

<b>Standards Committee</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	16 April 2024
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Member Training and Development 2023/24</b>
<b>EMT Lead</b>	Larissa Reed, Chief Executive
<b>Head of Service</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	The Standards committee is recommended to: 1. Note the report on Member Training and Development 2023/24

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress in Member Training and Development since May 2023 and sets out the proposed future work programme as discussed by the Member Development Working Group and EMT.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The Council's cross party Member Development Group (MDWG) monitors and develops the Council's Member Training and Development Programme. The Working Group is supported by the Chief Executive and Democratic Services and whilst Members have been settling into their roles since their induction in May 2023, and many training and briefing sessions have been taking place, the Working Group did not meet until February 2024 and are now meeting regularly again.
- 2.2 The MDWG is made up of a Member from each political party on the Council who is encouraged to seek views from their respective members and feedback to the working group. The Chair of the MDWG for 23/24 is Councillor Elliott Jayes.
- 2.3 The Member Development Working Group continue to evaluate the training and briefing sessions provided as well as discuss training needs for newly-elected Members and re-elected Members.
- 2.4 A Member training programme is usually developed at the start of each civic year and reviewed during the year. Ideas of future training sessions are sought from Members and Officers, and Members of the Member Development Working Group also agree relevant topics. The MDWG regularly review the training programme to ensure it is deliverable and within budget. Given the number of

new Members elected in May 2023, the training programme has focused on equipping new Members for their various roles such as membership of the Planning Committee, Licencing Committee and Audit Committee.

- 2.5 To encourage higher attendance, several bite-size training/briefing sessions have taken place directly before scheduled Committee meetings and sessions are generally hybrid allowing remote attendance. Sessions are recorded and added to the Member Teams Channel in order that Members may watch at a convenient time.
- 2.6 The table below sets out the Training/Briefing sessions that have taken place since the beginning of the civic year:

<b>Title of Training/Briefing session</b>	<b>Date</b>
Member Induction	13.5.23 & 15.5.23
Planning	18.5.23
Chair's training	15.6/23
Briefing prior to first P & R Committee	14.6.23
Briefing prior to first Env Committee	29.6.23
Briefing prior to first Housing & Health Committee	4.7.23
Finance briefing	5.7.23
Briefing prior to first Reg & Prop Committee	6.7.23
Waste & Street Cleansing Contract	18.7.23
Sound reasons for decision-making (Planning)	20.7.23
Audit training session	24.7.23
Cllrs Teams Channel drop in sessions	August/September 23
Rainbow Homes training	11.9.23
New Waste Contract	25.9.23
5 year land supply and monitoring	14.9.23
Licensing Training	19.9.23 & 4.10.23
Mid Kent Shared Services briefing	10.10.23
Information Governance Training	17.10.23
Audit Training on Statement of Accounts	23.10.23
Understanding Planning conditions	9.11.23
Child Safeguarding Basic Awareness	28.11.23
Members briefing on Draft Budget	29.11.23
Meet the Planning Policy Team, and learn about Swale's latest 5-year housing land supply position statement, and the housing delivery test	07.12.23
Bolstering responses to outline planning applications	11.1.24
Medway Estuary and Swale Programme presentation	17.1.24
Understanding and participating in the Planning Appeals process	03.2.24
Waste Contract Update	26.2.24
Urban design/design codes	7.3.24
Members Safeguarding Adults Training	19.3.24
Member/officer protocol	3.4.24
Employer Pension fund briefing by KCC	4.4.24

## Future work

- 2.7 At the MDWG's meeting held in March, a suggested programme of training and its individual priority was put together. The programme was subsequently discussed at SMT and a survey has been circulated to Members requesting feedback on convenient times to hold sessions. Proposed training for 2024/5 and beyond is attached at Appendix 1.

## 3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Standards Committee is asked to review and note the information contained in the report.

## 4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

N/A

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The report is submitted on behalf of the Member Development Working Group.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Members need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to help deliver the Council's priorities and to effectively represent their ward constituents
Financial, Resource and Property	Provision of £6,000 is made within the budget for Member Training and Development for 2024/25.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>Local authorities are complicated organisations that are heavily regulated and must act lawfully when discharging their functions. They can only act where there is a legal power or duty and decisions taken by them must comply with administrative law principles. Members are often required to take complex decisions or to follow prescribed procedures and they can be challenged by individuals or organisations who disagree with decisions taken.</p> <p>Knowledge of the relevant legal frameworks is vital to support them in their roles as community leaders, advocates and policy makers. It also protects the Council from the costs and bad publicity that is likely to result from legal challenges.</p> <p>Training in Planning and Licensing is a mandatory requirement for any Member to sit on those Committees. All Members should be</p>

	fully aware of their statutory duties and the requirement to have sufficient knowledge on these matters to properly exercise their responsibilities in-line with legislation.
Crime and Disorder	No implications identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	No implications identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	No implications identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	No implications identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	No implications identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	Each individual Member will have differing backgrounds, and a differing range of knowledge and experience that they bring to the role of Councillor. Members as Community Leaders have a role to help identify equality and diversity barriers that prevent the Council from building more cohesive communities.
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications identified at this stage.

## **7 Appendices**

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Proposed Member Training sessions

## **8 Background Papers**

8.1 None