

Member Training 2024/25 Discussion Paper

Final Decision-Maker	Democracy and General Purposes Committee
Lead Director	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	N/A

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of Member training and briefings for 2023/24 and the proposed training activities for 2024/25 for discussion and input from this Committee.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

To note the approach to Member training for 2024/25 and agree any additional training to be included in the programme.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Democracy and General Purposes Committee	27 March 2024

Member Training 2024/25 Discussion Paper

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will support the Council’s overall achievement of its aims as set out in the body of the report.</p>	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>The training and briefing sessions will support the achievement of the cross-cutting objectives.</p>	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved £9k Member Training budget and so need no new funding for implementation.	Section 151 Officer

Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Legal	There are no legal implications. However, under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended) the Council as a best value authority has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The Learning and Development Charter and this report assist in demonstrating best value and compliance with the statutory duty.	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no privacy and data protection implications.	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Equalities	No implications	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	No implications	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	No implications	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Procurement	Any training requiring procured will follow procurement and financial procedure rules.	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Biodiversity and Climate Change	Training for Members on biodiversity and climate change has been included as part of the programme.	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council has in place a Member Development Charter agreed by the Democracy Committee in September 2018.

2.2 The Charter sets out the following criteria for Member Development:

- There is a clear commitment to councillor development and support
- The council has a strategic approach to councillor learning and development
- Learning and development is effective in building capacity

2.3 As we are have out elections in May 2024 with the possibility of a larger cohort of new councillors, Members were surveyed for their input into the induction and support that would be helpful for new Councillors, as a result we will be undertaking several actions:

- Providing a who's who guide of key officers and services, making this available in digital form
- Providing an officer buddy from the Wider Leadership Team
- Including training on committee meetings and procedures to enable participation as part of induction
- Training on questions and recommendations
- Tour of key places
- Creating a new Member page with guidance, advice and support including:
 - Local Government Association guides for new councillors
 - Key dates for training and meetings
 - Links to the constitution
 - Links to Strategies and Policies
 - Links to community and other local information

2.4

Training and Briefings for Members in 2023/24

2.5 Over 20 training and briefing sessions were held for Members in 2023/24, carbon literacy training for Members was included in the programme for the first time with two sessions run for flexibility and to increase attendance with one on a week day and the other on a Saturday. Training was also held on the Nolan principles which was well received by those who attended.

2.6 Planning and Licensing Committees set their own training programme that members must complete to participate on the committees. Eight sessions were held to deliver planning training as agreed and identified by the Planning Committee. Three Licensing Committee training sessions were held for members of the Committee.

2.7 A number of briefing sessions were held covering topics including:

- Cabinet and Scrutiny Governance Models
- Budget Briefings
- Audit Governance and Standards
- Community Governance Review
- Town Centre Briefing

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 For 2024/25 the following training is proposed

- Induction for Councillors:

8 May 2024@18:30 – Introduction to the Council, governance model and who's who and meet and greet with Wider Leadership Team

15 May 2024@18:30 – Committee Basics, Interests, Procedures, Roles and responsibilities

- Overview and Scrutiny skills series covering chairing, questioning, recommendations and review skills – throughout the year
- Chairman's Training – June/July
- Nolan Principles – June/July
- Follow up session on Committee Procedures and Governance in September
- Support for Cabinet Members based on their portfolios through external training, conferences and internal briefings including Media Training
- Carbon Literacy Training

Planning and Licensing Training will be organised by those committees respectively, lead officers are on notice for the need for early training if there is a significant change to committee membership.

3.2 Several briefings will be scheduled by topic throughout the year as we have previously with input from the Executive and Corporate Leadership Team to ensure Members remained informed of Council activity and strategic issues for example briefings on the budget.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 In line with the Member Development Charter, Members are asked to put forward suggestions for training.

4.2 In previous years training has been held on:

- Constitution and procedure rules for meetings
- Code of conduct and interests
- Chairing skills

- Social media and media training
- Member rights
- Carbon Literacy Training

4.3 The Committee is asked to identify any additional training they would like to be included in this year's programme.

5. RISK

5.1 Training and development of Members will strengthen the council's governance arrangements and mitigate risk through ensuring effective decision making.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 Licensing and Planning Committees will be approving their own training programmes as regulatory Committees. The purpose of this report is for Democracy and General Purposes Committee to identify any training they believe would be beneficial for Members.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 New suggestions put forward and agreed by this Committee will be included in the programme. If the suggestions prove to require expenditure beyond the Member Training Budget a report will be brought back to this Committee to prioritise training. In previous years the budget has been underspent.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None