

# Teignbridge District Council – Member Development Strategy 2025

## Introduction

The role of an Elected Member / Councillor is both exciting and highly rewarding. A Councillor is expected to carry out many roles ranging from community leader to taking on roles and responsibilities both within the Council and on outside bodies. A Councillor requires to balance the needs and interests of their community, their political party or group if they are associated with a party/group, and the Council as a whole, other Authorities they are part of and of course, their personal, family and any employment commitments.

The Member Development Strategy will aim to ensure that the Council provides the information and training opportunities needed to support Members and equips them to effectively carry out their roles.

## Aim

- To ensure that every Member has access to the learning and development they need to perform their role and support their electorate.
- To ensure we provide learning and development to meet council legal obligations for members and also how we deliver functions as an organisation
- To outline the roles and responsibilities of Members in relation to their commitment to their professional development.
- To underpin and direct the resources required to deliver the Member Development Strategy.
- To promote the importance of learning and development for Members.

## Commitment Statement

The Council's [People and Culture Strategy](#) highlights the Council's Investors in People accreditation and the Council's commitment to developing the potential of our people. Whilst not employees, this Strategy underpins these values and recognises that Elected Members are integral to ensuring that the strategic aims and objectives of the Council are met in terms of making decisions and delivering better outcomes for the residents of Teignbridge.

Teignbridge District Council is committed to the development of its Elected Members and has produced this Strategy to assist in equipping all Elected Members with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet current and future challenges.

Signed by:

Leader of the Council

Chief Executive

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **All Elected Members**

All Elected Members are responsible for:

- Identifying their own development needs in conjunction with Officers.
- Advising the Council of any accessibility or reasonable adjustments that the organisation may need to consider to aid delivery of learning e.g. Use of larger font, yellow paper, assistive technology used, breaks in training to enable processing of information.
- Seeking opportunities to improve their effectiveness and increase their skills and knowledge and addressing any gaps therein.
- Attending arranged learning and development opportunities (or catching up with recordings if they are unable to attend).
- Sharing their knowledge and skills with their peers.
- Reviewing their learning and development activities.
- Owning the Member Development Strategy.

### **Group Leaders**

Political Group Leaders should encourage all Members from within their group to participate in the learning and development programme and actively support their Members in doing so.

### **Governance Committee**

The Governance Committee will be responsible for setting the strategic direction for Member Development and overseeing the Member Development Strategy.

The Terms of Reference for the Committee states its role is to oversee the Council's programmes for member development and training.

### **Democratic Services**

The Democratic Services Team will:

- Produce and deliver the elected Member induction programme.
- Produce and support the delivery of the Annual Member Training Programme.
- Arrange and deliver additional training sessions throughout the Council term.
- Record Members' training and development activities during their term of office and regularly report these to the Governance Committee.
- Record feedback of sessions to ensure their impact and benefit is understood.
- Ensure recordings, guides and further information relating to Member Development are stored on the Member's Sharepoint site.
- Assist Members with queries and any basic information on their roles and access to development opportunities.
- Ensuring training events (both internal and external) are advertised to Members.

### **Senior Leadership Team**

All Directors and Heads of Service within the Council are responsible for identifying and delivering service specific training to Elected Members. This can be delivered in many forms and examples of services informing Members include:

- Formal group training for all Members where needs arise.

- Participation in the arrangement and delivery of ad-hoc topic or service specific sessions to Elected Members such as a briefing session.
- Attending Committees to inform Members about specific services/topics.
- Circulating newsletters/factsheets to Members where relevant and contribution to the Members Newsletter on matters of interest.
- Keeping Members informed by providing regular updates to them on services, topics and developments.

## **Delivery of Member Development**

All Elected Members regardless of length of service, party or post within the Council will be given equal access to the training and development opportunities. All Elected Members will be given the support and development needed throughout their term to do their role to the best of their ability.

It is also recognised that Members have different roles and need different skills to those of Officers and as such training should always be tailored, as far as is practicable, to meeting Members' needs.

Member Development activities will be commissioned to meet individual Committee and corporate development priorities and cover:

- Generic skills to enable effective working as a Councillor.
- Service driven activities to support corporate priorities and Committee roles.
- Knowledge to support robust decision making.
- Community leadership to enhance the community role.
- Advanced development activities to enhance leadership skills.
- Skills to meet new ways of working resulting from the changing shape of local government
- In response to any legal requirements, changes to the law or Government policy.

## **Ongoing Development and Training Sessions**

After the Induction Programme and in addition to any mandatory training and Committee development, Elected Members will be invited to a broad range of information and development sessions throughout their term of office. The expectation is that Members continue to develop, not only through on-job activity, but also by attending development sessions.

We will provide learning in a way that meets individual needs through:

- A set Induction Programme after Elections.
- Internal learning events delivered by Officers such as Training Sessions and Briefing Sessions (see Appendix 1 below for the Annual Training Programme).
- Access to nationally recognised learning programmes and conferences, making use of opportunities with national organisations such as the Local Government Association.
- Supporting the work of the Council's Digital Competency Framework by providing access to IT support and training in relation to their role.
- Online resources accessed through the Member's Sharepoint site.
- Access to the Litmos Online Learning platform.

Delivery methods will consider inclusivity, access to learning, subject matter and learning styles offering both face to face, hybrid and online delivery and incorporating a variety of delivery methods.

It is recognised that not all Elected Members may be able to access these training opportunities in the same way due to work, family, personal circumstances. Officers and Members should always

keep in the mind the need to provide training opportunities in different ways, at different times of the day and possibly repeating sessions to allow for the maximum attendance of Elected Members around other commitments.

Many of the training sessions will be recorded to allow Elected Members to access these resources at a time and place that is best for them.

### **Review and Evaluation**

It is expected for the Governance Committee to review the Member Development Programme regularly to identify needs, potential sessions and that the needs of Members are being met. Members on the Committee are expected to regularly seek the feedback of training sessions from other Members, along with feedback recorded at the time of the session, to help evaluate and improve our offer.

### **Outside Bodies**

All Elected Members who are appointed to outside bodies are provided with contact details and information on the organisation where available. It is not possible for the Council to deal with the specific development requirements of Members appointed to represent the Council on every outside body on which it has a nominated representative. The range and diversity of such organisations are extensive, and their operations are out with the locus of the Council. Should training and development be required this should be provided by the outside body.

### **Records of Training and Development**

The Democratic Services Team will record the details of Member training and development opportunities.

The Governance Committee will regularly receive a report on the completed training, learning and development opportunities.

## Appendix 1: Annual Planned Member Training Programme

Month	Training Session	Mandatory or Optional	SMT Lead
January			
February			
March			
April			
May	Meeting Procedures	Optional	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
	Executive Member Training	Mandatory for Executive Members	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
June	Planning Committee Training	Mandatory for Committee Members	Head of Development Management
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Training	Mandatory for Committee Members	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
	Audit Committee Training	Mandatory for Committee Members	Head of Financial Services and Audit
July	Chairing Skills	Mandatory for Chairs and Vice Chairs	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
	Licensing and Regulatory Committee Training	Mandatory for Committee Members	Head of Neighbourhoods
	Standards and Code of Conduct Training	Mandatory for Committee Members	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
August			
September			
October			
November	Overview and Scrutiny Finance and Budget Training	Optional	Head of Financial Services and Audit / Head of Legal and Democratic Services
December	Planning Committee Refresher Training	Mandatory for Committee Members	Head of Development Management