

**SANDWELL COUNCIL ELECTED**  
**MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2023/24**



Sandwell  
Metropolitan Borough Council

## **Councillor Keith Allcock – Chair of the Member Development Working Group**

**As the Chair of the Member Development Working Group, it gives me great pleasure to endorse this new plan that builds on the success of the past few years.**

**Member Development remains integral to our roles; In ensuring that we, as elected members can continue to support our communities and effectively deliver against the Council's corporate ambitions, we must be confident in our various roles and our ability to carry out our various responsibilities. Our Member Development Programme supports all Councillors, whether newly elected or longer serving, by providing opportunities to ensure that we have the skills and knowledge to respond to immediate and emerging local government issues.**

**Committee colleagues and I will continue to have oversight of the programme and encourage all members to engage proactively in their own learning and development in support of positive outcomes for the Borough.**

**Kind regards,**

**Cllr Keith Allcock**

**Chair of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee**

## **Surjit Tour – Director – Monitoring Officer**

**Since 2018, Officers within my Directorate have been working to build a member development programme that holistically supports Sandwell Council's Elected Members.**

**At every turn, we have sought to ensure this is an inclusive process which all Members have an opportunity to contribute to in order for us to design and deliver a programme that enables you, as Councillors to feel supported in your roles, deliver against the strategic priorities and ambitions.**

**This document sets out what you can expect from the member development programme. We offer a mix of core knowledge and skills to meet the needs of all councillors, alongside themed bespoke development strands for those who have special responsibilities or aspire to a future role.**

**Whilst the programme is designed to be delivered over each municipal year, as always, Members are encouraged to engage with officers in the directorate if they identify and new development activity that would support them in their Councillor roles.**

**Best wishes,**

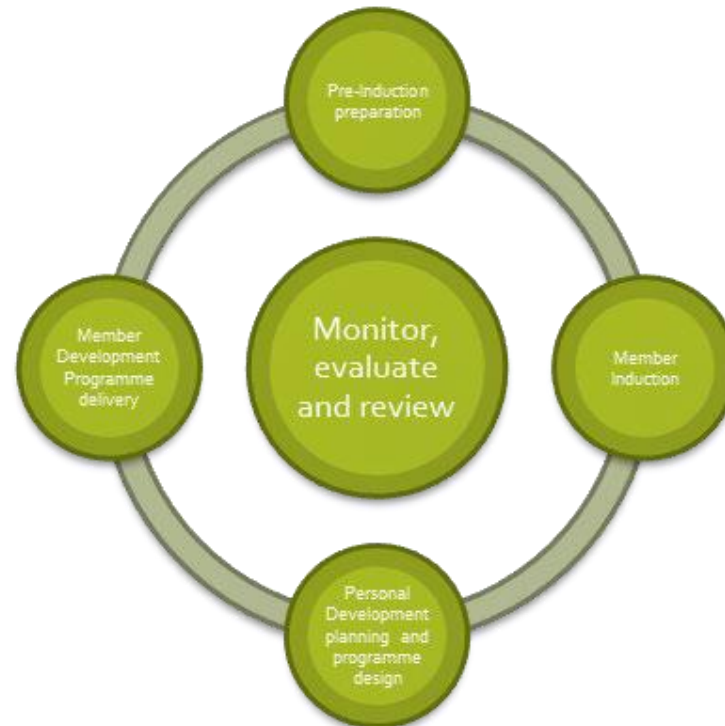
**Surjit Tour**

**Director of Law & Governance**

# SANDWELL'S APPROACH TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

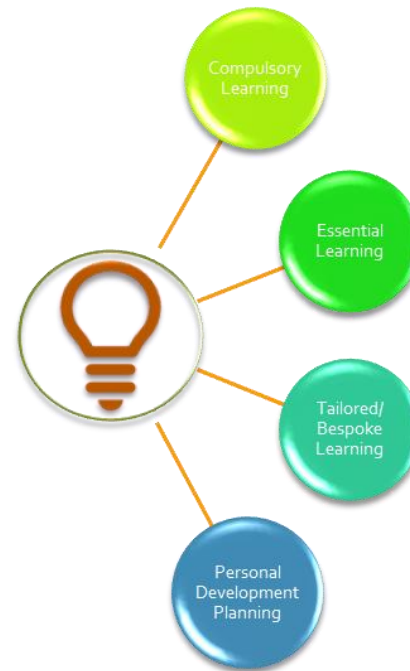
The Member Development programme is designed collaboratively with Members and officers across the Council with the aim of constructing an offer that incorporates the wishes of Members, the immediate needs of the authority and known future issues that impact across the local government landscape, with a view to ensuring that it remains fit for purpose and responsive to our needs.

Our shared belief is that an effective Councillor development journey begins prior to election, in preparing those that want to be Councillors, and continues on a cyclical basis throughout the remainder of a Councillors life in public service. Our approach enables individuals and groups to design a bespoke package of learning and support interventions that aim to enable and empower Members in their growth and development moving forward.



Our newly modelled approach includes robust monitoring, evaluation and review to ensure candidates, newly elected members and established members receive appropriate and targeted learning and support matched to their current and future needs.

The MDP has served its purpose well in recent years to establish learning and support as a key ingredient of Member effectiveness and confidence in their roles. This new and revised programme will work with the key strengths established over the past 5 years and build on the identified interventions that will develop Members who are in positions of special responsibility or are aspiring to be. The following diagram encapsulates the approach which is based on external best practice. Each of these elements work independently and collectively to inform a comprehensive framework of targeted development activity.





## WHAT TO EXPECT

We understand that members learn and develop in their roles differently and we have designed our programme to provide a variety of development activity. Our strands are delivered using a combination of interactive workshops, member briefings and e-modules. We are also in the process of building a knowledge repository that Councillors can access, via the MyCouncillor portal, key information, as and when you need it.

In understanding that your role does not follow a traditional 9-5 routine, we look to provide development workshops and briefings in the early evening, however, will accommodate daytime sessions where these are preferred.

For the programme to be effective, we rely on your contributions to sessions, sharing your experiences and understanding for the benefit of your colleagues, alongside qualitative feedback on the effectiveness and usefulness of the programme.



# UNDERPINNING THE APPROACH

**Development Plans** – will be available to Elected Members in roles, or aspiring to be, that hold special responsibilities. These will be developed and scheduled at key stages during the Municipal Year. Plans will be based on the individual role with learning, support, advice and guidance sourced internally and/or externally where appropriate.

**Support Arrangements** – A holistic solutions-based approach designed by Democracy staff to support Members in every aspect of the Member Development Plan and in their roles.

**Personal Development Plans (PDP's)** - Integral to the ongoing review, development and continuous improvement of the programme will be a planned, robust PDP meeting, held with officers from the Democracy service area, to consolidate strengths and establish areas for improvement. PDP's are scheduled to take place from July each year and the repeated prior to the end of this Municipal Year. Your PDP will aim to capture key skills and knowledge or learning and development that has been undertaken externally to the Council, for example, in employment or further/higher education



# YOUR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Member Development Programme (MDP) is designed to offer all Councillors a suite of learning and development activity that aims to be flexible in order to meet individual and collective need and ambitions at whatever point you are at in your Councillor lifetime. Your personal development plan or PDP will inform the content of the wider Member Development Plan, ensuring that appropriate resources are made available in support of your roles and responsibilities.

Where there are common themes or trends across the majority of members, our aim is to incorporate development activity in the MDP to address this, however, we understand that individual councillors may identify unique requirements that we aim to support where possible.

We offer all Councillors the opportunity to discuss their development needs in a one to one confidential discussion, where you'll be invited to reflect on your successes, explore future ambitions and design a programme of learning and development that supports your needs.



# LINKING INTO SANDWELL'S CORPORATE PLAN & AMBITIONS

Sandwell has a clear vision for what the borough should look and feel like by 2030: In 2030, Sandwell is a thriving, optimistic and resilient community. It's where we call home and where we're proud to belong – where we choose to bring up our families, where we feel safe and cared for, enjoying good health, rewarding work, feeling connected and valued in our neighbourhoods and communities, confident in the future, and benefiting fully from revitalised West Midlands. Sandwell's Corporate Plan sets out what the Council will do to deliver Vision 2030 and Sandwell's 10 ambitions over the next five years.

In addition to the Vision and its ambition statements, the Council is guided by the shared values of Trust, Unity and Progress. These values guide Members and Officers of the Council in all the work that they undertake and as representatives of the council.





# WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME?

The role of an elected member is varied and often complex, requiring different skills, knowledge and abilities. At Sandwell, we aim to provide development opportunities with the objective of ensuring that Councillors feel equipped to and confident in fulfilling the expectations of the electorate and contributing to the delivery of the Council's strategic ambitions for the Borough.

Our programme is designed to offer something for each member from the point of their first election and flexes to meet the various roles that you may undertake in the course of service to the community. Our themed development strands aim to support Members to achieve their individual and collective objectives.



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Some elements of the programme are critical to member roles and we identify these as compulsory. These may be to ensure that statutory obligations are fulfilled or to provide essential knowledge in relation to the individual remits of committee. Our identified priority learning is drawn from the feedback provided by Members as being key to their roles over the coming 12 months. Our specialist development programmes are designed to provide Councillors with, or aspiring to hold, identified roles and responsibilities, the appropriate support and knowledge to conduct those roles and our bespoke programme is responsive to any emerging themes or corporate need. The programme strands are set out below.

### New Member Induction

Date	Programmed Event	Objective(s)	Members to be invited	Compulsory Essential Bespoke Desirable	Lead Officers
9 May 2023	Welcome and Declaration of acceptance of office	To provide a welcome to the Council and for Councillors to sign their declaration of acceptance of office	Newly and re-elected members (and families)	Essential – for Councillors elected in May 2023	CEO/Monitoring Officer/Democracy
11-20 May 2023  By appointment	Member ICT and Portal	These sessions address the use of corporate IT devices, information governance and using the member portal for progressing casework	New members	Compulsory for new members	Member Services/ICT
11 May 2023	Decision Making process and Understanding My Role as a Councillor	This session will give you an overview of decision making in Sandwell, provide information on your role as a councillor at a meeting and how you can access your committee papers	New member	Compulsory for new members	Democratic Services



17 May 2023	The New Municipal Year	<p>To outline: Council priorities Working together: The role and responsibilities of Councillors and Officers; Directorates and Service provision An overview of decision making Support for members</p>	All members	Essential	Leadership Team/Democracy/Member Services
7 & 8 June 2023 (From 6pm)	Neighbourhood Support	<p>Meet the teams who directly support elected members in their communities. To provide an overview of the services they offer out in Sandwell Communities.</p>	All Members	Essential for new members, Desirable for all members	Neighbourhood Teams





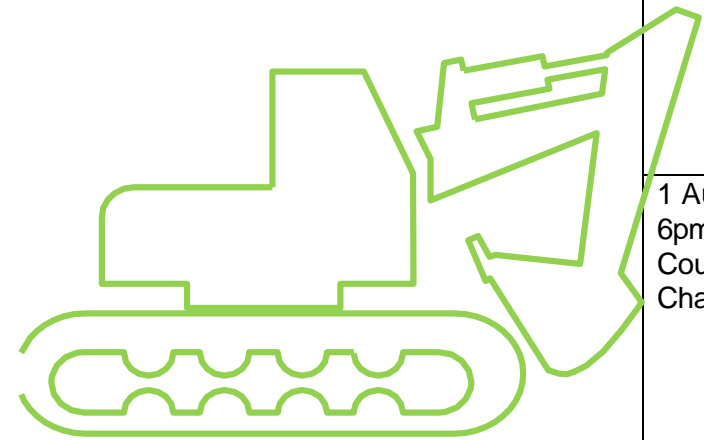
<p>12 June 2023 (10am to 4pm)</p>	<p>The Role of Scrutiny and scrutiny work programming</p>	<p>For members appointed to Scrutiny Boards, this session will provide a comprehensive overview of the role and powers of Scrutiny and how they add value to the work of the organisation. As the Scrutiny Boards are responsible for developing their own programme of activity, the afternoon session will enable Members and Officers to have initial conversations on priority areas for inclusion in Board work programmes.</p>	<p>Scrutiny Board Members</p>	<p>Desirable for new members</p>	<p>Statutory Scrutiny officer</p>
<p>14 June 2023 10.30am – Taxis 1pm – General licensing.</p>	<p>An introduction to Licensing</p>	<p>The opportunity to attend a general introduction to General Licensing &amp; Taxi Licensing which can feature in councillor casework</p>	<p>New Members</p>	<p>Desirable for new members</p>	<p>Licensing Manager/LGA Peer</p>

19 June 2023 Session 1 20 June 2023 Session 2	My Councillor Portal	An overview of the Member casework and enquiry management system	All Members	Essential for new members	Digital Transformation Lead Officer
20 June 2023 5.30pm – 7.30pm (virtual Zoom event)	Welcome to Newly Elected Members  (LGA National Events)	This is a virtual networking opportunity for new councillors across the country to link in with colleagues	New Members	Desirable for new members	LGA
27 June 2023  6pm-8pm	An introduction to Planning	The opportunity to attend a general introduction to the planning process which can feature in councillor casework	All Members	Desirable for new members Essential for planning committee members	Head of Planning John Baker/Alison Bishop
4 July 2023 6pm-8pm  (Virtual event)	An introduction to Licensing	The opportunity to attend a general introduction to Taxi Licensing which can feature in councillor casework	All Members	Desirable for new members	Licensing Manager/LGA Peer





<p>5 July 2023 6pm-8pm (Virtual event)</p>	<p>An introduction to Licensing</p>	<p>The opportunity to attend a general introduction to general Licensing which can feature in councillor casework</p>	<p>All Members</p>	<p>Desirable for new members</p>	<p>Licensing Manager/LGA Peer</p>
<p>6 July 2023 6pm- 8pm  Council Chamber</p>	<p>Introduction to Local Government Finance</p>	<p>To provide an overview of financial structures any systems within the Council</p>	<p>All Members</p>	<p>Essential for all members</p>	<p>Director of Finance/LGA peer  Simone Hines Rebecca Maher</p>
<p>19<sup>th</sup> July 2023 6pm-7:30 pm (Virtual event)</p>	<p>An introduction to Audit</p>	<p>The opportunity to see how Audit and Risk management ensures the integrity of the financial reporting and audit process and to oversee the maintenance of sound internal control and risk management systems.</p>	<p>All Members</p>	<p>Desirable for new members</p>	<p>Audit Manager Risk Manager External Auditor/LGA peer</p>
<p>1 August 2023 6pm-7.30pm Council Chamber</p>	<p>Public Speaking Skills</p>	<p>This 1.5 hour lively and practical event is aimed at new councillors who would like to learn the art of public speaking in webcast meetings environment (meetings and full Council)</p>	<p>All Members (Members who have attending a previous 'Public Speaking Skills' course need not attend unless they would like to refresh their knowledge)</p>	<p>Essential</p>	<p>David McGrath – link UK</p>



DATE TO BE CONFIRMED – 20 or 27 September 6pm-8pm	King's Honours & Awards	Information on the (personal) awards and how to submit a nomination.	All members	Bespoke	West Midlands Lieutenancy
26 September	Personal Safety	This event aims to provide members with key information on safety considerations	All members	Desirable for new members	LGA
TBC	Time Management	To outline strategies and practices to help Councillors balance the demands on their time	All members	Desirable	Commissioned LGA



### Corporate Governance

Date	Programmed Event	Objective(s)	Members to be invited	Compulsory Essential Bespoke Desirable	Lead Officers
16 May 2023	Code of Conduct	These workshops will explore the Code of Conduct for elected members and the expectations placed on councillors in their roles	All members	Compulsory for all members every 2 years	Monitoring Officer/Service Manager Democracy
12 June 2023	Overview and Scrutiny – provisions, powers, toolkit and work programming	Examining scrutiny best practice, tools and techniques, followed by initial development of work programmes	All Scrutiny Members	Essential for scrutiny members	Statutory Scrutiny Officer
TBC	Introduction to Overview & Scrutiny	To provide an introduction to the role, powers and functions of the Council's Scrutiny Boards	All Members	Essential for new members, desirable for all members	Statutory Scrutiny Officer
6 July 2023	Understanding local government finance	To provide an overview of financial structures any systems within the Council	All members	Compulsory ARAC, Cabinet Essential for all members	Director of Finance



<p>12 July 2023 6-8pm</p>	<p>Decision making and Council Procedure Rules</p>	<p>This session will offer an overview of the Council's decision-making framework and walk members through the conduct and constitutional provisions of Council meetings</p>	<p>All members</p>	<p>Essential for all members</p>	<p>Service Manager Democracy/ Monitoring Officer</p>
<p>August 2023</p>	<p>Your role on outside bodies</p>	<p>This workshop aims to provide members with an overview of their roles and responsibilities where they are appointed by the Council to outside bodies</p>	<p>Members/Directors appointed to outside bodies</p>	<p>Essential for members on outside bodies</p>	<p>Bethan Evans</p>



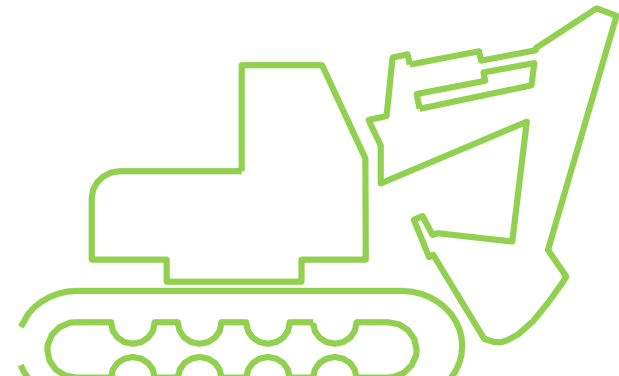
<p><b>Programme20:</b> Thursday 21 September – Friday 22 September 2023</p> <p><b>Programme21:</b> Saturday 27 January – Sunday 28 January 2024</p> <p><b>Programme 22:</b> Thursday 15 February – Thursday 16 February 2024 Virtual</p>	<p>Effective Scrutiny</p>	<p>This LGA module provides the opportunity to focus in depth on the hot topics that are currently most relevant to delegates</p>	<p>New or aspiring scrutiny chairs and task and finish review lead members</p>	<p>Desirable for scrutiny members</p>	<p>LGA</p>
<p><b>Programme 9:</b> Thursday 18 January – Friday 19 January 2024 <b>Programme10:</b> Saturday 10 February – Sunday 11 February 2024</p> <p>Both events take place at Warwick Conferences, Coventry CV4 7SH.</p>	<p>Audit committees</p>	<p>These sessions examine how Audit committees can be most effective</p>	<p>Audit Committee Chairs/Vice Chairs/Aspiring Chairs</p>		<p>LGA</p>





**Continuous Learning for all Councillors (to be finalised with the LGA)**

Date	Programmed Event	Objective(s)	Members to be invited	Compulsory Essential Bespoke Desirable	Lead Officers
e-learning module (accessible immediately) + workshop 5 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Understanding the Equality Act, Equality Duty	All Members	Essential	EDI Manager
TBC	Social media	Exploring the relationship between Councillors and Social media, unpacking practical and ethical considerations; the benefits of social media as a communication tool and making best use of social media platforms.	All Members	Essential - All members	LGA
12 <sup>th</sup> June (Corporate Parenting Week)	Corporate Parenting	To outline Councillor responsibilities in relation to the corporate parenting duty	All Members/Cabinet members	Essential	LGA



	Community Leadership	The key components of effective community leadership	All Members	Essential	LGA
	Safeguarding	To unpack what safeguarding means from a Local Authority lens, including corporate responsibilities and what to do if you have a safeguarding concern	All members	Essential	LGA
1 <sup>st</sup> August 2023	Effective public speaking and presenting with impact	This workshop will offer Councillors the opportunity to explore how to communicate effectively in a public setting and getting your message across	All Members	Desirable	David McGrath– Link Services
	Peer to Peer Mentoring for Chairs and Vice Chairs				LGA/CfGS



## Continuous Learning – Corporate Governance

Pre-committee	Standards Hearings	To provide a comprehensive understanding of the role and remit of the Committee where a standards hearing is required	Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee		Monitoring Officer
ASAP after Annual Council	The role of the Chair	Understanding the role of the Chair, how to chair meetings effectively including a look at activity leading up to meetings, Co-ordinating committee activity,	Chairs/Vice Chairs/Aspiring	Essential for committee and board chairs/vice chairs	LGA
ASAP after Annual Council	Chairing Hearings/ Proceedings	To explore the role of the Chair in managing quasi-judicial or other formal hearings/ proceedings	Chairs/Vice Chairs of quasi-judicial bodies	Essential – Chairs/Vice Chairs of regulatory Committees	David McGrath – Link Services
TBC	Chief Officer Employment Procedures	The role of Members in chief officer employment issues	Chairs/Vice Chairs/Cabinet Members	Compulsory	Head of HR
October 2023 (TBC – awaiting dates)	The corporate governance framework	Exploring the governance framework and Committee role	ARAC Members All Members	Essential	Cipfa

Pre-Committee	Managing risk	The committee's role in the management of risk and the wider context of corporate risk management	ARAC Members	Essential	
Pre-Committee	The role of External Audit	An overview of the role of the external auditors	ARAC Members	Essential	Grant Thornton
Pre-Committee	The annual statement of accounts	Examining and providing assurance on the content of the statement of accounts	ARAC Members	Essential	Director of Finance
TBC	Working together– the Member/Officer relationship	These workshops will explore the Member/Officer working relationships	All Members	Essential for all members	Monitoring Officer LGA
Pre-Committee	Performance Management	To examine the role of scrutiny in managing council performance	All Scrutiny Members	Desirable for scrutiny members	Statutory Scrutiny Officer/LGA

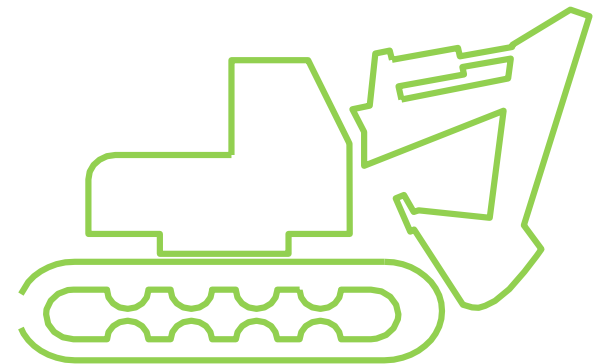
**Continuous Learning - Committee specific**  
Planning Committee

Date	Programmed Event	Objective(s)	Members to be invited	Compulsory Essential Bespoke Desirable	Lead Officers
27 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Introduction to Planning	To provide an overview of the Council's planning function and understanding key planning considerations as they relate to potential community issues and casework	All members	Compulsory for planning committee members Desirable for all members	Service Manager - Planning
Pre-Committee workshop	(bitesize) 5G mast – planning considerations	Exploring key considerations in relation to this planning matter	Planning Committee Members	bespoke	Service Manager - Planning
Pre-Committee workshop	(bitesize) Wind turbines	Exploring key considerations in relation to this planning matter	Planning Committee Members	bespoke	Service Manager - Planning
Pre-Committee workshop	Local planning policy	Exploring key considerations in relation to this planning matter	Planning Committee Members	bespoke	Service Manager - Planning
Pre-Committee workshop	Dealing with lobbying and representations	Exploring key considerations in relation to this planning matter	Planning Committee Members	bespoke	Service Manager - Planning





Pre-Committee workshop	The green belt	Exploring key considerations in relation to this planning matter	Planning Committee Members	bespoke	Service Manager - Planning
Pre-Committee workshop	Departures from development policy	Exploring key considerations in relation to this	Planning Committee Members	bespoke	Service Manager - Planning



## Licensing Committee

Date	Programmed Event	Objective(s)	Members to be invited	Compulsory Essential Bespoke Desirable	Lead Officers
Pre-Committee	The Gambling Act in practice	To deliver the key considerations of Licensing Committee in the context of applications received under the Gambling Act	Licensing Members	Bespoke	Licensing Manager
TBC	Licensing Decision Making at Licensing Committee	How to run a good licensing committee	Licensing Committee & Sub Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs	Bespoke	LGA

## Scrutiny Boards

Date	Programmed Event	Objective(s)	Members to be invited	Compulsory Essential Bespoke Desirable	Lead Officers
TBC	Effective questioning	Exploring techniques to facilitate powerful and effective questioning	All Scrutiny Members	bespoke	Link UK
TBC	Undertaking review activity	This workshop will explore best practice and tools for deep dive scrutiny review activity	All Scrutiny Members	bespoke	TBC



**Audit Committee**

Date	Programmed Event	Objective(s)	Members to be invited	Compulsory Essential Bespoke Desirable	Lead Officers
Pre-Committee	Local Government Funding Background		All ARAC Members	Essential	Director of Finance
Pre-Committee	Financial Control Framework		All ARAC Members Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Board	Essential	Director of Finance
Pre-Committee	Financial Coding		All ARAC Members	Essential	Director of Finance
Pre-Committee	Budget Monitoring and Preparation		All ARAC Members Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Board	Essential	Director of Finance

