

# Standards Committee



2 December 2024

<b>Title</b>	<i>Member Development Strategy 2025-2027</i>
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report Author</b>	<i>Matthew Williams, Democratic Services Officer</i>
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	<i>N/A</i>
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Community Addressing Housing Need Resilience Environment Services
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Committee is asked to:</b> <i>1. Adopt the Member Development Strategy 2025 - 2027. 2. Agree the reconstitution of the Member Development Steering Group as set out in the Terms of Reference at Appendix A</i>
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	<i>To ensure there is a robust strategy in place for Member Development.</i>

## 1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is currently no Member Development Strategy in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the 2023 Induction Programme there was no strategy for any further development for Members.</li> <li>A Member Development Strategy will ensure Members are provided with the right training to carry out their role effectively.</li> </ul>
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put in place a member-led strategy for further development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt the Member Development Strategy 2025-2027.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reinstate the Member Development Steering Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree to reinstate the Member Development Steering Group</li> </ul>
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1.1 Having a Member Development Strategy will help put in place the correct training to support Councillors, create a suitable Induction Programme for 2027 following elections, and aim to facilitate Councillor engagement with training sessions.

**2. Key issues**

2.1 The 2023 Member Induction Programme was put together by Committee Services based on the 2019 Induction Programme, input by the LGA, and research into what other Councils offered. Member input was sought once the draft programme had been completed.

2.2 A key aspect of the proposed Member Development Strategy is the reinstatement of the Member Development Steering Group, with the view that they would take a lead on identifying training needs for existing Councillors as well as working with officers to create the Induction Programme for 2027.

2.3 Attendance at non-mandatory training sessions for 2023 varied between 44.7% and 73.7%, with the average attendance being 63.2% (25 councillors). Members of the Member Development Steering Group would be expected to take a lead on encouraging attendance at training sessions.

2.4 Feedback forms were sent out to all attendees following the first eight training sessions in 2023. A total of twelve forms, from five different councillors, were received. The Member Development Strategy highlights the need for alternate arrangements for obtaining feedback from members following training sessions.

**3. Options analysis and proposal**

3.1 Option 1: Adoption of the Member Development Strategy 2025 – 2027 as set out at Appendix A (Recommended Option)

Option 2: Amend the Member Development Strategy 2025 – 2027 and then adopt.

Option 3: Choose not to progress with a Member Development Strategy.

**4. Financial management comments**

4.1 In 2023 a budget of £20,000 had been set aside for delivery of the Induction Programme and ongoing member development. To date £5954.97 has been spent on member training.

**5. Risk management comments**

5.1 Lack of comprehensive training could result in sub-optimal decision making leading to reduced value to the local taxpayer and communities served in delivering corporate priorities.

**6. Procurement comments**

7. Compliance with Contract standing orders is required if external training is sought.

**8. Legal comments**

9. The Monitoring Officer needs to ensure that members are appropriately trained in all aspects of the Council's business.

**10. Other considerations**

- 10.1 There are no other considerations.

**11. Equality and Diversity**

- 11.1 The Member Development Strategy aims to make all training more accessible by considering alternate options including hybrid sessions and training taking place at different times.

**12. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

- 12.1 The Member Development Strategy aims to introduce more hybrid options for attendance at training sessions therefore reducing the need for members and trainers to travel to the council offices.

**13. Timetable for implementation**

- 13.1 Standards Committee – 2 December 2024  
Council – 12 December 2024  
First meeting of Member Development Steering Group – January 2025 (TBC)

**14. Contact**

- 14.1 Matthew Williams, m.williams@spelthorne.gov.uk

**Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer  
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.**

**Background papers:**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Councillor, C. Morgan et al, 2016

**Appendices:**

**Appendix A – Member Development Strategy**

**Appendix B – Review of 2023 Members Induction Training**

**Appendix C – Indicative Timetable**