

Council	
Meeting Date	2 October 2024
Report Title	Member Development Strategy
EMT Lead	Larissa Reed – Chief Executive
Head of Service	Lisa Fillery – Director of Resources
Lead Officer	Larissa Reed – Chief Executive
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. To adopt the Member Development Strategy 2024 - 27

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the Member Development Strategy for councillors, which includes the updates suggested by the Standards Committee on 24 September 2024.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council wishes to ensure that all Members have the necessary skills and knowledge to best serve their community. This is very important, at a time of ongoing changes in local government. Our Councillors come from diverse backgrounds and for some, the workings of local government is completely new.

It is important that the training the council provides Members is high quality and is delivered in a variety of methods to meet the differing learning styles of our Councillors.

There is some training which is mandatory (eg planning and licensing) to enable Councillors to take regulatory decisions.

- 2.1 Training is everyone's responsibility, and the Group Leaders will play a key role in ensuring training plans are developed with their members. It is also the responsibility of the Group Leader to ensure that Members attend training relevant to their role, or training which has been identified within their training plan.

3 Alternative Options Considered and rejected by officers

3.1 The only other option considered by officers was to not have a Member Development Strategy. This was rejected for the following reasons

- This was not the will of the Member Development Working Group.
- Swale Borough Council is committed to the development and training of councillors.

4 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

4.1 There has been no formal consultation, however this strategy has been developed by the Member Development Working Group which has representatives from all political parties and also independent councillors and has been discussed by the Standards Committee.

5 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	This strategy meets the needs of the corporate plan (Running the Council Pledge) as Development and training enables elected members to understand their role and represent their constituents
Financial, Resource and Property	The delivery of the training set out within this strategy is within council resources
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	With the exception of Licensing and Planning training, there is not legal requirement for members to undertake training
Crime and Disorder	No implications
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	No implications
Health and Wellbeing	As part of our commitment to Health and Wellbeing, giving councillors the tools, support and skills to undertake their role effectively is important. This strategy enables this to happen
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	No implications
Risk Management and Health and Safety	No implications

Equality and Diversity	Ensuring that training is delivered in a way which embraces different learning styles is essential to our commitment to Equality and Diversity
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications

6 Appendices

6.1 Member Development Strategy

7 Background Papers

7.1 Minutes of the Meetings of Member Development Working Group.