, for example, formal/informal group/individual, interactive/passive	Training and development is provided to a consistently high standard, commissioning and	Joint training held regularly, e.g. Chairs' training with Brecon, also relevant planning matters jointly with Pembrokeshire County Council.	Ongoing evaluation of training needed Any external trainers would be taken from WLGA list if possible

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	<p>authority has a systematic and effective approach to commissioning, developing, providing and evaluating its training and development activities. This could include internal, external and collaborative arrangements.</p>	<p>working environment/away day. The authority would need to demonstrate an effective selection process for commissioning training. This might include working with the WLGA and should include working collaboratively where appropriate with other authorities to share intelligence or undertake joint procurement.</p> <p>Internal training, (rather than briefing) should be designed and provided with the support of training/OD professionals in addition to member support or policy/service officers.</p>	<p>evaluation is effective and systematic.</p> <p>The authority works regularly with other authorities to pool experiences and consider the sharing or coordination of joint programmes.</p>	<p>Joint Member/officer training sessions held regularly, e.g.</p> <p>Lighting seminar; Value of planning; Budget; LDP workshops; Brexit; Data protection/GDPR; ICT; National Park Management Plan</p> <p>Members are encouraged to shadow officers where appropriate in order to learn more about the work of the Authority on the ground.</p>	

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<p>B6. There is a clear responsibility for leading the programme, driving the strategy and monitoring the outcomes.</p>	<p>The Authority has clearly defined the arrangements for developing, implementing and monitoring its strategy for member support and development. Individual members and officers have clear roles in leading and championing this area.</p>	<p>A member support and development "champion" and member development working group made up of members and officers is in place to sponsor the strategy and monitor the programme.</p>	<p>These arrangements are mature and effective in representing the views of all members and the needs of the organisation in sponsoring and developing the strategy and monitoring the training programme and outcomes. Attendance, satisfaction and outcomes for members are monitored and low levels of attendance addressed.</p>	<p>MDSWG established in 2008. Member Support and Development Committee established in January 2019 to demonstrate a higher profile and emphasis on Member development and to support the Advanced Charter application. New Committee has revived the Member development process and the approach has been completely revitalised as a result.</p> <p>The Chair and Deputy Chair of the MSDC act in the Champion capacity.</p> <p>A forward calendar of meetings is presented to NPA each Spring so that Members know what is planned in advance.</p>	<p>Attendance levels to be monitored quarterly by the MSDC.</p>

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				<p>Member attendance presented quarterly to Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee and Operational Review Committee.</p> <p>Attendance figures in 2018/19 and 2019/20 showed:</p> <p><u>Meetings (target 75%):</u> 2018/19: 75.5% 2019/20: 79.8% Year to date: 93.6%</p> <p><u>Training (target 65%):</u> 2018/19: 66% 2019/20: 56.5% Year to date: 86%</p> <p>Some Members have been unable to attend training sessions due to personal circumstances and Chair of MSDC has emailed them to ensure that all is well.</p>	

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				Regular meetings held between Chair of MSDC and Democratic Services Manager to discuss Member development issues.	
B7. Resources are identified and provided for member development.	Dedicated resources are identified and provided for member development activities.	How dedicated is dedicated? Resources are specifically put aside and used for member development. The development activity can be very widely interpreted but should not be the usual business of the Authority. It could include traditional briefing, workshops or seminars, handbooks, e-learning, induction activities. Resources should also include staff time, shared where possible between authorities.	Resources, whether people or money, are allocated according to the priorities in the strategy arising from organisational needs or those expressed by members in their PDRs and TNAs. Consideration has been given to sharing resources between authorities and (where a clear benefit exists) collaborative arrangements have been made.	Any expenditure on Member development is taken from various budget streams – there is no 'dedicated' budget heading. Joint training sessions with Pembrokeshire County Council have been undertaken wherever possible, e.g. Chairs' training on 03 May 2020.	

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<p>B8. Members are offered the opportunity to be mentored by member peers.</p>	<p>The authority is exploring the needs of members to be mentored. Any member who has requested a mentor is provided with one.</p> <p>Mentors are trained in mentoring skills.</p>	<p>The authority is speaking to members about the concept and benefits of mentoring to gauge interest. Mentoring might include member to member or working with member or officer "buddies".</p> <p>The authority should be exploring the need to provide Leadership mentoring for the Chair if requested.</p>	<p>The authority has a mentoring strategy to support the needs of members who have requested mentors.</p>	<p>Draft Buddying Scheme agreed by MSDC on 31 July 2019. Scheme being trialled by newly appointed Welsh Government Members (3) and current WG Members.</p> <p>Chair has undertaken 1:1 with her Buddy and longer established WG Members held a session with newer Members on 6 December 2019 to discuss progress and exchange ideas.</p> <p>Evaluation form drafted in order to learn from pilot scheme, with a view to rolling out to all new Members in future.</p>	

C. Member Support					
<p>C1. Officer support is provided for all the member functions.</p>	<p>Every member, committee, panel, forum etc. has officer support provided.</p> <p>The nature of the support has been clearly articulated to members</p>	<p>Officer support should be provided for every authority meeting and committee.</p>	<p>Members are satisfied with the level of support provided.</p>	<p>Officer support already provided. Members regularly ask for assistance with minor matters.</p> <p>Member workshop held in June 2018 to gauge whether or not Members needed any further support. Twelve out of the eighteen Members attended the workshop.</p> <p>Due to Government guidance and Regulations, virtual meetings have been held since March 2020. Training sessions were provided for all Members in order to familiarise themselves with the virtual meeting platform being used and prior to virtual Authority/Committee meetings taking place.</p>	

				Three training sessions were commissioned from a former BBC presenter on how best to present oneself and behave at virtual meetings and a guidance document was also produced to that effect.	
C2. Arrangements made for the business of the Authority are flexible and enable members to participate fully regardless of personal circumstances	A review of the arrangements for authority business has taken place and as a result, meeting times, arrangements and venues reflect the needs of members as closely as possible.	Authorities should undertake a review at least once every term, preferably shortly after the new Authority is established which at least measures whether daytime or evenings are preferred and if particular times cause problems for individual members. Individual committees should be able to define what is convenient for members of that committee. What should be demonstrated is an awareness of the restrictions placed on	The authority can demonstrate that it knows the requirements of its current members and has met them, i.e. meetings are arranged to suit the convenience of the majority of members expected to attend the meeting. Special arrangements are made for those members who have special access requirements.	Member survey undertaken in 2013. Member workshop held in June 2018 to gauge whether or not Members needed any further support. Twelve out of the eighteen Members attended the workshop. Wheelchair accessible minibus has been hired in the past for site inspections and study tour day. Wheelchair accessible minibus now on Authority fleet and a number of officers	Arrangements are in hand to undertake a new survey during the current financial year.

		members by holding meetings at certain times and some evidence of flexibility in meeting arrangements as a result.		<p>have been specifically trained to drive it.</p> <p>Review of Committees undertaken.</p> <p>Joint Scrutiny Committee with Snowdonia NPA held in 2015 when video conferencing and simultaneous translation facilities were used to facilitate matters.</p>	
C3. Personal support for members	Members are provided with access to guidance on their rights and benefits as members.	Members are provided with general advice on what might be described as 'employment' rights and benefits relating to their role as Members. This includes member salaries, family absence, allowances, tax and benefits.	Members report that this information and advice is adequate.	<p>Members are informed of their benefits at induction.</p> <p>Code of Conduct training has been provided annually.</p> <p>Travel claims are sent electronically to each Member every month for confirmation and/or amendment.</p>	Details to be reviewed/updated for forthcoming intake of new Members.

D. Member Facilities					
<p>D1. All members are provided with adequate access to ICT.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members have access to the equipment, or connectivity required to undertake their role. ▪ Basic training is provided in its use and IT support is available. ▪ Members are supported in remote working through the use of remote access codes and Skype etc. as required. ▪ Members are able to communicate with the Authority and the public electronically. 	<p>Members are provided with equipment for their individual use to undertake Authority business.</p> <p>They are shown how to use the equipment and software.</p> <p>They are able to have assistance if they are experiencing problems with using the equipment or it is faulty.</p> <p>Members are advised on the use of mobile communications and digital and social media and have access to relevant social media sites, discussion fora and communities of practice such as is required to undertake their role on the Authority.</p>	<p>Members are routinely using the provisions required for level one and report that this is sufficient.</p>	<p>IT support is available on request and one Member has been provided with a tablet, whilst another has been provided with a laptop to enable them to undertake their role.</p> <p>All Members are offered electronic papers, although some still prefer hard copy.</p> <p>There is a good internet connection in the Meeting Room for those who receive electronic agendas.</p> <p>Most Members use their own equipment although support is available should Members need to purchase new equipment.</p> <p>Telephone conferencing and</p>	

		<p>All Authority agendas and meeting papers are provided electronically.</p>		<p>Skype facilities are available to Members on request. One Member used the teleconference facility to join the Personnel Committee from France in the past.</p> <p>All Members have an official email address, which forwards emails to their home address on request. Some access their email via Outlook Web Access.</p> <p>One Member trained on WebRecruit – HR application process. Demonstration given on Planning Portal.</p> <p>All Members given training on use of the virtual meeting platform in advance of convening virtual meetings of the Authority and its Committees.</p>	
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<p>D2. Information resources are provided</p>	<p>A central collection of information dedicated to member needs is provided as part of the information and research support available to members.</p>	<p>An up to date and regularly revised collection of information resources is available specifically for members.</p> <p>This contains agendas, minutes, training opportunities, links to web resources and access to performance data.</p> <p>Members are informed about the information that is available.</p>	<p>Members routinely use the provisions required for level one and report that this is sufficient.</p> <p>Good practice might include an interactive portal dedicated to members.</p>	<p>Members' Handbook supplied on CD when they join the Authority.</p> <p>Performance data reported quarterly to Members via Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee and Operational Review Committee. RAG (Red, Amber, Green) system used in reporting performance, with dialogue given on any variations.</p> <p>Progress on the Parcnet (intranet) portal for Members has been delayed due to the IT workload being diverted to enable home working and virtual meetings to take place.</p>	
<p>D3. Facilities for members to work in the Authority are available.</p>	<p>Member needs have been reviewed and where required the following are provided:</p>	<p>The needs of members must have been assessed.</p> <p>Rooms must be available but not</p>	<p>Members report that facilities are sufficient and that their needs are regularly reviewed.</p>	<p>Member workshop held in June 2018 to gauge whether or not Members needed any further support. Twelve out of the</p>	<p>Review to be arranged once Members are able to attend HQ once more</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Private rooms for meetings. ▪ Offices for senior office holders. 	<p>necessarily permanently dedicated.</p>		<p>eighteen Members attended the workshop.</p> <p>Yellow Room designated as Members' Room on meeting days.</p> <p>Private rooms can be set aside on request and have been used for teleconferences, Skype meetings and buddying sessions.</p>	
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