



## **Member Development Group**

**Wednesday, 12 October 2022**

## **Draft 2023 Councillor Induction Programme**

### **Report of the Service Manager – Corporate Services**

#### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1. The next Borough Council Elections are on Thursday, 4 May 2023. Following the local elections, the Council has a responsibility to ensure new councillors are adequately prepared for their new roles and returning councillors are provided with opportunities to update essential skills. There is also paperwork to complete, and the induction provides both councillors and officers with the opportunity to start building important working relationships.
- 1.2. This report provides members of the Group with an overview of the 2019 Induction Programme (as a reminder), and the proposals developed by officers for the 2023 events. It invites members of the Group to discuss the proposals and help officers shape the content and format of the sessions.

#### **2. Recommendation**

It is RECOMMENDED that the Member Development Group:

- a) Discuss the proposals that officers have 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.

#### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1. The Induction Programme is for new and returning councillors. Therefore, it is important for existing councillors to be involved in its development to ensure the content and format meet the needs and expectations of the target audience.

#### **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1. The Induction Programme is primarily aimed at new councillors elected at the May 2023 Borough Council Election. Its purpose is to share information about how the Council works, inform them about their new role and responsibilities, and to ensure they have the knowledge and skills needed to carry out their new roles effectively. It also provides the opportunity for both new and

returning councillors to complete necessary paperwork and for returning councillors to update their knowledge and skills in key areas.

- 4.2. The 2019 Induction Handbook contained information on the following topics:
- Introduction from the Chief Executive and a map of the Borough
  - Introduction to RBC
  - Key officers – role and contact information
  - Contact details for Democratic Services
  - Contact details for Lead Specialists
  - Working together to deliver what's right for Rushcliffe
  - What you can expect from us and what we'd like in return
  - How the Council works – an overview
  - Know your Council – services delivered by RBC / NCC
  - How to get an issue resolved
  - Essential information about accessing information, meetings and making decisions
  - Diary of meetings for the first three months
  - Overview of the induction programme
  - Details about individual sessions
  - E-learning
  - The annual training programme.
- 4.3. It is proposed that the 2023 Induction Handbook takes the same format and contains updated information. Does the Group have any additional content ideas for the Handbook?
- 4.4. The 2019 Induction Programme contained 12 face-to-face training sessions delivered over a seven-week period following the election in early May 2019. Some sessions were targeted primarily at new councillors and for some both new and returning councillors were encouraged to attend. Some training sessions are important to hold before meetings take place (Council, planning and scrutiny), and some paperwork is essential to enable councillors to access systems and for their new roles to be publicised.
- 4.5. Attendance at the sessions on the 2019 Induction Programme started reasonably high at 22 attendees (17 new councillors) but had dropped to 12 attendees (8 new councillors) by the last session of the Induction Programme in mid-June 2019. It is important to remember that not all sessions were targeted at all councillors and so 100% attendance is not a realistic goal. The Induction Programme is followed up each year with a Councillors Training Programme. This was launched in September 2019, and by December it was clear that the Council was experiencing a problem with Councillor engagement in training. Anecdotal evidence at the time pointed towards training fatigue as a result of the very long and intensive Induction Programme – the content was excellent but was just too much to absorb as a new councillor and there was no break allowing new councillors to find their feet and adjust to their new roles.

- 4.6. Do members of the Group have any feedback on the 2019 Induction Programme or its subsequent effect on training engagement in the following three years?
- 4.7. It is clear to officers that there is an art to balancing the induction process – the volume and breadth of content that needs to be imparted, the length of the induction process, and the ability of councillors to absorb information and integrate their new roles into existing responsibilities.
- 4.8. Therefore, the proposals for the 2023 Induction Programme focus on three sessions immediately following the May 2023 election with a medium and longer term training programme to follow-up. The 2023 Induction Programme is outlined in detail in Appendix One and summarised below:
- **Session One – Admin and Logistics**  
**When:** Wednesday 10 May 2023 – 5-8pm (drop-in session)  
**For:** New and returning Councillors  
**Summary:** Opportunity for new Councillors to meet returning Councillors and key officers; Admin to be taken care of at earliest opportunity; Refreshments to be provided.  
**Specific activities:** Sign Official Acceptance of Office; Access Advice and Complete Register of Interests; Complete Starter Form including Contact Information, Bank Details, Next of Kin, Vehicle Registration; Have photo taken for ID Card; Register for Councillor Email account; Have InTune installed on device.
  - **Session Two – The Fundamentals**  
**When:** Saturday 13 May 2023 – 9.30am-3.30pm (lunch included)  
**For:** New Councillors (though returning Councillors are welcome to attend)  
**Summary:** Everything you need to know about the Borough, the Council and its governance arrangements in advance of Annual Council (25 May).  
**Specific activities:** Detailed presentations and handouts where appropriate; opportunities for returning councillors to share insight of particular roles / responsibilities; practical exercises where these can be effective in the time available.
  - **Session Three – The Bigger Picture**  
**When:** Wednesday 17 May 2023  
**For:** New Councillors (though returning Councillors are welcome to attend)  
**Summary:** Presentations from each Director (supported by their Service Managers) on the different functions / teams within the Council (like we do for our staff inductions) of 10 minutes each and a 20-minute presentation on Town and Parish Councils focusing on how our Councillors can support / link with them. A ‘partner’ exhibition at the rear of the Council Chamber for new Councillors to explore before and after the brief presentations. Additional exhibition style displays on the Council’s key projects.
- 4.9. The Group is asked to provide officers feedback in the meeting about the following points:
- The length and timing of the Induction Programme

- The breadth of content of the Induction Programme
  - The format of the Induction Programme.
- 4.10. The medium-term follow-up Training Programme aims to impart vital information about the role of a Councillor and the skills they will need to be an effective Councillor. It has been timed to run between June and December 2023 allowing a few weeks between the Induction Programme and the start of the more in-depth Training Programme for Councillors to take a break and also for Annual Council to take place meaning that Councillors will know what groups and committees they have been nominated to so that training can be targeted. The full Training Programme is outlined in Appendix Two and summarised below:
- Planning for Ward Councillors
  - Understanding Planning Committee
  - Understanding Scrutiny / Scrutiny Skills
  - Understanding Licensing Committee
  - Understanding Standards Committee
  - Understanding Local Government Finance
  - Understanding your responsibilities
  - Using technology in meetings
  - Understanding and making the most of motions at Council
  - Chairing Skills.
- 4.11. Member Development Group are asked to consider the content of this medium-term programme and whether the sessions should be in any particular order or delivered by any specific point in time.
- 4.12. The longer-term Training Programme runs from January 2024 onwards and contains topics as set out in Appendix Two. It also features the annual Budget Briefing sessions for Councillors. Officers have also highlighted a small number of areas where a short video or printed materials would help reinforce or replace the need for additional training. Have the Group got any further suggestions or observations to make which might assist officers when pulling the training programme together?
- 4.13. All Councillors will also have access to e-learning modules which will be activated on a bimonthly basis – Councillors will be notified via email there is a module to complete, and completions will be reported to this Group and Group Leaders twice a year.
- 4.14. Councillors can help promote engagement in the Induction Programme and ongoing Training Programme by speaking positively about training and the benefits of participation in Group meetings and with their fellow Councillors. Can members of the Group suggest any additional ways officers can encourage engagement in the Induction programme and ongoing training?
- 4.15. A number of questions and discussion points have been raised by officers in the report above. For ease these are summarised below:

- Does the Group have any additional content ideas for the Handbook? (para 4.3)
- Do members of the Group have any feedback on the 2019 Induction Programme or its subsequent effect on training engagement in the following three years? (para 4.6)
- The Group is asked to provide officers feedback in the meeting about the following points:
  - The length and timing of the Induction Programme
  - The breadth of content of the Induction Programme
  - The format of the Induction Programme (para 4.9)
- Member Development Group are asked to consider the content of this medium-term programme and whether the sessions should be in any particular order or delivered by any specific point in time (para 4.11)
- Have the Group got any further suggestions or observations to make which might assist officers when pulling the training programme together? (para 4.12)
- Can members of the Group suggest any additional ways officers can encourage engagement in the Induction programme and ongoing training? (para 4.14).

## **5. Risks and Uncertainties**

- 5.1. There are significant risks associated with Councillors not participating in training. These include damage to the Council's reputation as well as the potential for unconstitutional decisions to be made. Therefore, it is important that every effort is made to encourage Councillors to participate in training.

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1. Financial Implications**

The Council has a Councillors' Training budget that is profiled over the four-year term. This covers training that officers organise on the Councillors behalf but also allows for Councillors to attend training provided by other organisations such as East Midlands Councils.

### **6.2. Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications contained within the recommendations of this report.

### **6.3. Equalities Implications**

The Council provides training in both day and evening slots, as well as face-to-face and e-learning formats to cater for different learning styles.

#### 6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no Section 17 implications contained within the recommendations of this report.

#### 7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	An effective and targeted Induction Programme is essential to provide Councillors with the skills and knowledge they require to support the Council's priorities in their work.
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	
The Environment	

#### 8. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Member Development Group:

- a) Discuss the proposals that officers have 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.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Charlotte Caven-Atack Service Manager - Corporate Services ccaven-atack@rushcliffe.gov.uk
<b>Background papers available for Inspection:</b>	
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix One – The draft 2023 Induction Programme Appendix Two – Forward looking Training Programme

## **Proposed Induction Programme for New and Returning Councillors – May 2023**

Election and Count 4/5 May 2023

### **Session One – Admin and Logistics**

**When:** Wednesday 10 May 2023 – 5-8pm (drop-in session)

**For:** New and returning Councillors

**Summary:** Opportunity for new Councillors to meet returning Councillors and key officers; Admin to be taken care of at earliest opportunity; Refreshments to be provided.

**Specific activities:** Sign Official Acceptance of Office; Access Advice and Complete Register of Interests; Complete Starter Form including Contact Information, Bank Details, Next of Kin, Vehicle Registration; Have photo taken for ID Card; Register for Councillor Email account; Have InTune installed on device.

**Officers in attendance:** Democratic Services; MO and DMO; Media; ICT; possibly Finance; possibly EMT / SMs if available.

**Timings:** Likely to take returning Councillors 10-15 minutes to complete all tasks (not all are necessary for returning Councillors) – will be encouraged to chat to new Councillors but not expected to hang around for the whole 3-hour session. Likely to take new Councillors 45-60 minutes to complete all tasks depending on complexity of personal circumstances and staff availability. Refreshments, returning Councillors and key officers available to bridge any gaps. Also provides social opportunity to enable people to get to know each other.

## **Session Two – The Fundamentals**

**When:** Saturday 13 May 2023 – 9.30am-3.30pm (lunch included)

**For:** New Councillors (though returning Councillors are welcome to attend)

**Summary:** Everything you need to know about the Borough, the Council and its governance arrangements in advance of Annual Council (25 May).

**Specific activities:** Detailed presentations and handouts where appropriate; opportunities for returning councillors to share insight of particular roles / responsibilities; practical exercises where these can be effective in the time available.

**Officers in attendance:** EMT and Service Managers; MO, DMO, Democratic Services

### **Timings:**

9.30-10.15 – Welcome to Rushcliffe Borough Council [including introduction to the Borough; structure and workings of the Council; introduction to EMT; summary of Council services; key priorities, challenges and opportunities; and financial standing]

10.15-11 – Being a Rushcliffe Borough Councillor [including skills and attributes of a modern councillor; role and responsibilities; community leadership; being a ward councillor; the councillor / officer protocol (working together); support for councillors; how to get an issue resolved; essential reading]

11-11.30 – Comfort break

11.30-12 – The Constitution and Code of Conduct [what it says on the tin!]

12-1 – All about meetings – Council [including what to expect (room layout); role of the Mayor; technology; agenda; citizens' questions; motions (and amendments); councillors' questions; points of order; voting; a practical exercise]

1-1.30 – Lunch break

1.30-1.50 – All about meetings – Cabinet [including what to expect (room layout); agenda; citizens' questions; opposition group leaders' questions; confidential items; forward plan; key decisions; shared experience from a returning councillor (portfolio holder)]

1.50-2.10 – All about meetings – Scrutiny [including what to expect (room layout); agenda; structure; matrix; witnesses; call-in; insight from current chairmen; link to more focused training later in training programme]

2.10-2.30 – All about meetings – Planning Committee [including what to expect (room layout); agenda; committee workings and responsibilities; public speaking; ward councillor responsibilities; insight from current committee member / chairman; links to more focused training later in training programme]

2.30-2.45 – All about meetings – Licensing Committee [including what to expect (room layout); agenda; committee workings and responsibilities; ward councillor responsibilities; insight from current committee member / chairman; links to more focused training later in training programme]

2.45-3 – All about meetings – Standards Committee [including what to expect (room layout); agenda; committee workings and responsibilities; links to more focused training later in training programme]

3-3.15 – All about meetings – Other meetings and groups

3.15-3.30 – Wrap-up and further training opportunities



## **Session Three – The Bigger Picture**

**When:** Wednesday 17 May 2023

**For:** New Councillors (though returning Councillors are welcome to attend)

**Summary:** Presentations from each Director (supported by their Service Managers) on the different functions / teams within the Council (like we do for our staff inductions) of 10 minutes each and a 20-minute presentation on Town and Parish Councils focusing on how our Councillors can support / link with them. A 'partner' exhibition at the rear of the Council Chamber for new Councillors to explore before and after the brief presentations. Additional exhibition style displays on the Council's key projects.

**Officers in attendance:** EMT and Service Managers; Partners (Parkwood, Mitte, Metropolitan, Wise, Community Safety Partnership, xxx)

**Timings:** 5.30-7.30pm (presentations 6-7pm)

## Proposed Training Programme for 2023-2024

To follow-up Induction Programme (taking place in the three / four months following the election)

- Planning for Ward Councillors – for all councillors making them aware of their responsibilities in terms of responding to planning consultations and speaking at planning committee (can this be covered in a 45-minute pre-Council session?)
- Understanding Planning Committee – for members of the planning committee and those that may substitute for colleagues (two sessions – pm and eve – 2-hours in length – to be made clear that this is prerequisite for sitting on this committee and that it needs to be completed every four years as a minimum)
- Understanding Scrutiny / Scrutiny Skills – for members of scrutiny committees and those that may substitute for colleagues including the structure of scrutiny, submitting a topic for consideration on the matrix, identifying key lines of enquiry and good scrutiny questions (two sessions – pm and eve – 2-hours in length)
- Understanding Licensing Committee – for members of the licensing committee – potentially a re-run of external training taking place in September 2022 (one session – eve – 2-hours in length – to be made clear that this is prerequisite for sitting on this committee and that it needs to be completed every four years as a minimum)
- Understanding Standards Committee – for members of the standards committee (one session – eve – 2-hours in length – to be made clear that this is prerequisite for sitting on this committee and that it needs to be completed every four years as a minimum)
- Understanding Local Government Finance – for all councillors in advance of the autumn budget briefings (two sessions – pm and eve – 2-hours in length)
- Understanding your responsibilities – GDPR and Cyber Crime – for all councillors to ensure basics have been conveyed – to be followed up with e-learning modules (one session – eve – 2-hours in length)
- Using technology in meetings – a practical session to familiarise councillors with the use of microphones in the Council Chamber with the aim of improving the sound quality of meetings on the You Tube recordings – including voice projection, positioning of the microphones, and direction of address (ie the microphone not the room (ie the mayor) (a 45-minute pre-Council session)
- Understanding and making the most of motions at Council – a rerun of practical training delivered in 2022 (one session – eve – 2-hours in length)
- Chiring Skills – hopefully delivered by East Midlands Councils as it has been in the past – open to all current and aspiring Chairmen (one session – eve – 2-hours in length)

## Regular training opportunities (taking place in the six to twelve months following the election)

- Budget Briefings – consultation with Councillors re the budget – not really training but always included on the programme
- Asset and Treasury Management – annual training for Governance Scrutiny Group members
- Risk management – annual training for Governance Scrutiny Group members
- Getting Tough – increasing Councillor awareness of what can be done by our planning and EH enforcement teams
- Emergency Planning – increasing Councillor awareness of who does what in an emergency and how they can help
- Unauthorised Encampments – increasing Councillor awareness of what can be done by our ?? and how they can help

## Well-attended training opportunities (for future years)

- Personal safety
- Dealing with difficult people and situations
- Influencing skills
- Personal resilience
- Effective public speaking

## Training but done differently

The following have previously been offered as training sessions, but we believe these would be better worked up into a video and factsheet before they are needed.

- Getting the most out of the Learning Pool

[This maybe a suitable option for training that is delivered early in the cycle for either new members or by way of a reminder such as GDPR or Emergency Planning]

## Essential E-Learning

- Your role as a Councillor
- Equality and Diversity
- Disability and Discrimination
- Safeguarding Adults
- Safeguarding Children
- Hate Crime
- GDPR 1, 2 and 3
- Cyber-crime, phishing, smishing and vishing
- Information Classification
- Display Screen Equipment
- Section 17: Crime and Disorder

## Desirable E-Learning

- Armed Forces Community Covenant
- Charing Meetings
- Community Leadership
- Managing Information Effectively
- Public Speaking
- Working with the Media