Draft Member Development Overview 2024-2028

The City Council is committed to supporting Members with their development to ensure they have the necessary training to discharge their democratic duties. Set out below is a summary of the support and resources that represents the Member Development Offer to support Councillors in their roles.

Member Development Steering Group (MDSG)

MDSG is a cross party working group that meets monthly in the lead up to an all-out election, and then regularly as required.

The group's main purpose is to facilitate a planned, strategic and Member-led approach to Councillor development, including a comprehensive induction programme, and ensuring that Members' training and development needs are being successfully met.

Member Development Strategy 2024/28

The strategy sets out the Council's commitment and approach to supporting Member development throughout an elected member's term of office. The strategy is supported by an action plan and timeline for delivery, monitoring and evaluation. The Council currently holds the Local Government Association's Charter Plus status for Councillor Development and is committed to undergoing reassessment to retain this accreditation in 2025.

Member Induction and Refresher Programme 2024

The programme will start in May 2024 and be delivered in three phases.

Phase 1 (May-June) – Essential and time critical sessions

Phase 2 (July-September) – The remainder of the induction programme

Phase 3 (October-December) – Informed by an all-member survey to focus opportunities for a deeper dive into selected topics.

Essential – Failure to attend would prevent Members from sitting on a specific committee or access to the Council's network

Highly Recommended – Group Leaders will expect their Members to attend these sessions, as they will provide the knowledge required to make effective decisions and an increased understanding of Members' roles and responsibilities.

Recommended - It is recommended that Members attend these sessions, as they will provide the knowledge required to make effective decisions and an increased understanding of Members' roles and responsibilities.

Essential	Highly Recommended	Recommended
All Members • Information Security • GDPR **Nominated Members** • Licensing • Development Control • Public Safety and Protection • Public Rights of Way and Greens • HR Dismissals Appeals • Selection Committee • Home to School Transport Appeals	• Governance and Decision Making under the Committee System • Policy Committees • Audit • Local Authority Finance and Budgets • Health Scrutiny • Adult and Children Safeguarding • Equalities and Inclusion • Human Resources • Wellbeing, Health, and Personal Safety • Guardianship Panel Appeals • Chairing effectively	• Public Health • Homes and Landlord Services and Housing Delivery • Climate Change and the Ecological Emergency • Risk Management and Insurance • Carbon Literacy Training • LGA Public Health Training • Operations Centre and Emergency Planning • Social media • Scrutiny Training for WECA members • Citizens Services including casework and complaints • Virtual Tour of the City/Area Committees

Councillor Link Scheme

This informal buddying scheme was introduced for the first time in 2021. The scheme will run between May and August 2024. All Councillors will have the opportunity to be paired with a senior officer (Head of Service or above) to build officer-member relations and give both parties a space to share information about how the Council operates or provide guidance on a particular service area.

Councillor Resource Area SharePoint Site

This is an online resource area on SharePoint that looks like a website/Source page specifically for Councillors. It contains support pages, HR information, key contacts, training resources, member briefing presentations, Information Guides, and key links to the Committee Management System, the Council's Constitution, Guidance and protocols.

Member Briefings

There is a regular Wednesday evening slot agreed for all-member briefings on emerging topics of interest. Briefings are delivered by officers and external guests, and cover everything from personal safety to the operation of Council owned companies.

During the induction the briefings slot will be temporarily utilised for essential or highly recommended training and development sessions. Briefings to be scheduled as part of the Member Induction Programme include:

- Policy, Strategy, and Partnerships
- S106 and CIL funding
- Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- West of England Combined Authority (WECA)
- Housing Delivery
- Strategic Procurement and Supplier Relations
- City Office
- Bristol City Councils Companies
- Place (including Management of Place and Economy)
- Finding out about your ward

Member Information Guides

Information Guides are concise 2-page documents that cover a specific service area or team that is of key interest to Councillors or residents. They outline pertinent information on the chosen topic, and a key contact for Councillors to use. There are over 50 Information Guides, and they are stored in the Councillor Online Resource Area.

Supporting Ward Work

There are a variety of tools and resources available to support Members with understanding their ward and supporting citizens.

Ward Profiles

Ward Profiles (Power BI) is an interactive online tool that enables Councillors to search and compare ward level data such as population, health, quality of life, crime levels and more.

Tour of Bristol

Members will receive a virtual tour of the City delivered by the Community Engagement Team, which covers North, East, South, and Central Bristol; and is an opportunity to hear about the work going on in different areas and hear from local people. We also run "Finding out about your Ward" sessions, where Members are shown how to use the Ward Profiles and Power BI tools.

Area Committees

Councillors will be introduced to the 6 Local Area Committees which make decisions on how local funds are spent to support improvements in their area. The Committee Model Working Group are in the process of reviewing the operation of local decision-making in a Committee Model.

<u>Managing Casework</u>

Councillors will be introduced to the iCasework software and the way MP and Councillor Enquiries are managed. Group officers support Members to keep track of constituent queries through regular reporting and liaison with Council Services and Officers.

Equalities Survey

An anonymous equalities survey is carried out to capture an overview of the protected characteristics of elected Members. The results of the survey enable Officers to provide targeted training or information on specific support needs identified. Understanding how the protected characteristics of Councillors changes over time enables us to target our communications when hosting Be a Councillor events in the years before an all-out election.

E-Learning

The BCC Online Learning Portal enables councillors to complete 2 essential and 2 highly recommended training courses as follows; A Guide to Data Protection, Information Security, Safeguarding Adults Awareness and Child Protection Awareness.

Member Development Charter Plus Award

Bristol was awarded Charter Plus Accreditation for Member Development in March 2022. The charter signifies a commitment from a council to deliver a strategy that supports and encourages Councillor development.

The charter framework provides a best practice guide that the Member Development Steering Group has agreed to sign up to with a view to retaining the award through an application and assessment process in autumn 2024.

The Member's ICT Working Group

The working group is responsible for identifying Member's ICT induction and training needs for the Councillor Swearing in Ceremony and Induction Day.

Members will receive training on key systems such as ITrent Payroll system in order to claim expenses promptly, and Modern Gov Committee Management System software.

Modern Gov enables members to view and annotate documents in preparation for their meetings. The password protected area enables Members to update their Councillor profile and Registration of Interests, and view exempt or confidential reports. Members will be supported by a schedule of regular drop-in sessions for support with this key software.

Election Welcome Pack

The Elections Welcome pack, includes everything a new councillor needs to get started; a swearing in day checklist, information about Key dates such as Annual Full Council, the Disclosure and Barring Service Checks and Registers of Interest as well as a Supporting Citizens – Useful Contacts document and Induction Sessions Descriptions.

Annual Development Records and Personal Development Plans

Democratic Services will maintain an annual development record for each Councillor based upon their role, special responsibilities and Committee allocations. Councillors may choose to have an optional Personal Development Plan to set out any additional personal learning objectives and an action plan to achieve them. Members and their groups will be provided with the relevant templates and guidance where they elect to conduct the PDP discussion within their groups.