

Classification	Item No.
Open	

Meeting:	Standards Committee
Meeting date:	24 th September 2026
Title of report:	Member Development Programme 2026/27 & Training Requirements
Report by:	Jacqui Dennis, Director Law & Governance
Decision Type:	N/A Report for information only
Ward(s) to which report relates	(Not applicable)

Executive Summary:

The report provides Standards Committee with an overview of the Council's Member Development Programme for 2026/27, including the mandatory training requirements for Members, arrangements for monitoring attendance and completion, and the processes in place for addressing non-attendance. It also responds to a question raised by a Member at a previous Standards Committee regarding the training offer, attendance data and follow-up arrangements. Information is drawn from the Member Development Offer 2026-2027 found in appendix 1.

Recommendation(s)

1. Note the contents of the Member Development Programme for 2026/27.
2. Note the arrangements in place for monitoring attendance and training completion.
3. Note the response provided to the Member question concerning mandatory training, attendance monitoring and follow-up arrangements.
4. Support continued reporting of Member development activity and compliance with mandatory training requirements.

Background

The Member Development Programme is reviewed yearly, and the latest version is for the 2026/27 municipal year and is designed to support Members at all stages of their elected role. The programme is structured around four themes:

- Core Training
- Specialist Training
- Optional Training
- Leadership Development

The programme includes a combination of face-to-face sessions, virtual learning and e-learning modules to provide flexibility and improve accessibility for Members.

Following a request by the Member Development Group the Democratic Services Team are working with officers to deliver the option of face-to-face training for all core training modules.

Mandatory Training Requirements

The Member Development Group has identified a number of core training requirements that all Members are expected to complete in order to support good governance, statutory compliance and the effective discharge of their responsibilities. These include:

- Code of Conduct Training
- Corporate Planning and Performance Briefing
- LET'S Do It Strategy Update
- GDPR (annually)
- Health and Safety (minimum every three years)
- Equality and Diversity (minimum every three years)
- Corporate Parenting (minimum every three years)
- Safeguarding Against Radicalisation (minimum every three years)
- Climate Change (minimum every three years)

Members may also submit evidence of equivalent training completed through employment or voluntary roles for consideration and recording against their training record.

Committee-Specific Mandatory Training

Certain committee appointments carry mandatory training requirements. Members serving on regulatory or quasi-judicial committees must complete the relevant training before participating in decision-making meetings.

This includes:

- Planning Control Committee
- Licensing and Safety Committee
- Employment Panel
- Audit Committee
- Other specialist committees where training is prescribed

Training on the purpose of the meeting and an overview of responsibilities are covered for the three scrutiny committees.

The Member Development Offer confirms that Members of Licensing and Safety Committee, Planning Control Committee and Employment Panel must attend the relevant training before participating and voting at meetings.

Attendance Monitoring

Attendance and completion of mandatory training are monitored through a combination of:

- Attendance registers for in-person and virtual sessions.
- Completion reports from the Council's e-learning platform.
- A Member training dashboard which records progress against mandatory learning requirements.
- Updates provided by Democratic Services from training providers and officers delivering sessions.

Attendance information can be reported periodically to the Member Development Group and Standards Committee to provide assurance regarding compliance with the Council's training expectations.

Follow-Up Arrangements for Non-Attendance

Where Members do not attend mandatory training sessions or fail to complete required e-learning modules, a staged approach is adopted:

1. Reminder communications areas of high noncompliance are escalated and a targeted training session is put on through Democratic Services highlighting outstanding training requirements.

2. Alternative opportunities are provided where possible, including repeat sessions, virtual attendance options, recorded materials or e-learning modules.
3. Individual follow-up is undertaken with Members whose records show outstanding mandatory learning.
4. The Member Development Group receive regular reports on the training status of all elected members as a standing item.
5. Group Leaders may be notified where significant mandatory training requirements remain incomplete.
6. For regulatory committees, Members who have not completed the required training may be prevented from participating in committee business until the training requirement has been met, in accordance with the Council's governance arrangements.

This approach seeks to encourage compliance while supporting Members in balancing training commitments alongside their wider council and community responsibilities.

Member Question

At the Standards Committee a member asked whether feedback from the Member Development Group could be provided regarding mandatory training requirements, attendance data and arrangements for following up Members who do not attend training. Whilst the Member Development Group has not yet met and is set to meet on the 6th October, an overview of the training requirements as agreed at Member Development Group has been included in this report.

Response

The Member Development Group has been involved in shaping and reviewing the 2026/27 Member Development Offer, which includes a clear distinction between mandatory core training, specialist training linked to specific committee roles, optional learning opportunities and leadership development activities. The Group has supported the principle that Members should complete essential governance and compliance training and that those serving on regulatory committees must undertake the relevant specialist training before exercising decision-making responsibilities.

Attendance at both in-person and virtual sessions is recorded by Democratic Services, whilst completion of e-learning modules is monitored through the Council's online learning management system and Member training dashboard. This enables the Council to maintain accurate training records and identify outstanding requirements.

Where Members do not attend mandatory sessions, Democratic Services undertakes follow-up through alternative learning opportunities. Where non-compliance persists, Group Leaders may be informed, and where training is linked to membership of a

regulatory committee, Members may be unable to participate in committee business until the relevant training has been completed.

The Member Development Group will continue to review attendance levels, training content and delivery methods throughout the year to ensure the programme remains effective, accessible and responsive to Members' development needs.

Background paper:

Appendix 1 Member Development Offer 2026/27