



**Sandwell Council Elected
Member Development
Programme**

2018 - 2020



Working to deliver Vision 2030

Councillor Geoff Lewis
Chair of the Member Development Working Group

As the Chair of the Member Development Working Group, it gives me great pleasure to endorse this document.

Member Development is integral to our roles; we must refresh our knowledge, gain new knowledge, and have an adequate support infrastructure in place to ensure we can carry out the various roles we undertake effectively.

In my role as Chair of the working group, myself and my colleagues, Councillor Steve Trow and Councillor Joyce Underhill have put in place robust tests to ensure this

will be a programme that works for us all, but has the flexibility to ensure it still meets our own varied and individual needs.

For this programme to be a success, and for the sake of all our development, I urge every Elected Member to attend the training sessions offered and to contribute to this programme.

Elected Members with reaffirmed and newly acquired knowledge will help to achieve positive outcomes for the Borough.

Clr Geoff Lewis



Surjit Tour
Director – Monitoring Officer

Since the turn of the year, officers within my Directorate have been working towards developing this bespoke plan, rooted in a holistic approach that will serve the needs of you; Sandwell Council's Elected Member.

At every turn, we have sought to ensure this is an inclusive process which all Elected Members have had the opportunity to contribute to in order for us to craft a programme that meets not only your specific needs, but the strategic priorities and needs of all Elected Members and the Council as a whole going forward.

This document lays out what you can expect from the MDP with regard to training and support arrangements. A lot of work has gone in to the design and delivery of this programme, with aspects still being developed.

Throughout this programme both myself and my officers will be on hand to guide you through this process. Elected Members will be entitled to as much or as little support as they'd like.

I hope you enjoy this document and are enthused about this refreshed and revitalised programme.

Surjit Tour

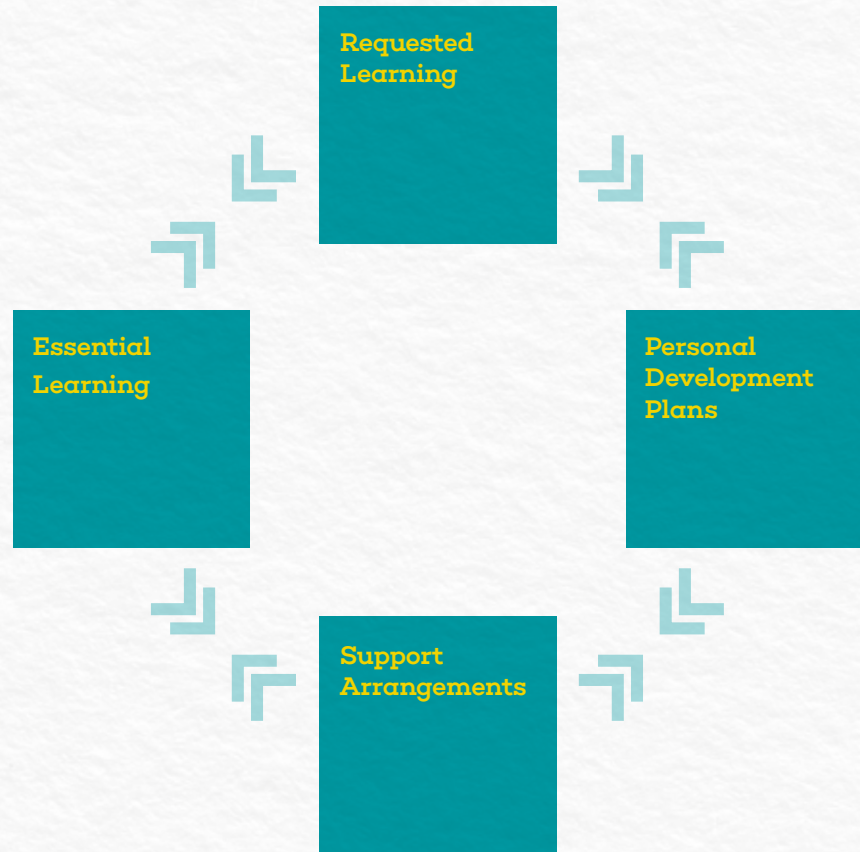
The Approach

The Member Development Programme has been produced by you as Elected Members, through consultation at every stage of the process. This continual input from you has allowed officers to construct an offer that incorporates your wishes to ensure it remains fit for purpose and responsive to your needs. Underpinning this inclusivity throughout the process is a four-sided solution that should enable and empower you in your growth and development moving forward. These are shown opposite this text.

Each of these elements, working in isolation and as a whole are designed to assist you in every part of the refreshed Member Development Programme.

It is important to stress that the Member Development Programme is not a one size fits all process, suited for only one use. This programme has been developed with a holistic approach in mind that will, over the next few years, as it grows and develops, respond to your emerging learning and support needs as and when they arise. Underpinning this will be the commitment to ensuring the Vision 2030 for Sandwell is reflected at each and every stage and throughout the entirety of this process.

This is an ambitious, forward-thinking and undoubtedly challenging initiative. However, support from officers will be readily available to you at any stage throughout this process; both in 1-2-1 support but also in the development of infrastructure mechanisms, such as a Member Portal which will better assist you in your role. ■



What to Expect

This document will outline the delivery of your Member Development Programme and what you should expect from it. As shown in the diagram previously, it comprises of 4 key elements:

1

Essential Learning

The learning which all Members must undertake to ensure they have the requisite skills, competencies and knowledge to undertake their role.

2

Requested Learning

Delivery of sessions based on the learning themes that Elected Members stated they'd like to learn more about following interactive workshops designed to identify their needs.

3

Support Arrangements

A joined up approach designed to support Elected Members in every aspect of the Member Development Plan and in their roles.

4

Personal Development Plans

A refreshed and invigorated scheme designed to help Elected Members identify what matters to them personally.

Linking into Sandwell's Strategic Ambitions

Sandwell Council's guiding philosophy over the coming years is the Vision 2030.

Containing 10 challenging ambitions; five focusing on Sandwell the place and 5 focusing on the people of Sandwell, the work which both Elected Members and Officers undertake will feed towards achieving the aim that by 2030,

Sandwell is a thriving, optimistic and resilient community.

This Elected Member Development Plan will ensure that Elected Members are alive to the Vision and will ensure, through the training and development they undertake, they are actively working towards its achievement.



In addition to the Vision and its ambition statements, the Council at all times adheres to its guiding values of Trust, Unity and Progress. These values guide officers of the Council in all the work that they undertake and as representatives of the council, and borough for those

working on a regional level, Elected Members should also articulate these values. That is why this Member Development Programme will work towards the implementation of these values. ■

You Said, We Will

The following is a 'you said, we will' based on comments and feedback that have been shared with officers throughout the Member Development Plan, and officers are acting upon these to develop a plan suited to your needs:

Can you ensure the MDP offers the support we need outside of training e.g. ICT?

A key integral part of the new MDP will include extensive support infrastructure around ICT which will feature a review of current/future kit, using technology effectively, a new Elected Member Portal, learning to increase confidence plus advice and guidance.

We'd like sessions to be less 'death by PowerPoint' please?

Officers are talking with external/internal learning providers to ensure sessions are more interactive and not dominated by presentations.

Can you please make sure sessions are shorter to allow for our busy schedules?

Many of the learning sessions that will feature will be 'bitesize' and no more than an hour.

Sometimes we feel the learning is the same every year and doesn't always meet our needs?

We've used the Paired Comparison technique to prioritise your individual learning needs.

Q Some of us want less formal training style and a choice of learning methods?

A We are taking this on board and speaking with providers to ensure there are more interactive workshops, group sessions as well as on-line training you can do at home.

Q Please ensure we use a mix of in-house and external training providers to keep costs down?

A We are working our in-house officers plus external providers such as the LGA who can source many trainers for free.

Q We need to ensure any learning and development makes us answer the question 'now what do I/we do with this?'.

A Again, we are meeting with all learning and development providers to ensure Elected Members can utilise the outputs as part of their role(s).

The Member Development Programme will deliver:

- Bitesize sessions
- Interactive training
- Various training methods (online, group, workshop)
- Topics based on your priorities.
- Working with internal and external stakeholders.
- Develop support mechanisms
- Developing training to answer, 'Now what do I/we do with this?'

Artemis

Online modules designed to cover the following topics:

- Child Protection Level 1
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Information sharing

Equalities and Religious Awareness

Designed to focus on equality topics such as:

- Equality Act 2010
- General Duty and the impact this has on Councillors and their duty to uphold it

Licensing

Training designed to cover key licensing issue such as:

- Taxi licencing
- Liquor licencing
- Gambling licencing

Your Essential

AIM

Through a mix and match of training methods essential topics which will aid their development to be rolled out from early 2019

Council Values

Interactive session facilitated by Human Resources designed to:

- Raise awareness of Trust, Unity and Progress
- How Elected Members can display these values
- What promoting the values can do for the Council

Code of Conduct

Facilitated by the Director – Monitoring Officer to ensure Elected Members:

- Understand the code of conduct
- Why and how they can adhere to it
- Know which information is essential to declare

Corporate

Parenting

Led by Officers from Sandwell Children's Social Care Trust for Elected Members to understand:

- The role of the Trust
- The role of the Council as a corporate parent

Health and

Safety

Providing Members with an awareness of issues such as:

- General Health and Safety practices
- Agile working
- Staying safe in the working environment

Learning list

... sessions, providing Elected Members with knowledge on ...
... ment, facilitated by professional training providers

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

Planning

Sessions designed to cover issues such as:

- Ensuring Elected Members have essential planning knowledge
- Having the tools to deal effectively with constituent enquiries

Scrutiny

Facilitated by the Council's Scrutiny Unit, these sessions are designed to cover issues such as:

- Helping Elected Members understand the importance of effective scrutiny.
- The types of scrutiny.
- The roles they can play in the scrutiny process

Safeguarding

Training with mini-workshops and quizzes designed to cover topics such as:

- 5 categories of abuse
- Children's Safeguarding
- Adult's safeguarding
- What you can do to ensure proper safeguarding

Requested Learning

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To implement the learning topics identified by Elected Members in the interactive workshop sessions held in Spring 2018 and prioritised accordingly; individually and collectively through the paired comparison prioritisation exercise.



Working with both internal and external providers, including West Midland Employers and the Local Government Association these sessions are currently being developed, ready to be rolled out from early 2019. The order in which they are listed are results of the collective prioritisation scores taking into account the feedback of all Elected Members. Subject to availability of trainers, the learning rollout will follow the ranked order.

Understanding Sandwell's Vision 2030, the WMCA, how they interlink and how I can make an impact

Enabling Elected Members to achieve a greater level of awareness around Sandwell's Vision 2030, the role it plays within the Borough; the importance of the West Midlands Combined Authority and how these two strategic priorities for the authorities interlink.

Embracing technology to transform and enhance new ways of working

Providing Elected Members with insight on how to develop and embed new ways of working via the use of technology, this session will give Elected Members the mechanisms by which to work more effectively and confidently in an ever-changing environment.

'A Focus On...' Sessions; inviting Council officers, businesses, public sector partners and the VCS to share what they do and improve networking opportunities:

Working with suppliers internally and externally, these sessions will enable Elected Members to engage with key stakeholders active within Sandwell, learn more about the work they do, the challenges they face and how joint working can lead to positive outcomes for the people of Sandwell.

Following on from these initial sessions, further sessions will involve more collective and collaborative sessions with partners working on key issues around the Vision 2030 and its ambitions.



Theory of Change

Underpinning the work with our partners through the 'Focus On...' sessions is something commonly known as the 'Theory of Change' approach. This focuses first on what outcome is being sought, then considers all the things that need to be in place to make it happen. For the 'Focus On..' sessions, this means increasing opportunities and awareness of collaborative working with our partners, exploring strategic and operational opportunities and how we can deliver better outcomes for the Borough.

Accessing and managing information to make me a more effective Elected Member

This training module has been designed to enable Elected Members to find the information that is essential to their role and how to manage information generally, as well as handling personal information regarding constituents, keeping in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 legislation.

Empowering Communities – What does this mean for me and how can I use it in my role effectively?

These sessions, underpinned by the newly developed Town Plans of Sandwell offer Elected Members the opportunity to find out how their role can achieve greater levels of community engagement within Sandwell and their role as facilitators and enablers within the community.

Requested Learning

Being commercially savvy and dealing with our commercial partners, including negotiating skills



Developing the commercial skills and knowledge of Elected Members, as well as building skills around developing relationships with businesses, this module will also help Elected Members with their negotiating skills, feeding into their role as a community leader, enabler and facilitator.

Understanding Council Finances – Budgeting, Procurement and Governance arrangements



This training intervention has been designed to give Elected Members, from a Sandwell specific viewpoint, the finances of the Council and wider Borough.

Drawing on the expertise within the Council's Finance and governance areas, Elected Members will leave with a heightened knowledge of the Council's initiatives to save money in the face of austerity and how they can contribute to sustainable budget management.

How my role impacts upon effective scrutiny

Led by the Council's Scrutiny Unit, these sessions will help Elected Members understand further the different types of scrutiny and how in their role, they can promote and enhance good and effective scrutiny within Sandwell Council, as well as realising what the benefits of good scrutiny can be for the borough.

Understanding and using social media strategically and effectively

In the age of social media, where leading public sector bodies, businesses, politicians and the world at large can communicate easily, quickly and effectively with each other, these sessions will provide Elected Members with the tools to promote effectively the work that both they do and the Council do.

Given the varied needs of Elected Members, time will also be devoted to how beginners to social media can engage with it confidently and effectively.

Successful facilitation and conflict resolution techniques

In their role as community leaders, Councillors can find themselves key facilitators both in their Ward and at a borough level, but also as a mediator in times of conflict.

These sessions will equip Elected Members with the skills by which they can further develop these skills to achieve positive benefits for Sandwell.

Member Wellbeing and Resilience

The role of an Elected Member is fast changing, with numerous relentless demands placed upon your time and resources. That is why a robust support plan centred around your wellbeing and resilience is just as critical as learning and development, ICT and broader support arrangements.

Our partners at the LGA have produced a workbook to assist you. Online, please enter the following link to access the information:

LGA Stress Management and Personal Resilience Workbook

www.local.gov.uk/councillor-workbook-stress-management-and-personal-resilience

This and other workbooks related to your role, such as community leadership, supporting residents with complex issues and engaging young people can all be found on

LGA Councillor Workbooks

www.local.gov.uk/councillor-workbooks

They will support some of the learning you have requested and we will send reminders via regular bulletins over the coming months. Information will also be made available through the Elected Member Portal which is currently being created.



Support Arrangements

AIM

To compliment the Essential and Requested Learning elements of the Elected Member Development Programme, support arrangements on a variety of issues have been developed to ensure Elected Members feel empowered and enabled not only to participate in the Programme, but also in their role.



The support arrangements are as follows:

- 1 Day-to-day Civic and Elected Member Services support. A first point of contact for the help and advice you need.
- 2 Refreshed enquiry system for you to log, progress and chase your Ward enquiries.
- 3 Personal Development Plans tailored to your individual learning and support needs.
- 4 Fit for purpose ICT hardware and software that meets your requirements.
- 5 Complete ICT support package designed to cater for all abilities.
- 6 ICT Elected Member Champions – representing your voice when developing ICT solutions.
- 7 Provision of 'Advice on a Page' bulletins for guidance on frequently asked questions or key subject matters as required by you as Elected Members.
- 8 Regular training bulletins keeping you up to date on the latest learning available.
- 9 'What you need to know' communications designed to keep you informed on current/topical issues and matters facing the council.
- 10 Development of a fit for purpose Elected Member Portal by Autumn 2019, to serve as a one-stop shop for you to find the key information that you want.

Your Digital Solution

Officers recognise that to date, there hasn't been appropriate level of resources or awareness focused on ICT for Elected Members. From online infrastructure to the very equipment Elected Members use, the current system simply isn't fit for purpose and isn't responsive to the ever increasing and changing demands and needs for Elected Members. During the interactive workshop sessions, Officers took on board a vast range of comments in relation to Elected Members' digital needs. The following points have been developed, and are currently under implementation to provide support in the form of a digital solution to Elected Members:

{ COMING
SOON }

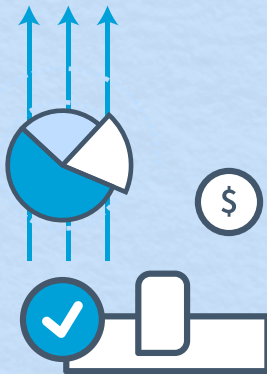


ICT workshops for Elected Members to ascertain how a digital solution could help Elected members undertake their tasks more more efficiently and effectively in the future; the current functionality of ICT equipment and the sort of updates they'd expect to receive as Elected Members.

+5



A review of the current case management system, in consultation with Elected Members, regarding whether more effective, streamlined processes can be developed to ensure Elected Member enquiries are answered in a detailed yet efficient manner.



Development of a bespoke, fit for purpose, Elected Member Portal that will act as a source of problem resolution, guidance and information to Elected Members. An officer Working Group has been established with two Elected Member 'Champions' to relay the thoughts, views and opinions of Elected Members on how they would like a Portal to look and feel. A review of LGA identified best practice has also been conducted, with a Councillor Toolkit from Plymouth Council the example that Sandwell shall seek to work with and build upon.



Your Development Plans

Alongside the relaunch of the Member Development Programme, the Personal Development Plan (PDP) process has also been refreshed, taking into account all of the above elements; Essential Training, Requested Learning (with focus on individual paired comparison scores within the PDP) and support arrangements in relation to Elected Members ICT requirements and preferred learning styles.

For all Elected Members, officers from Civic and Member Services will conduct their PDP. Following this, taking on board the comments from Members,

officers will seek to develop learning interventions designed to suit and assist Elected Members in whichever way they can.

A close-up photograph showing a person's hand holding a pair of blue-handled scissors, cutting a small white rectangular piece of paper. The paper has the handwritten text "I can't do it" written on it in black marker. The scissors are positioned to cut the paper diagonally, and the tip of the scissors is just above the text. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

I can't
do it

Your Member Development Timeline

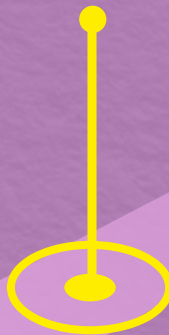
1 Essential Training launch and commencement of delivery

Winter 2018



2 Requested Learning Training launch and commencement of delivery

Spring/Summer 2019



3 Development of a bespoke, fit for purpose, Elected Member Portal to provide support and guidance to Elected Members

Autumn 2019



Your Civic and Member Services Team



Please send enquiries regarding Member Development to member_development@sandwell.gov.uk and expect bulletins throughout 2019.