To all Members of the Member Development Group

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Member Development Group will be held on Monday, 25 September 2023 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber Area A, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

This meeting will be accessible and open to the public via the live stream on YouTube and viewed via the link: https://www.youtube.com/user/RushcliffeBC Please be aware that until the meeting starts the live stream video will not be showing on the home page. For this reason, please keep refreshing the home page until you see the video appear.

Yours sincerely

Gemma Dennis
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1.   Apologies for Absence

2.   Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 October 2022 (Pages 1 - 6)

3.   Declarations of Interest

        Link to further information in the Council's Constitution

4.   Evaluation of the 2023 Councillors Induction Programme (Pages 7 - 10)

5.   Councillors Training - Update September 2023 (Pages 11 - 16)

Membership

Chair: Councillor D Soloman
Councillors: M Barney, T Birch, T Combellack, M Gaunt, R Mallender, A Phillips, D Polenta and G Williams

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Toilets: are located to the rear of the building near the lift and stairs to the first floor.

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The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control.

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Rushcliffe
Borough Council

MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP
WEDNESDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2022
Held at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford

PRESENT:
Councillors R Mallender (Chairman), G Dickman, A Phillips, K Shaw, G Williams, C Jeffreys and J Wheeler

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:
C Caven-Atack   Service Manager - Corporate Services
E Richardson   Democratic Services Officer

ABSENT:
Councillors B Buschmann and M Gaunt

24   **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

25   **Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 May 2022**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

26   **Single Sign On for Training**

The ICT Project and Development Officer led the group through a demonstration of the Single Sign-On for Members e-learning.

27   **Councillor Training - Update**

The Service Manager Corporate Services presented her report providing an update on Councillor Training.

The Service Manager Corporate Services explained that the report formed part of a twice yearly update to the Group and set out the current position of training completed by Members, including for the mandatory training sessions such as licencing and planning which had now been completed. She explained that due to the death of Her Majesty the Queen, Risk Management Training had been rearranged and that that, along with Code of Conduct and Treasury Management Training, were scheduled to take place shortly.

The Group was informed that Single Sign-On for e-learning had been trialled and following the successful demonstration with Members of the Group at the

start of this meeting, it was planned to now roll this out to all Councillors. The Single Sign-On link could be found on the front page of the Members Intranet and Councillors simply needed to click on the link to take them directly to their e-learning account where all available training would be listed.

The Service Manager Corporate Services explained that the aim of the Single Sign-On was to make it easier for Councillors to access training and for it to act as a reminder of what had been completed and what was outstanding. The system would also send notification emails to Members to let them know of e-learning courses that they were due to complete, with a link taking them to their e-leaning account. She asked for Members to report any difficulties experienced and highlighted that the alternative to e-learning would be in-person training which had cost and time commitments. She said that the Council would circulate individual training records to all Members shortly.

The Chairman referred to anecdotal feedback from Councillors that they had previously had difficulty finding the training system and therefore thought that the Single Sign-On access, with the reminder system, would be a great help, particularly for training which required regular refreshment such as GDPR. The Chairman encouraged Members of the Group to feed this back to Councillor colleagues to hopefully lead to an increase in training completed.

In relation to bringing in sanctions for uncompleted training, Members of the Group thought that this wouldn't be necessary and suggested that it could be more for Chairs and Vice Chairs to encourage uptake for their relevant Committee members. The Group also hoped that the Single Sign-on in itself would help with completion rates.

Councillor J Wheeler suggested that Councillors not be allowed to sit on committees until they had completed the training required for that committee and highlighted the importance of mandatory training, such as GDPR for accessing emails, as potentially something that the Information Commissioner would look at if there were a data breach. He suggested that election candidates be pre-notified that completion of basic and mandatory training would be required of them if elected as a Councillor next year.

In relation to training completed elsewhere, including at the County Council and through employers and external organisations, Members of the Group asked whether this would count towards their Borough Council training record. The Service Manager Corporate Services confirmed that it could as some training was universal, such as GDPR, and said that Members just needed to provide certification of completion. She explained that the Borough Council was working with the County Council to share training information, and whilst there were differences in some training which meant that they needed to be completed separately at both organisations, such as for planning, much would be transferrable.

Councillor Williams referred to training completed externally and noted that it may have differences in content to that of the Council. The Service Manager Corporate Services agreed but said that the Council took a pragmatic approach in trusting that external training resulting in a certificate would be at a sufficiently high level to cover necessary information.

The Chairman thought that good engagement in training meant that Councillors completed the minimum level required for the committees on which they sat, and then progressed to complete training on other useful topics and for other committees, for example planning training was useful for engagement with residents and commenting on applications.

Councillor Williams asked whether external training would also feed into the e-learning system to show as completed there so as not to trigger reminders. He also questioned whether display screen equipment training was essential for Councillors as they often did not sit at a desk for long periods of time.

Councillor Williams asked whether external training completed but not specified in the Council's list of courses could be recognised and listed in Councillor's training records, such as CPR training. The Chairman confirmed that the Council did recognise external training certificates.

Councillor Jeffreys referred to changes in language and said that it would be helpful to have guidance about the appropriateness and inappropriateness of some words, so as not to cause offence. The Service Manager Corporate Services confirmed that inclusive language guidance for officers was currently being prepared, which would be used to create a guide for Councillors. The Council was looking at providing more involved equality and diversity training and also to incorporate information into the Councillor induction training about public speaking and making speeches.

The Chairman referred also to Local Government speak and the use of acronyms which were not always readily understood by residents. He agreed that the connotations of language needed to be understood, including how to address people and Committee Chairs as people had differing preferences.

Members of the Group thought that in-person training courses needed to be delivered with passion to keep people engaged.

The Chairman asked that Members of the Group contact Officers if they had any additional feedback following the meeting.

It was RESOLVED that the Member Development Group:

a) discussed the information provided by officers in relation to Councillor Learning and Development
b) suggested any actions or ideas they may have in relation to Councillor Learning and Development which would address the concerns raised by officers through the report.

28   Draft 2023 Councillor Induction Programme

The Service Manager Corporate Services referred to the induction process for newly elected Councillors, and specifically the Councillor's Handbook which set out all of the basic information that a Councillor needed to know immediately upon election. She confirmed that the Council was proposing to keep the handbook and asked if Members of the Group would support that decision and

if they had any feedback about content.

Members of the Group agreed that the handbook was useful and that the Council should continue to provide it. Members of the Group asked whether it would be available online, and also how a candidate could get it if they did not attend the count to receive it at that point. The Service Manager Corporate Services confirmed that a physical copy would be handed out to Councillors at the count and whilst it was unusual for a candidate to not attend, a copy could be emailed or posted to them if required. The content of the handbook would also be replicated on the Members extranet. The Group suggested that it would be helpful to have a pdf version of the handbook also.

The Service Manager Corporate Services reflected that the 2019 training schedule had included twelve face-to-face training sessions over a seven week period and had been hard for officers and Councillors, and had ultimately resulted in a drop off in attendance. Members of the Group echoed those sentiments and thought that it had involved a lot of time and travel commitment and questioned whether the new programme could include online and hybrid training and also whether information could be uploaded onto the Members Extranet.

The Service Manager Corporate Services referred to proposals for the 2023 induction programme as set out in the report, which included three sessions. The first session proposed was an evening drop-in session where Councillors could meet officers and other Councillors and complete essential paperwork and find out key information; Session One – Admin and Logistics. Session Two would be an all-day Saturday session covering fundamental information about the work of a council and what it was to be a Councillor; Session Two – The Fundamentals. Session Three would an exhibition style evening session providing information about the wider work of the Council, including partner organisations and big scheme projects; Session Three – The bigger Picture.

Councillor Jeffreys said that it was essential that returning Councillors attend these sessions to engage with and support the new Councillors. Members of the Group also suggested that new Councillors be reminded to speak to their employer about having flexibility to attend to Council business and asked whether training sessions could be recorded so that Councillors who both were and weren't able to attend could use them as a learning resource.

Members of the Group supported the three session schedule and the breakdown of information into three discreet events, including having a drop-in session where Councillors could meet with colleagues.

Members of the Group thought that informing candidates of the dates ahead of the election would be helpful so that they could hold those dates in their diaries. The Service Manager Corporate Services confirmed the expectation that newly elected Councillors would make themselves available to attend these sessions. If there was circumstance where attendance wasn't possible then alternative provision would be made.

The Service Manager Corporate Services referred to the proposed training schedule and explained that information previously contained within the initial

induction programme had now been moved into the medium term programme, which would commence after the induction training had concluded. She explained that key training, such as planning and licensing, had been front loaded for early completion and in readiness for the commencement of committee and Full Council meetings.

The Service Manager Corporate Services explained the much of the training would be run internally, supported by training offered by East Midlands Councils where appropriate.

Councillor Jeffreys thought that the inclusion of training on Motions was very important and the Service Manager Corporate Services confirmed that the Council had well developed training in place.

The Service Manager Corporate Services referred to proposals for the longer-term training programme which included some information being provided through written and how-to documentation or short videos where a Councillor demonstrated how to do something, rather than an in-person training session.

The Chairman opened discussion about Members of this Group being involved in training videos to share experience and knowledge, which could be created ahead of the elections. Members of the Group supported the use of written and videos training, including how to access and use the planning system.

Councillor Williams asked about scrutiny training and the Service Manager Corporate Services explained that the Council had provided much training on scrutiny over recent years, and it was included as part of the medium-term programme, which could be expanded on if and as required.

The Chairman said that there was a role for political groups and experienced Councillors to support and explain the workings of the Council to new Councillors. The Service Manager Corporate Services said that Councillors sharing information and speaking positively about the training programme would support learning.

It was RESOLVED that the Member Development Group:

a) discussed the proposals that officers had put forward for the 2023 Induction Programme.
b) put forward any ideas or suggestions to officers at the meeting to increase councillor engagement in the Induction Programme.

The meeting closed at 7:20pm

CHAIRMAN

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	Member Development Group
Rushcliffe Borough Council	**Monday, 25 September 2023**
	Evaluation of the 2023 Councillors' Induction Programme

Report of the Service Manager – Corporate Services

1. Purpose of report

1.1. Contained within the Terms of Reference for Member Development Group are the following specified roles:

- Creating an environment that encourages self-development and continuous learning

- Identifying, delivering and evaluating learning and development opportunities for all Councillors.

1.2. Every four years the Member Development Group is responsible for creating an Induction Programme for new Councillors following a Borough Council Election. This report presents the evaluation of the 2023 Councillors' Induction Programme and poses a number of questions for the Group to consider in relation to future training and the development of the next Induction Programme in 2026.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Member Development Group:

a) Discuss the information provided by officers in relation to the evaluation of the 2023 Councillor Induction Programme

b) Suggest any actions or ideas they may have in relation to future training for Councillors or the development of the next Councillor Induction Programme in 2026.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1. Learning and Development is an essential part of being a Councillor. The Member Development Group has been set up to advise and direct Councillor Learning and Development. The Councillor Induction Programme is a vital element of the Councillors Learning and Development Policy. It is good practice to evaluate training after is has been delivered to identify any improvements or changes that need to be made in the future.

4. Supporting Information

4.1. The 2023 Councillors' Induction Programme consisted of an Induction Handbook and three targeted sessions over the ten days following the Borough Council election on 4 May 2023.

4.2. The Induction Handbook, at 32 pages, contained a large amount of information about the Borough and the Council, the role of a councillor, contact details for officers and partners, meeting and training session dates. It was handed to every councillor on the declaration of the result for their ward on Friday 5 May 2023.

4.3. In terms of the Induction Programme, session one, on Wednesday 10 May, titled 'Admin and Logistics', was a drop-in session enabling new and returning councillors to take care of essential admin at an early opportunity. As well as signing the Official Acceptance of Office, councillors were able to complete their Register of Interests, a Starter Form, gain access to council emails and have their photo taken for their ID badge. Refreshments were served and there was the opportunity to meet fellow councillors and senior officers. 40 councillors attended.

4.4. Session two was entitled 'The Fundamentals' and took place on Saturday 13 May from 9.30am until 3pm and included lunch. It covered information about the Borough, how the Council operates, and its governance arrangements providing new councillors in particular with the information they needed with regard to committee places in advance of Annual Council. A number of returning Councillors also attended and they were invited to share their experiences and provide insight at various points during the day. Practical training was also given in regard to the Council's microphones. 28 councillors attended.

4.5. Session three, on Wednesday 17 May, entitled 'The Bigger Picture' focused more on the internal workings of the Council including the services it provides. There was also an opportunity to hear about the work of Town and Parish Councils, and how to build relationships with them, as well as the chance to meet key partners and learn about the Council's biggest projects at the moment. This session was attended by 30 councillors.

4.6. All of the induction sessions were delivered by senior officers and were open to all councillors. Attendance across the three sessions was 74% (98/132).

4.7. A SurveyMonkey evaluation of the Induction Sessions was circulated to all councillors in May 2023 following the final session. 13 councillors provided feedback using the form and four more provided unsolicited feedback via email.

4.8. Session One Feedback:
- Speed dating approach worked well
- Clear where to go and who to talk to
- Plenty of people to talk to

- IT needed more staff or a quicker process
- A list of expenses that councillors can claim would have been helpful
- IT not being able to load the portal onto Apple devices was disappointing
- 67% of respondents were very satisfied, 25% satisfied and 8% (one respondent) neither satisfied or dissatisfied.

4.9.   Session Two Feedback:
- Excellent content conveyed in an interesting manner
- Mock up on Council meeting very helpful
- More on motions would have been helpful
- Having the slides in advance would have been good so that notes could be made on them instead of in a separate place
- 70% of respondents were very satisfied and 30% satisfied.

4.10.   Session Three Feedback:
- Content of session very helpful
- Room layout was appropriate for the session
- 73% of respondents were very satisfied and 27% satisfied.

4.11.   Respondents were asked after each session whether they found officers helpful and if the session met their needs – all responses were positive.

4.12.   Feedback was received in relation to each of the induction sessions:
- "As an introductory session it met my expectations. Good balance not to overwhelm/overload new councillors. Very friendly atmosphere putting one at ease" [session one].
- "Thank you for yesterday. A very useful and engaging day" [session two].
- "It was a full introduction and I felt confident that I know where to go for specific information" [session three].
- "I found the induction sessions very useful, however, I did feel that an awful lot of information was thrown at us (not literally!) in a very short space of time and did wonder how completely newly elected councillors would manage to process so much new information in what was a very short space of time between sessions" [all sessions].
- "It is actually fantastically helpful to have it done like that. It will save hours of searching through emails or annoying Democratic Services" [the Induction Handbook].

4.13.   The survey also asked for suggestions of where the Induction Programme could be improved:
- More ICT staff at Session One to expediate getting Councillors' devices uploaded with software to enable them to access emails, the portal and paperwork for meetings.
- Provision of more information on expenses either in the Handbook or at the Induction sessions.

5.   Questions to prompt discussion:

5.1.   Member Development Group is asked to consider:
- Was the 2023 Councillor Induction Programme successful?
- Was the format and number of sessions appropriate?
- Did the content of the Handbook and Sessions meet the needs of new (and returning) councillors?
- Were the presenters clear, knowledgeable and welcoming?
- Does the Group have any ideas or suggestions to improve the Councillors Induction Programme?
- What does the Group wish to record now that would assist in the development of the 2026 Councillors Induction Programme?

For more information contact:	Charlotte Caven-Atack Service Manager - Corporate Services 0115 9148278 ccaven-atack@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	None

	Member Development Group
Rushcliffe Borough Council	**Monday, 25 September 2023**
	Councillors' Training - Update

Report of the Service Manager – Corporate Services

1.   Purpose of report

1.1.   Contained within the Terms of Reference for Member Development Group are the following specified roles:

- Creating an environment that encourages self-development and continuous learning
- Identifying, delivering and evaluating learning and development opportunities for all Councillors.

1.2.   This Training Update is brought before the Group to inform members of the current position in regard to Councillor Learning and Development (training) and prompt discussion about the training of Councillors both now and in the future.

2.   Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Member Development Group:

a)   Discuss the information provided by officers in relation to Councillor Learning and Development

b)   Suggest any actions or ideas they may have in relation to Councillor Learning and Development.

c)   Consider undertaking action to encourage Councillors to attend training sessions.

3.   Reasons for Recommendation

3.1.   Learning and Development is an essential part of being a Councillor. The Member Development Group has been set up to advise and direct Councillor Learning and Development and has agreed to receive regular updates about this matter.

4.   Supporting Information

4.1.   The 2023/24 Councillor Training Programme kicked off immediately after the 2023 Councillor Induction in May 2023. The Programme has so far delivered 12 events. These are summarised below for information and discussion.

Planning for Ward Councillors – 18 and 30 May
- Attended by twenty-seven Councillors over two sessions
- Delivered by officers from the Planning and Growth team
- Feedback provided by six councillors; five were satisfied with the training, one would have like more practical, hands-on assistance using the Planning Portal online
- Councillors would like further training on s106 and CIL.

Planning for Committee Members – 1 and 7 June
- Attended by thirty-eight Councillors over two sessions
- Delivered by officers from the Planning and Growth team
- Feedback provided by seven councillors; all were satisfied or very satisfied with the event; specific comments included professionally presented, well-structured, provided a good understanding of different roles, mock planning committee excellent
- Councillors would like further training on how applications fit with neighbourhood planning policy

GDPR and Cyber Security – 15 June
- Attended by six Councillors
- Delivered by the Council's Chief Information Officer and Head of ICT
- Feedback was received from four Councillors with all being satisfied with the event; one commented that a potentially dull subject had been made interesting with real life examples

Scrutiny Skills – 13 and 19 June
- Attended by twenty-three Councillors over two sessions
- Delivered by the Service Manager – Corporate Services
- No feedback was received from Councillors

Additional Planning training delivered via MSTeams – 21 June
- Attended by four Councillors
- Delivered by Delivered by officers from the Planning and Growth team
- No feedback was received from Councillors

Capital and Investments – 21 June
- Attended by twenty-two Councillors
- Delivered by officers from the Financial Services team
- Feedback received from one Councillor who was satisfied and reported the training as being short and to the point

Motions Training – 27 June
- Attended by sixteen Councillors
- Delivered by the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer
- Feedback received from three Councillors who were all satisfied or very satisfied and they found the session relaxed and engaging

Getting Tough – 17 July

- Attended by twenty councillors
- Delivered by officers from Planning and Growth and Environmental Health
- One councillor provided feedback which was positive, commended the length Q&A session but suggested that some practical examples or case studies would have provided further insight.

   Planning Issues within the Greenbelt delivered via MSTeams – 26 July
- Attended by seventeen Councillors
- Delivered by officers from the Planning and Growth team
- Four councillors provided feedback – one was satisfied and three were not. One provided feedback that the session was disrupted by a small number of councillors with very political views. Two suggested that the session could have been improved by the presentation of the topic from a councillor's perspective. Further feedback suggested that this session would have been more effective if run in-person rather than virtually.

4.2. In addition, two Councillors attended an East Midlands Councils run event focusing on Chairing Skills in July 2023.

4.3. Mandatory training is required before taking up a seat on five of the Council's Committees. At the time of reporting, all eleven members of the Planning Committee have received planning training this year, and an additional twenty-eight councillors are sufficiently trained to act as substitutes. Training for Licensing Committee members and members of the Standards Committee take place in September and November respectively. Training for members of the Appointments Committee and Employment Appeals Committee will take place prior to these committees being needed.

4.4. Events still to be delivered on the Training Programme for 2023/24 include:
- Understanding Local Government Finance – 7 September, 6pm [at the time of writing]
- Understanding Licensing Committee – 18 September, 6pm
- Risk Management Training – 28 September, 6pm
- Understanding CIL and S106 agreements – 11 October, 6pm
- Understanding Emergency Planning – 18 October, 6pm.
- Understanding Standards Committee – 29 November, 6pm

4.5. Anecdotal feedback would indicate that a further session on GDPR and Cyber Security would be welcomed, as would a more focused session for Scrutiny Group Chairs.

4.6. Specific sessions well received in previous years have included the following:
- Getting started with E-Learning – previously delivered by officers
- Personal Resilience – previously delivered by Nelson Training
- Effective Public Speaking – previously delivered by Nelson Training
- Media Training – previously delivered by The Media Group
- Climate Change – previously delivered by Climate Fresk
- Defib and CPR training – previously delivered by Trent First Responders

- Code of Conduct training – previously delivered by Governance Training and Consultancy Ltd.

4.7.   Councillors can also access the Council's e-learning modules. There are six essential and eleven discretionary modules. From October 2023, Councillors will receive an email focusing on a specific e-learning course that should be completed within the next six weeks. Courses generally take between 20-30minutes to complete. A summary of e-learning completion rates will be provided at the next meeting of the Member Development Group.

4.8.   Individual learning records are kept for Councillors. These are available on request from Democratic Services either by individuals or Group Leaders.

4.9.   Training attendance has been problematic in the past and as a consequence is closely monitored. The percentage of expected Councillors attending in-person training events this municipal year currently stands at 58% which is higher than it has been in the past. However, there are pockets of non-attendance: two Councillors have attended no training, four Councillors have only attended one training session, three Councillors have attended two training sessions and five Councillors have only attended three training sessions. Of these Councillors, three are new Councillors and eleven are returning Councillors. They span both political groups and independent seats. Training not only assists Councillors to develop in their roles, but helps protect them as individuals, the Council and ultimately residents, so they can undertake their roles to the best of their ability.

4.10.   Whilst e-learning modeules are openly available, the requirement to complete essential modules has not yet been activated. This will be reported upon at the next meeting.

4.11.   The Councillors Training Budget stands at £8,000 for 2023/24 and drops to £5,000 in 2024/25. Current expenditure for 2023/24 stands at £650. This is mainly because the majority of training sessions have been provided internally at this point in the year by officers rather than needing to bring in external trainers.

Questions to prompt discussion:

4.12.   Member Development Group is asked to consider:

- Has the training that has already been delivered met the needs of Councillors and been well received?
- Are there any improvements that could be made to the training that has already taken place?
- Has the training that has already taken place identified any areas for future or further training?
- Is the Group aware of any additional training needs that the current programme fails to meet that could be investigated for inclusion on the 2024/25 programme?

- Are there any concerns about training attendance and if so what action would the Group like to take?

For more information contact:	Charlotte Caven-Atack Service Manager - Corporate Services Tel: 0115 9148278 ccaven-atack@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Councillors Learning and Development Policy – July 2021
List of appendices:	

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