

<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Democratic Services – Sylvia Reynolds
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<b>Submitted to:</b>	Constitution and Members Development Committee -
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<b>Subject:</b>	Elected Member Training Attendance
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**Summary**

<b>Proposed decision(s)</b>
To note Elected Member attendance at training sessions for the municipal year 2020-21.

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?
Noting/Discussion	No	No	No

Contribution to delivery of the 2021-24 Strategic Plan		
People	Place	Business
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

<b>Ward(s) affected</b>
Not applicable

**What is the purpose of this report?**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Constitution and Members Development Committee with a summary of Elected Members attendance at training sessions for the municipal year 2020-21.
2. This report provides information about the member learning and development sessions delivered since April 2020, and provides, for information, an overview of upcoming member learning and development sessions.

**Why does this report require a Member decision?**

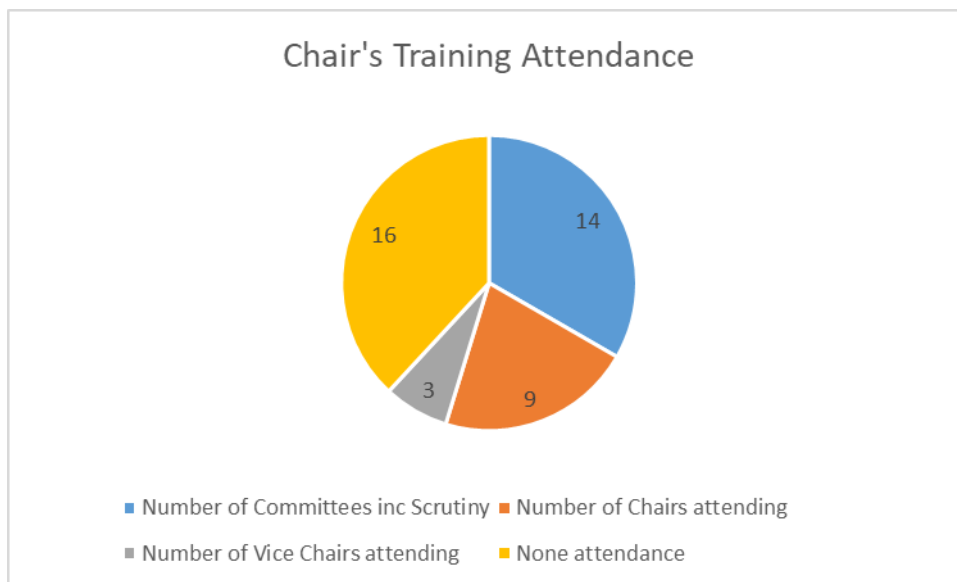
3. This report is for information and discussion by Members of the Constitution and Members Development Committee only.

## Report Background

4. At the Constitution and Members Development Committee held on 11 November 2016, it was agreed that a Skills Framework for Members be introduced which would help identify individual development needs around the following competencies:
  - Local leadership;
  - Partnership working
  - Communication skills
  - Political understanding
  - Scrutiny challenge; and
  - Regulatory and monitoring
5. An annual Member Development Programme is produced to meet member development needs and shows how the events/briefings/seminars are aligned with this skills framework.
6. The Council protocol is that Members will be required to undertake training or attend briefings in respect of certain roles and in order to serve on certain Committees. This is aimed at protecting members and the Council from prospective challenge to legislative decision making. This training programme is organised on an annual basis, following the AGM, when committee membership is confirmed. Ad hoc one-to-one training will be provided for any subsequent changes to committees.
7. Committees where training is required before being allowed to take part in the decision making, include Planning & Development Committee, Licensing Committee and Sub-Committees, Standards Committee, Staff Appeals Committee, Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee, Teesside Pension Fund Committee, Teesside Pension Board. This training should be undertaken on an annual basis.
8. Attendance at the required training is consistently high with all members of the specific committees attending the required training. This could be due to members having to attend this training before being able to take part in the decision making in respect of those committees. Whilst training may be devised specifically for committee Members, these events are open to all members to attend, which will also aid groups should they wish to appoint a substitute to attend a committee in the case of the absence of one of their Members. The table below details the number of members who are not committee members who have completed the required training courses.

Staff Appeals Committee	Teesside Pension Fund	Planning & Development Committee	Corporate Affairs & Audit Committee	Licensing (Taxi) Committee	Standards Committee
0	7	13	5	7	23

9. Newly elected Chairs and Vice-Chairs are also required to attend Chairs' training sessions following the Council AGM. The pie chart below shows the number of Chairs and Vice Chairs and the number who attended Chairs Training.



10. Based on the figures above 42.86% of Chairs and Vice Chairs attended the Chair's training. This equates to 32.14% of Chairs attending and 10.71% of Vice Chair's attending.

11. Given the proportion of members with limited local authority experience following the most recent elections, it is disappointing that the take up for this training is low as the training provides key skills to be able to chair a Committee effectively.

12. At the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee held on 5 August 2021, a joint report of the Director of Legal and Governance Services and Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) was presented, setting out the governance issues identified in the Best Value Inspection of Liverpool City Council (LCC) report and assessed whether there were any lessons to be learnt for corporate governance within Middlesbrough Council. The report also provided an update on actions previously agreed for Middlesbrough Council following consideration of the Best Value inspection of Northamptonshire County Council and the public interest report issued by the external auditor of London Borough of Croydon Council.

13. The following areas which could be related to member training were highlighted in the report:

- Regeneration and planning.
- Elected members – roles and responsibilities understanding.
- Corporate governance compliance.
- Legal corporate governance.

The report highlighted that, LCC had the same democratic governance model as Middlesbrough Council. It was therefore not surprising that the inspector's recommendations relating to governance and structure were relevant to Middlesbrough Council. The self-assessment identified a range of planned actions that focussed on member and officer relationships and awareness and understanding of roles and responsibilities. Those recommendations aligned with a recent internal audit report on Member decision-making, which was currently at the draft report stage. There was a risk that if roles and responsibilities were not fully understood and adhered to by both Members and officers, Middlesbrough Council could experience the same issues as LCC.

14. The Member Development Programme provides a range of different opportunities for attendance at a variety of learning events which has included scrutiny training, effective questioning skills and work programme planning. A range of briefing sessions have also been held for Members to keep them informed of key issues. The table below details the

training/briefing sessions taken place during 2019/20 and the number of Members who attended each session.

Training/Briefing Session	Number of Members in Attendance
Local Area Outbreak Planning Briefing	18
Recovery Briefing	18
Covid 19 & the Impact on the Financial Position Briefing	21
The Role of the Corporate Parent	19
SEND Reforms Training	12
Pay & Remuneration Briefing	34
Border to Coast Virtual Conference	2
Members Roles in Scrutiny & Corporate Parenting	16
Chairing & Leading Scrutiny	8
Culture & Diversity Workshop	11
Effective Questioning Skills	14
How Modern Gov will make your life easier	17
Work Programme Planning	11
National Census 2021 Member Briefing	9
Chief Constable Briefing	29
Raising Awareness of Foodbanks Member Briefing	19
Implementing Strategies to Tackle Homelessness Member Conference	2
PREVENT Awareness Session Member Briefing	16
Strategic Plan Member Briefing	24
Pay Policy Statement Member Briefing	24
Dementia Awareness Member Briefing	23
Office for the Police & Crime Commissioner Member Briefing	18
Stanhope Castle Briefing	22

15. The Member Development Framework also provides opportunities for Executive Members to attend role specific training with the Local Government Association (LGA) Leadership Academy. The table below details Executive Member attendance at the LGA Leadership Training and also details Members who took part in the LGA One to One Coaching opportunity.

Training Event	Elected Member
LGA - Difference and Inclusion: Building a 'how to toolkit'.	Councillor Mieka Smiles
LGA- Being an Effective Cabinet Member	Councillor Mieka Smiles
LGA One to One Coaching	Councillor Carolyn Dodds Councillor Mieka Smiles Councillor Ashley Waters Councillor Alma Hellaoui

#### What decision(s) are being asked for?

That Members note the attendance of Elected Members at training courses.

## **Why is this being recommended?**

To make Members aware of the requirement to attend training in order to provide them with the appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil their role as an elected member.

## **Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

Not applicable

## **Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)**

### ***Legal***

No impact

### ***Financial***

As this report is for members to note, there is no financial impact. There is a small budget allocated within the overall Members budget for training and development to cover the costs of additional training that will need to be provided through the Member Development Framework.

### ***Policy Framework***

Not applicable. The report does not propose an amendment to the policy.

### ***Equality and Diversity***

Not applicable

### ***Risk***

Not applicable

## **Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)**

## **Appendices**

## **Background papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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