

Slough Borough Council

Report To: Standards Committee

Date: 8 October 2025

Subject: Member Development Programme 2025-26 - Update

Chief Officer: Sukdave Ghuman (Monitoring Officer)

Contact Officer: Dave Burn (Interim Democratic Services SME)

Ward(s): All

Exempt: No

Appendices: None

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report provides an update following consideration of this matter at the last meeting of Standards Committee held on 20 March and covers monitoring of attendance as well as feedback is being managed for the Member Development sessions.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to note the report and to comment as required.

Reason:

Whilst the report is for information comments are welcomed to help with the delivery of an effective and productive programme.

Commissioner Review

This report is outside the scope for pre-publication commissioner review; please check the [Commissioners' instruction 5 to CLT to sign off papers](#) for further details.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 As advised at the last meeting on 20th March 2025, the Member Development Programme has been designed to allow Councillors to build on their existing knowledge and skills base.
- 2.2 The Programme has been designed to meet the Council's improvement goals with ongoing development opportunities for its decision-makers, to steadily improve their skills, knowledge and behaviours.
- 2.3 As advised at the last meeting, the bulk of training continues to be provided in-house, with a mixture of online and in-person sessions, with accessibility enabled by modern technology such as recording sessions on Teams. Some sessions will be facilitated by external providers, and councillors will also be encouraged through various other means to gain outside experience of 'what good looks like'. The main

outside provider is the Local Government Association, in part through the support offered as part of the Council's recovery programme.

3. Report

- 3.1 Since May 2025 there have been 15 sessions held covering finance, planning, licensing and Audit Committee. There have also been sessions to support scrutiny such as questioning skills. We have held a chairing skills session and more recently a session dealing with collaborative working by members and officers. In addition, a series of Public Health briefings have been held, with 3 held to date.
- 3.2 Some challenges have been experienced with attendance at the support sessions provided. Whilst it is accepted that there are significant demands on Member's time, officers are working with Group Leaders to ensure the sessions are relevant and attendance maximised. With that in mind, new targets have been devised. Progress, in terms of attendance, has been steadily improving. In May, June and July attendance was 66.5%, 73.5 and 93.5% respectively. This is against a target of 80%. A new feedback monitoring form was introduced in September, and the information provided will be used to inform future sessions as well as to capture changes in approach and behaviours.
- 3.3 Every effort is being made to convene a meeting of the Member Development Working Group in October 2025, where attendance and feedback will be discussed in more detail.

4. Implications of the Recommendation

4.1 Financial implications

While a modest budget is available for individual members to attend external training or to bring in external trainers during the year, this report does not commit members to any specific spend. This budget continues to be managed and administered by Democratic Services and the Head of Democratic Services who has the authority to determine payment from this for external providers of any courses mentioned in this report, without the need for a councillor decision.

4.2 Legal implications

The Council has many different statutory functions and duties. When making decisions members must comply with these legal duties, including making decisions in a fair, lawful and transparent manner. Members must comply with the Member Code of Conduct and understand their obligations to register and declare interests and the sanctions regime for failing to comply with the Code of Conduct. The Member Development Programme assists members to be effective and ensure the Council complies with its legal obligations, amongst other things.

4.3 Risk management implications

The Member Development Programme has been prepared to assist members in their varied roles as a Councillor. Additionally, the programme has taken account of the issues identified as part of the Council's improvement and transformation journey. Attendance, engagement and feedback will assist the Council to deliver on its objectives and to improve. Keeping the programme under constant review will help ensure that it is fit for purpose.

4.4 Environmental implications

None

4.5 Equality implications

The Council has a duty to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for those with a protected characteristic and those without. The member development programme, and the way we deliver it, should take account of members' protected characteristics and consider any adjustments needed. This is done on a session-by-session basis.

5. Background Papers

None