

<b>19 July 2023</b>	<b>ITEM: 8</b>
<b>Standards and Audit Committee</b>	
<b>Member Training Schedule 2023/24</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> Not applicable	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key
<b>Report of:</b> Matthew Boulter, Democratic Services Manager	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Not Applicable	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Asmat Hussain, Interim Director of Law and Governance	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

## **Executive Summary**

Through this report the Standards and Audit Committee are asked to review and comment on the Member Training Schedule for 2023/24. The Training Schedule covers all aspects of inducting members following the May 2023 local elections and sets foundations for continual development.

### **1. Recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 For the Standards and Audit Committee to review and comment on the Member Training Schedule for 2023/24.**
- 1.2 The Committee agree to receive a quarterly report, where necessary, on Member attendance and feedback at training sessions.**
- 1.3 Establish a Sub-committee of the Standards and Audit Committee to oversee and engage with Member Learning and Development.**
- 1.4 Agree the terms of reference attached at appendix D for the proposed sub-committee.**
- 1.5 To make and agree nominations to the sub-committee membership.**

### **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 The Member Training Schedule 2023/24 is composed of a number of sections, including the training schedule itself, which covers the skills Members require to participate in committees and undertake their role as community leaders. It also features the planned cultural and leadership**

development of Members through the Local Government Association (LGA) and a proposed Digital Academy.

- 2.2 The attached schedule includes a number of changes from previous schedules, including:
- New sessions have been added in response to the Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP). These sessions include more training on financial decision making and a session on the IRP itself, orientating Members on the new ways of working and agenda for the Council's improvement.
  - The addition of the Local Government Association (LGA) Leadership Academy for use by the Leader, Leader of the Main Opposition and their deputies.
- 2.3 A Digital Academy section has also been added to capture any sessions officers feel Members need on using ICT/digital related apps which the council use.
- 2.4 Training is open to all Members, not just new starters.
- 2.5 The feedback following the All Members Briefing session on 13 March 2023 has been fed into the Member schedule:
- A new training schedule was needed and wanted by Members.
  - More elements of the training schedule should be mandatory for some members depending on their role and attendance should be recorded / reported.
  - Financial training should be mandatory for all Members regardless of roles, and some will require additional/more detailed training dependent on role.
  - Training schedule needed to acknowledge different learning styles – and there should be the possibility of tailoring to individuals, including one to one session if required.
  - New Members, in particular, often feel overwhelmed by the complexity of the information and therefore induction is refocussed.
- 2.6 As part of the Council's improvement journey, the LGA will be working with officers to offer cultural and leadership development to all Members. This offer has been received and is in the process of being rolled out. The offer includes targeted training for Overview and Scrutiny to be provided by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS), which will be introduced in coming months. Similarly places on the LGA's flagship Leadership Academy course has been offered to Members and a select number of senior Members have confirmed their attendance.
- 2.7 The Committee is recommended to establish a sub-committee to replace the former role of the Member Training Working Group, namely to oversee and engage with the ongoing work that officers will be progressing to enhance the member training offer going forwards. The proposed terms of reference for this sub-committee is attached at Appendix D.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 The provision and take up of training will be monitored throughout 2023/24 to evaluate its usefulness and relevance to Members. Following each training session, Members will be asked to complete a training evaluation form. Feedback will be used to provide improvements to future Member training. See Appendix C.
- 3.2 Key training sessions have been marked as 'mandatory' in response to Member wishes and this Committee, alongside group leaders and whips may be asked to support officers in encouraging and promoting attendance to important sessions.
- 3.3 The individual learning and further training requirements of Members will begin to be tracked through the training schedule and developed into supporting documentation to help Members identify their future development needs.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Member Training Schedule is a key part of the IRP and requires the Standards and Audit Committee's input to ensure Member ownership of the offer.

### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 The Senior Leadership Team and Directorate Management Teams have had the opportunity to comment on the training schedule. The Schedule was further shared with group leaders in March 2023.

### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 The training schedule aligns with the priorities and requirements of council business and ensures Members have access to up to date and relevant training to undertake their roles as both committee members but also as community representatives and leaders. The schedule reinforces the good governance of the council and its decision-making processes. The cultural development aspects of the report support the Council's improvement priorities as identified by commissioners.

### **7. Implications**

#### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Rosie Hurst**  
**Interim Senior Management Accountant**

The training schedule is intended to be delivered within existing budgets reserved for Member Training. Additional sessions and activity related to cultural development and learning are provided by the LGA as part of the Council's membership of that body.

## 7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Gina Clarke**  
**Governance Lawyer & Deputy Monitoring Officer**

The Localism Act 2011 creates the ethical standards framework under which all Members and co-opted Members of the Council are required to comply with the Code of Conduct.

The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring that appropriate training is given to Members on the ethical standards framework and the Code. This includes ensuring that training is provided on induction, and on a regular basis.

All Members have personal responsibility to ensure they comply with the provisions in the Code. Under paragraph 8 of the Code all Members are under an obligation to undertake Code of Conduct training provided by the Council. The proposals reflected in the report are compliant with the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct.

## 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Becky Lee**  
**Team Manager - Community Development and Equalities Adults, Housing and Health Directorate**

Training will be provided in venues and in formats that are accessible with reasonable adjustments where required to ensure council fulfils responsibilities set out in the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

There is a requirement for Members to undertake Equality and Diversity training which is accounted for in the schedule.

## 7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e., Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children

Various training sessions impact upon important services and priorities of the council and will upskill Members in their decision making and knowledge

when dealing with these issues both at committee but also as community leaders.

**8. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

**9. Appendices to the report**

- Appendix A – Member Training Schedule 2023/24
- Appendix B – Induction Day Schedule
- Appendix C – Training Evaluation Form
- Appendix D – Draft Terms of Reference for the Member Learning and Development Sub-committee

**Report Author:**

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Legal and Democratic Services