



**Member Development
Annual Report 2024/25**

Member Development Annual Report 2024/25

Foreword from the Chair of the Member Development Working Group

I am pleased to present this annual report on Member Development for 2024/25. 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, including refresher training where required for Statutory Committees such as Planning and Licensing.

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 2024/25.

Councillor Sandra Peake

Chair of Member Development Working Group (2024/25)

1. Introduction

The purpose of this annual report is to provide a summary of member development work undertaken in the municipal year 2024/25.

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 2024/25 was as follows:

Councillor Rowan Clarke
Councillor Mary Dooley
Councillor Louise Fox
Councillor Justin Gilbody
Councillor Cathy Jeffery
Councillor Sandra Peake
Councillor Jen Wilson

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 2024/25 are listed in the table below. The sessions comprised of refresher training courses and topics requested by members.

Date of Session	Topics	Attendance
29th May 2024	Chairing Skills (Association of Democratic Services Officers)	6
14th June 2024	Planning	3
20th June 2024	Risk Management (Zurich)	16
26th June 2024	Scrutiny Essentials (Centre for Governance and Public Scrutiny)	13
18th June 2024	Licensing	6
26th July 2024	Licensing	2
16th September 2024	Planning	1
22nd January 2025	Planning – NPPF briefing	
17th March 2025	FOI and Data Protection	16
17th March 2025	Equalities and Diversity	17
17th March 2025	Security Briefing	20
17th March 2025	Safeguarding	13

Date of Session	Topics	Attendance
24th March 2025	Cyber Training for Councillors (webinar Derbyshire Police Online Safety Team)	
14 May 2025	Cyber Crime (Derbyshire Police)	
20th May 2025	Role of the Civic Head (EMC) *for Chair of Council	1

External courses by the Local Government Association (LGA), Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) and East Midlands Councils (EMC) were also advertised to Councillors and places were booked as requested by individual Councillors.

External courses and webinars were also shared with members by the Governance Team and included:

- 13th February 2024 – “Safer Internet Day” – Derbyshire Police
- 11 July 2024 - “What about the numbers? Understand them and use Storytelling to get your messages across” – LGA
- 12 July 2024 – “One Year On” Councillor Development Workshop – EMC
- Neurodiversity – webinar
- “Run, Hide and Tell” – online training

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 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.

It was decided to offer a number of training sessions on one day to see if this improved attendance and be a suitable option to enable members to attend a number of events on the same day. A good notice period was provided to enable members to plan to attend (especially for those needing to make caring or work arrangements).

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 2024/25 received 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 which followed on from the Induction Programme in 2023.