



REPORT OF:	The Monitoring Officer
TO:	Standards Committee
ON:	22 June 2023

SUBJECT: Member Training – 2023/24

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To review the Member Training 2022/23 and consider the training programme for 2023/24.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Standards Committee is requested to:

2.1 Consider the following mandatory courses:

- Information Governance for Elected Members
- DOJO Cyber Security Awareness for Elected Members.

2.2 Encourage all Members to review the LGA elected member course portfolio now accessible via the MeLearning Portal and access the training and development, which they consider would best assist generally in their role as a councillor and in their specific responsibilities.

2.3 Review the local training programme delivered in for 2022/23 (**Appendix 1**) and consider the outline local training programme for 2023/24 (**Appendix 2**)

3. BACKGROUND

The Standards Committee has a key role in directing the provision of member development in order to ensure that elected members receive training, which meets their needs as decision makers and ward councillors. The Committee therefore reviews and updates the training and development needs each year, and considers the training programme. The programme includes items that the Committee consider mandatory and areas that it also feels necessary for members to be aware of in carrying out their duties generally as a Councillor and in their specific roles.

4. RATIONALE

The Council offers online MeLearning e-learning facility as part of a blended approach to learning, which the Committee has previously endorsed. The

MeLearning portal has a selection of courses available to all Members. On-line training (via MeLearning and MS Team presentations) provided a vital training method during the pandemic for ensuring members kept up to date with key areas of their role.

In addition to the constitutional requirement for elected members sitting on Planning & Highways and Licensing Committees, two other essential training courses were made available 'online' specifically for councillors:

- DOJO Cyber Security Awareness
- Information Governance for Elected Members

All elected members were expected to undertake and refresh their training in these areas. The Committee is requested to consider the continuation of the essential courses relating to Information Governance and DOJO Cyber Security Awareness, and method of learning that best delivers the outcomes. The Committee will be aware of the importance of these courses for both officer and councillors who use the Council's IT systems to undertake their roles. As attendance levels were varied in relation to the mandatory DOJO Cyber Security Awareness and Information Governance for Elected Members mandatory courses, IG officers arranged special training sessions (via MS Teams) for those councillors who were unable to undertake their training via the MeLearning portal.

The MeLearning portal offers a number of generic e-courses available to elected members and staff, including the following courses produced by the Local Government Association (LGA) specifically targeted at Councillors:

1. Commissioning of Services
2. Community Engagement & Leadership
3. Councillor Induction
4. Equality & Diversity
5. Facilitation & Conflict Resolution
6. Handling Complaints for Service Improvement
7. Handling Intimidation
8. Holding Council Meetings Online
9. Influencing Skills
10. Licensing & Regulation
11. Local Government Finance
12. Planning
13. Police & Crime Panels
14. Scrutiny for Councillors
15. Stress Management & Personal Resilience
16. Supporting Mentally Healthier Communities
17. Supporting your Constituents
18. The Effective Ward Councillor

These relevant courses can be accessed by Members at any time and at their convenience.

In addition to the above, a local training programme will also be offered for 2023/24. These will include briefings and presentations delivered online (MS Teams), in-person, or through the 'hybrid' method where an in-person event can be joined remotely by other councillors. A number of these briefings and presentations were delivered during 2022/23 (**Appendix 1**) and following consultation with senior officers a number of topics have been identified for 2023/24 (**Appendix 2**), which the Committee is requested to consider.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Members are expected to ensure they are regularly updated with the necessary knowledge of key legislation relating to their work as Councillors as well as their specific roles. This is particularly important to enable Councillors to make informed decisions. The training and development opportunities detailed in this report would assist in the delivery of that objective. In addition, there is a constitutional requirement for elected members sitting on Planning & Highways and Licensing Committee to have received up to date training.

Attendance at mandatory courses whilst not being a legal requirement as Councillors handle data, it is recommended by the Information Commissioner's Office.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Member training and development is necessary for providing elected members with key knowledge to enable them to undertake their public roles. The Council should therefore put in place adequate provision for training and development for its members (particularly the newly elected members), and provide support and encouragement to members to undertake the training provided.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The courses that are developed and accessible through e-learning represent an effective and efficient use of digital technology. The training that is delivered in-person for better engagement, require the investment of time and resources from senior officers and the Governance team.

9. CONSULTATIONS

The Committee holding a key role in member training and development and will be considering the Member Training programme for 2023/24. Chief Officers will also be consulted for topics of training relating to their operational areas.

Chief Officer/Member

Contact Officer: Asad Laher, Deputy Director – Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer.

Date: 9 June 2023

Background Papers: None