Review of 2023 Members' Induction Programme

Feedback forms were sent out to Members following the preliminary training sessions. In total 259 forms were sent out, relating to the first eight training sessions, with only 12 (4.6%) completed forms being received, with some members expressing that they did not feel that completing the forms was worthwhile and that *"going to the training sessions is time consuming enough without having to give an opinion on everything"*.

Completed forms received related to the following training sessions:

New Councillor Induction Day, 11 May 2023 – 4 forms

Working within a Committee System, 15 May 2023 – 2 forms

IT Training, 16 May 2023 – 2 forms

Finance Briefing, 18 May 2023 – 2 forms

Being an Effective Councillor (LGA), 24 May 2023 – 2 forms

No completed forms were received relating to Members' Code of Conduct, 22 May 2023, Planning Training, 30 May 2023, and Licensing Training, 7 June 2023.

While twelve completed forms were received, this related to responses from only 5 different Councillors

A summary of responses follows:

New Councillor Induction Day

How Helpful was this course seminar?

Very Helpful	
Helpful	
Of some help	2 (50.0%)
Of no help	
No response	2 (50.0%)

How would you rate the following:

	Trainer	Contents	Structure	Visual Aids	Videos	Handouts	Facilities	Location
Excellent	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)			1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)
Good							1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)
Fairly Good	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)						
Poor			1 (25.0%)					
No response	2 (50.0%)	2 (50.0%)	2 (50.0%)	3 (75.0%)	4 (100.0%)	4 (100.0%)	2 (50.0%)	2 (50.0%)

Was there anything you would liked to have been included?

"More chance of interaction between councillors"
"Introduction to how to deal with resident query"

Was there anything you would liked to be excluded?

"Talks by Chief Executive and other senior officers were too long"
"2-hour lunchbreak, genuinely terrifying new Councillors, telling scary tales to intimidate us"

What new skills and knowledge can you bring immediately to your role as Councillor as a result of this training?

"None"
"This was extremely helpful! Gave a great overview of many services and gave a good opportunity to meet the team."

Any other comments?

"When you provide food please ensure it is clearly labelled. Vegetarian sandwiches should be kept separate from meat ones."
"This induction day was a shocking waste of the new Councillors time. It showed total disrespect to our schedules by timetabling a 2 hour lunch. It was filled with scaremongering and doom and gloom. There was ZERO positively worded messages or guidance on HOW to be a force for good. Really did NOT enjoy this day."

Working within a Committee System

How Helpful was this course seminar?

Very Helpful	
Helpful	
Of some help	1 (50.0%)
Of no help	
No response	1 (50.0%)

How would you rate the following:

	Trainer	Contents	Structure	Visual Aids	Videos	Handouts	Facilities	Location
Excellent	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)			1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)
Good							1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)
Fairly Good	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)					
Poor								
No response				1 (50.0%)	2 (100.0%)	2 (100.0%)		

Was there anything you would liked to have been included?

"Not sure. The talk seemed fairly general. It should maybe have been more specific to the situation in Spelthorne."

Was there anything you would liked to be excluded?

No response

What new skills and knowledge can you bring immediately to your role as Councillor as a result of this training?

"None as I'm already aware of the situation."
"Extremely Valuable and will assist in navigating through the structure of the Council and how it all works."

Any other comments?

No response

IT Training

How Helpful was this course seminar?

Very Helpful	
Helpful	
Of some help	1 (50.0%)
Of no help	
No response	1 (50.0%)

How would you rate the following:

	Trainer	Contents	Structure	Visual Aids	Videos	Handouts	Facilities	Location
Excellent	1 (50.0%)							
Good				1 (50.0%)			2 (100.0%)	2 (100.0%)
Fairly Good	1 (50.0%)	2 (100.0%)	2 (100.0%)					
Poor								
No response				1 (50.0%)	2 (100.0%)	2 (100.0%)		

Was there anything you would liked to have been included?

"More specific help. We have to get used to new computers. The talks were probably too general rather than giving individual help where needed."

Was there anything you would liked to be excluded?

"For most people I believe over half of the course would not be anything new i.e. Outlook and Teams. Plus the IT team when hading over laptops gave Councillors a good idea of the general systems. So I would suggest perhaps doing the training in two halves – basic and more advanced so that those perhaps not very confident can do both and others could pick just the second which could be 30 minutes."

What new skills and knowledge can you bring immediately to your role as Councillor as a result of this training?

"Getting to know my new computer."
"I didn't learn anything as nothing was new to me."

Any other comments?

No response

Finance Briefing

How Helpful was this course seminar?

Very Helpful	
Helpful	
Of some help	1 (50.0%)
Of no help	
No response	1 (50.0%)

How would you rate the following:

	Trainer	Contents	Structure	Visual Aids	Videos	Handouts	Facilities	Location
Excellent								
Good	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)			2 (100.0%)	2 (100.0%)
Fairly Good	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)					
Poor								
No response				1 (50.0%)	2 (100.0%)	2 (100.0%)		

Was there anything you would liked to have been included?

"The training should have been simpler, more basic for those of us without a financial background."
"At this stage it is too early to know what else would be useful to know. But I feel like that we got a lot of good news and perhaps we would need to also know some of the bad news."

Was there anything you would liked to be excluded?

"Financial jargon."

What new skills and knowledge can you bring immediately to your role as Councillor as a result of this training?

"None. I've been struggling to understand the Council's finances for the past four years and I'm not there yet."
"It is general background knowledge that is required for general decision making."

Any other comments?

No response

Being an effective Councillor (LGA)

How Helpful was this course seminar?

Very Helpful	1 (50.0%)
Helpful	
Of some help	
Of no help	
No response	1 (50.0%)

How would you rate the following:

	Trainer	Contents	Structure	Visual Aids	Videos	Handouts	Facilities	Location
Excellent								
Good			1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)			1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)
Fairly Good	1 (50.0%)							
Poor		1 (50.0%)						
No response	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	2 (100.0%)	2 (100.0%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)

Was there anything you would liked to have been included?

No response

Was there anything you would liked to be excluded?

No response

What new skills and knowledge can you bring immediately to your role as Councillor as a result of this training?

"It was interesting getting an opinion from other council representatives. Especially as they were from other Councils, who had both done the peer review. Hopefully the peer review can be an annual event to tack and monitor progress or regress."
"I didn't find this helpful."

Any other comments?

"The course felt a bit self-indulgent. The speakers regularly spoke about other councils and I could not find much relevance or assistance from the course content. Considering how much time we are giving up I didn't have much patience as I felt my time could have been better spent."

Given the lack of responses, it is difficult to know what weight to give to any of the above comments and feedback.

What went well:
- Service Marketplace evening – lots of positive verbal feedback from councillors and officers.
- Generally good level of engagement at training sessions.
- Recording of training sessions was well received

What did not go well:
- Training 'fatigue' set in quickly amongst councillors.
- Poor attendance at some sessions
- Lack of enforcement around mandatory attendance of some sessions

Improvements/Amendments for 2027?
- Expand the service Marketplace – opportunity to showcase other services
- New Councillor Induction Day – afternoon session - hold a 'mock' Council session (cover standing orders, motions, best practice etc)
- Reduce the overall number of sessions / spread out the sessions / allow members to attend virtually (where appropriate).