



**Member Development
Annual Report 2023/24**

Member Development Annual Report 2023/24

Foreword from the Chair of the Member Development Working Group

I am pleased to present this annual report on Member Development for 2023/24. The Council is dedicated to fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional growth among our Councillors, recognising that their development is crucial to the effective governance and representation of the community.

The report highlights the various training sessions that have been conducted throughout the year, which for this year included a comprehensive induction programme following the District Council elections in May 2023.

The Member Development Working Group regularly considers feedback from training sessions and reviews the training opportunities available.

I would like to thank all those involved in delivering the Councillor training programme for 2023/24.

Councillor Sandra Peake

Chair of Member Development Working Group

1. Introduction

The purpose of this annual report is to provide a summary of member development work undertaken in the municipal year 2023/24.

Member development activities are designed to support the learning and development of Members so that they have the appropriate knowledge, skills and confidence to carry out their various roles and represent the public they were elected to serve.

The Annual Report covers the following subjects:

- Member Development Working Group
- Member Development Sessions
- Committee Specific Training and Other Training and Development Events
- Other Member Development Opportunities
- Member Induction Programme Development

Part of the Members' Roles and Responsibilities includes that Members 'be responsible for continuous personal development, engaging in available opportunities for training and development to build on understanding and knowledge, and to develop relevant skills.'

2. Member Development Working Group

The Council has a cross-party working group to oversee, monitor and make recommendations on member development. The Group is committed to supporting the development of Councillors and to enable them to engage effectively in the modernisation of local government and to deliver the Council's statutory functions and corporate objectives, and to represent the people of Bolsover District.

The Working Group was chaired by Cllr Sandra Peake and its membership in 2023/24 was as follows:

Councillor Rowan Clarke
Councillor Mary Dooley
Councillor Louise Fox
Councillor Tom Munro
Councillor Sandra Peake
Councillor Rita Turner
Councillor Deborah Watson

3. Member Learning, Development and Information Sessions

The purpose of the Member Learning, Development and Information Sessions is to provide a framework to support the achievement of members' objectives.

The sessions offer an opportunity for Members and officers to discuss the latest developments in local government in terms of policy, legislation and initiatives from Government and to undertake development work in an informal environment which supports learning.

The sessions held during 2023/24 are listed in the table below. The sessions largely comprised of Member Inductions Sessions following the May 2023 elections.

Date of Session	Topics	Attendance
20 May 2023	First Induction Session	28
17 May 2023	Induction Session – How the Council Works	25
17 May 2023	Induction Session – Risk Management	23
19 May 2023	Induction Session - Data Protection & FOI	16
19 May 2023	Induction Session - Safeguarding	15
23 May 2023	Induction Session – Equalities and Diversity	25
23 May 2023	Induction Session – Code of Conduct	24
23 May 2023	Induction Session – Health & Safety and Lone Working	22
31 May 2023	Induction Session - Planning Committees	18
6 June 2023	Induction Session - Corporate Priorities, Performance and Partnerships	23
6 June 2023	Induction Session - Dragonfly	20
8 June 2023	Induction Session – Licensing Committees	10
12 June 2023	Induction Session – Fraud Awareness and Local Government Finance	23
12 June 2023	Induction Session – Environmental Health	23
6 July 2023	Licensing Committees	6

Date of Session	Topics	Attendance
4 September 2023	Planning Committee Training (Planning Advisory Service - LGA)	-
6 September 2023	Prevent (Counter Terrorism) Training	5
15 January 2024	Safeguarding – catch up session	11
5 February 2024	FOI and Data Protection – catch up session	11
14 May 2024	Cyber Crime (Derbyshire Police)	19

External courses by the Local Government Association, Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and East Midlands Councils were also advertised to Councillors and places were booked as requested by individual Councillors. External courses advertised included Finance without the numbers – an introduction to local government finance, scoping and managing scrutiny reviews, national and local implications of the Government’s levelling up agenda, scrutiny questioning skills, data and managing council performance.

The attendance at many of the training sessions was low and participation and take up of training events remains an issue. Training is particularly important for certain subjects and there are a number of sessions that are set out as mandatory training sessions in the Members’ Code of Conduct. Training for members of particular committees such as Planning and Licensing are vital due to the nature of the decisions the committees take and it is essential that Members are trained prior to sitting on such committees. This is set out in Appendix A to the Members’ Code of Conduct.

The Member Development Working Group regularly considers the attendance of Councillors at training sessions.

4. Member Development Evaluation

The Working Group receives reports on a regular basis detailing evaluation, together with Members’ comments, on training and development events. All training events in 23/24 received largely positive feedback.

5. Member Development Programme Development

An email asking for Councillors to feedback any training needs was sent out in February and March 2024. The responses were considered by the Member Development Working Group which used them to develop a programme for 2024/25 following on from the Induction Programme in 2023.