

Member Development Strategy 2023-2027



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Foreword

Introduction from the Chief Executive

As Councillors undertake their responsibilities as community leaders, in strategic functions and regulatory roles, we will work to ensure that learning and development is appropriately focused, well delivered and that resources are used effectively to achieve maximum benefit.

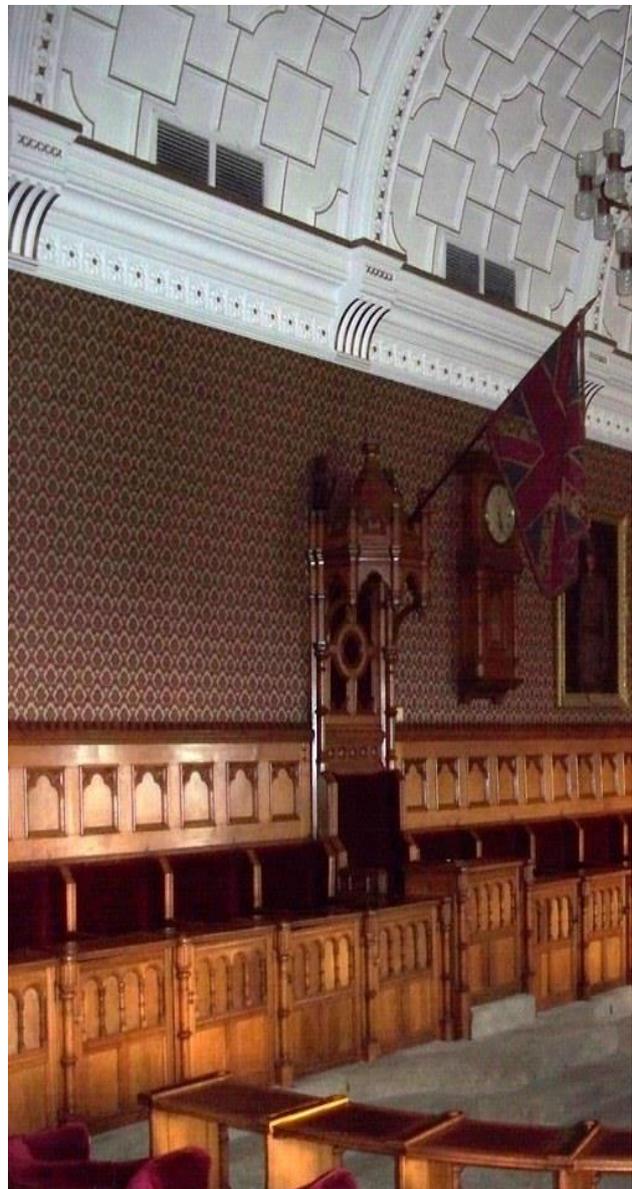
This will help to ensure that we can all play a leading role in driving forward our plans in a town of hope and aspiration.

The Member Development Strategy sets out our commitment to continuous Councillor development, our approach, and the opportunities that are available to all elected representatives.

As a Council, we recognise that the learning and development of Members is crucial to our success and will bring wider benefits to both the organisation and our citizens.



Clive Heaphy,
Chief Executive



Introduction from the Constitution and Members' Development Committee

Our Constitution and Members' Development Committee helps oversee and shape the Member Development programme. As Councillors with a broad range of skills and experience, we understand the challenges faced by the modern-day Councillor, including in the period shortly after election when considerable learning is required during a condensed period. One of our key pledges is to ensure that all Councillors receive the support and help that they need to succeed in their roles, and we will ensure that equality of access to development and training remains a guiding principle, as outlined in this Strategy.

All committee members have really valued the diverse training and development opportunities we have accessed to date, helping us to develop a wide range of knowledge and skills to enable us to fulfil our roles as community leaders.

The Member Induction and Development programme offers a diverse, blended learning approach aimed to meet the different needs of all members. Learning never stops and we strongly encourage you all to engage with continuous development throughout your time in office.

Councillor Julia Rostron



Purpose and Aims

This Strategy sets out our commitment to supporting Members with their continuous development, and details how we will equip Members with the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil their roles effectively. It also covers how we will identify development needs; the ways in which Members can participate in continuous learning and development; and how we will evaluate and measure the success of all learning.

The Member Development Strategy aligns closely to the Corporate Plan and People Strategy to ensure all activities contribute to delivery of key commitments to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

The Strategy will ensure that Members have appropriate training and support to assist them with every aspect of their roles.

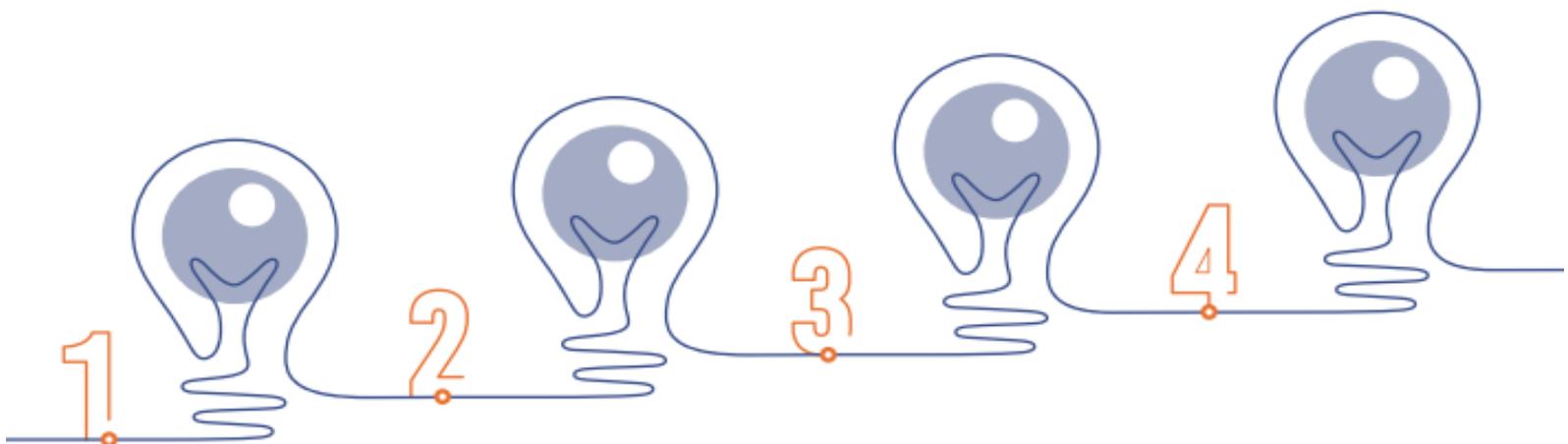
This will include: -

Ensuring compliance with mandatory training on areas such as data protection and information security.

Providing all key policy, procedural and legal information before Members are required to participate in decision making.

Ensuring Members can perform any 'special responsibilities' relating to additional duties and roles they may undertake.

Offering the opportunity to participate in continuous development through a variety of learning methods.



Aims and Key Performance Measures

Our Aims and Key Performance Measures are:

To ensure that all Members have consistent and equal access to training and development opportunities, providing the resources required to support those with access needs. We will monitor this with an annual survey as well as ongoing feedback on attendance, non-attendance, and potential barriers

We will measure success by achieving the following three targets at the end of each Municipal Year: -

- 1** 100% of Members complete all mandatory training
- 2** 60% of Members attend wider skills courses
- 3** 70% of evaluation survey respondents express overall satisfaction with the development programme

Equalities and Inclusion

As a public body we are bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty, which is defined within the Equality Act as: -

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Councils [Equality and Inclusion Policy 2021-2024](#) underpins how we design and deliver the Member Development programme but in particular we will: -

- Ensure all Councillors have equal access to training and development opportunities i.e., by providing multiple sessions in accessible formats and at various times of the day.
- Offer strongly recommended training on equalities and inclusion to all Councillors on an annual basis. This will provide Members with the skills necessary to comply with the Public Sector Equalities Duties.
- Provide advice and guidance to Members setting out how to interpret and evaluate the Equalities Impact Assessments completed for formal reports.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Middlesbrough Council

Our Values

Our Values are at the heart of everything we do at Middlesbrough Council. They are a critical element in our strategy to create a brighter future for Middlesbrough, and the foundation for how we operate, interact, and make decisions

From sharing creative ideas, to Members and Officers working collaboratively within the organisation and external agencies, to being passionate about doing things better whilst focusing on the things that matter - we can make a real difference to the people and place we are all proud to serve.

All Members, along with Council Officers, will have access to a Values Based Blended Learning Programme as shown below. These courses support development of a range of knowledge, skills, and behaviors to help drive the culture we all want at Middlesbrough Council.

 Passion	Leadership & Management Fundamentals Leading in a Blended World
 Integrity	Authentic Leadership Let's Talk and Be Rich in Feedback
 Creativity	What is Creativity and how can we use it? Models and Tools to Generate Creativity
 Collaboration	Together we achieve more A Partner Mindset
 Focus	Gold Standard Goal Setting Keeping on Track through Times of Change



Passion

We believe in Middlesbrough and are proud to work for the town



Integrity

We are open and transparent and treat everyone with respect



Creativity

We have the courage to try new ideas and new ways of working



Collaboration

We work with others to make Middlesbrough better



Focus

We are clear about what we will deliver to meet the needs of the town

Ethical Standards

Members sign up to the Council's **Code of Conduct** upon accepting their term of office, which includes a commitment to upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life, known as the Nolan Principles, which outline the requirements around ethical standards. Details of each of the seven Nolan Principles are shown below: -

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and values and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

We will support Members to uphold the ethical framework set out above, by doing the following: -

- Ensure that Members are fully briefed about their roles and responsibilities and that all essential requirements regarding compliance with Codes, Protocols and Declarations are met.
- Providing ongoing training, guidance and help to Members, in respect of ethical matters, as and when required.
- Facilitate a range of training and support to assist Members to conduct their roles as effective community leaders.



Member Development Programme

The Member Development offer will be delivered via an induction and refresher programme of intense activity over the first 6 months, followed by ongoing targeted training and support for the remainder of the 4-year term. The Programme will be flexible in order to adapt to changing needs in the event of challenging times or disruption to 'business as usual.' Examples shown below;



Corporate Governance Knowledge and Skills Programme

The Corporate Governance Training Programme offers a suite of training to ensure both Members and Officers have the skills and knowledge needed to ensure we all operate effectively within the Council, understanding the roles and responsibilities we have in the key processes we undertake when delivering services, making recommendations or decisions on issues, or spending Council money.

The blended learning programme will consist of bitesize introductory eLearning modules followed by practical face to face workshops, all delivered by internal professional leads to ensure we understand the relevant policies and procedures and have the necessary skills to apply them effectively. This training programme is vital to ensure we are fully compliant with all governance processes, therefore completion of this training should be appropriately prioritised by all.

Course modules are –

- Principles, Values and Council Constitution
- Procurement and Contract Management
- Financial Procedure Rules and Budget Management
- Consultation, Engagement, and Impact Assessments
- Risk Management
- Programme and Project Management
- Information Governance and GDPR
- Decision Making Routes and Report Writing

Corporate Governance Skills Programme
Transparency and accountability for all

Personal Development Plans

If Members wish to be supported with a Personal Development Plan to identify their individual learning and development needs, we can offer support to complete this and in accessing any relevant learning and development required.

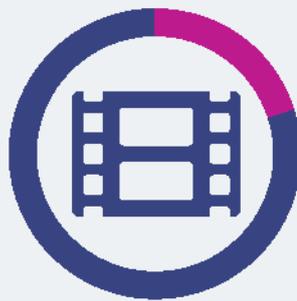


Training Delivery Methods

We will use a wide variety of in person and/or virtual formats to deliver training in an inclusive and accessible way for all members, such as:



**E-Learning
courses**



**Demonstration
videos**



**Internal training
courses**



**Internal briefings –
emerging topics**



**Case studies –
examples of
best practice**



**External
conferences,
seminars and
training courses**



**Personal
development
planning
discussions**



**Peer to peer
learning between
Councillors and
information sharing
including with key
external partners**

Feedback and Evaluation

Regular evaluation of the Member Development offer will be undertaken by officers in conjunction with the Constitution and Members' Development Committee.

The following methods will be used: -



**Training evaluation forms
and other feedback
received**



1-1 meetings



**Feedback through
Committee groups
and Member
meetings**



**Statistics on Councillor
participation**



Annual Survey

This Strategy will be reviewed annually or earlier where necessary.

The Constitution and Members' Development Committee, in partnership with Democratic Services, has responsibility for oversight of the Member Development Programme and will be regularly consulted on progress.



Resources and Support

An annual budget is allocated for Member development, and to provide administrative support and resources for the delivery of training, development, and ongoing feedback processes

The resources available to support Member development are available to all Councillors and do not fund activity specific to a political group.

Cost benefit analysis will be conducted to monitor investment in Member Development.



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