

Question from Chris Jeffries

Dear Sally

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to submit a question for consideration at the next Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting. My question relates to councillor training policies and their impact on governance and decision-making.

I observed the last full council meeting where there was a small debate surrounding seat allocation, a member raised an issue regarding attendance, which I thought was an interesting point to raise and I was surprised that it had become common for such meetings to run on low attendance.

Question:

Given the importance of robust decision-making and the need for equitable access to training for councillors, particularly concerning their ability to act as substitutes on the Planning Committee, can the committee review the council's current training policy to assess the following:

1. Whether all councillors are provided with sufficient and equal opportunities to undertake relevant training for committee participation and governance oversight;
2. How the current approach align with best practices in fostering inclusive and informed decision-making within the council; and
3. What measures can be introduced to ensure that all councillors, irrespective of their committee assignments, are adequately prepared to contribute effectively when required?

Additionally, could the committee examine how the lack of universal training opportunities impacts the council's ability to meet its statutory and governance responsibilities, particularly in areas such as transparency, accountability, and proportionality?