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ISLINGTON
For a more equal future

Town Hall, Upper Street, London, N1 2UD

AGENDA FOR THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

Members of the Audit and Risk Committee are summoned to a meeting, which will be held in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on, **20 November 2023 at 7.00 pm.**

Membership

Councillor Nick Wayne (Chair)
Councillor Flora Williamson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Janet Burgess MBE
Councillor Sara Hyde
Alan Begg (Co-Optee)
Alan Finch (Co-Optee)

Substitute Members

Councillor Angelo Weekes
Councillor Jilani Chowdhury
Councillor Jason Jackson
Councillor Jenny Kay

Quorum: is 3 Councillors

C.   **Urgent non-exempt items**

Any non-exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

D.   **Exclusion of press and public**

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the remaining item on the agenda, it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of the Access to Information procedure rules in the Constitution and, if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.

E.   **Confidential/exempt items**   **Page**

F.   **Urgent exempt items (if any)**

Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

The next meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee will be on 29 January 2024

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Report of: (Acting) Returning Officer

Meeting of:	Date:	Ward(s):
Audit	26 October 2023	Laycock

Delete as appropriate	~~Exempt~~	Non-exempt	

SUBJECT: Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

1. Synopsis

1.1   This report sets out proposed changes to polling districts and polling places in Laycock ward.

1.2   This change will take effect with the publication of the revised Register of Electors on 1 December 2023 and for all elections for four years thereafter.

2. Recommendations

2.1   To agree the changes set out in the report in relation to Laycock Ward.

2.2   To note the comments/representations received by Councillors and residents

3. Background

3.1   The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK parliamentary polling districts and polling places. The last compulsory review had to be started and completed between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020 inclusive.

3.2   In 2019 the Local Government Boundary Commission reviewed all the wards within the London Borough of Islington and concluded that thenumber of wards should increase from 16 to 17 wards.

3.3   These changes resulted in the need to undertake a review for all the polling districts and polling places in the borough and these changes then came into effect in May 2022.

3.4   Following changes to building availability within Laycock ward we have undertaken a review to find a suitable replacement within the SLAC polling District.

3.5   The steps required for the review have been undertaken, including publication of the proposals and consultation on them. The Returning Officer will seek approval from the Audit Committee of the Council, which has delegated powers to designate polling places, at a meeting of the committee on 20 November 2023.

4.   Laycock Ward

4.1 Proposed polling districts and polling stations

4.1.1   As Laycock PDC is going to be used by Childrens Services and the layout of the building is to be changed it is no longer suitable to be used as a polling station.

4.1.2   As part of the review, we visited several venues within the polling district but found that most were unsuitable or not accessible. The polling place will comprise of two polling stations, the proposed venue provides sufficient space for this.

4.2 Existing Polling Places for Laycock ward

Polling District	Current Polling Place	Polling Stations
SLAA	Ringcross Community Centre, 60 Lough Road, London, N7 8RH	2
SLAB	Westbourne Community Centre, 43 Roman Way, London, N7 8XF	1
SLAC	Laycock PDC, Laycock Street, London, N1 1TH	2

4.3 Proposed Changes

4.3.1   It is proposed that the polling station in Laycock PDC is moved to 222 Upper Street to accommodate those residents living in properties in the SLAC polling district. The proposed venue for the new district is on the main road with good transport links and is near to the previous polling place.

4.3.2   222 Upper Street is also a Council building so it will be ideal in terms of awareness of the new location and as the building is a council building, we have more control over availability for future elections. The new venue was visited and assessed in August 2023 and is entirely suitable for polling, has level access throughout and all the necessary facilities for electors and staff. Other potential venues included an annex of Laycock PDC, however we were informed this building

would also be part of building works and it would not be able to be used.

4.4 Proposed new Polling Districts and Polling Places for Laycock ward

Polling District	Current Polling Place	Polling Stations
SLAA	Ringcross Community Centre, 60 Lough Road, London, N7 8RH	2
SLAB	Westbourne Community Centre, 43 Roman Way, London, N7 8XF	1
SLAC	Islington Customer Centre, 222 Upper Street, London, N1 1XR	2

5. Representations

5.1 Two comments/representations have been received as a result of the review consultation. Both representations are in support of the proposed changes and excerpts are included below.

Email from Cllr Staff 10 September 2023

"Agree this seems the nearest most accessible place for a polling station".

Email from Cllr Turan 10 September 2023

"222 does seem to be the most suitable alternative".

6. Implications

6.1 Financial Implications:
The costs of the polling districts and polling places review will be met from within existing budgets.

6.2 Legal Implications
6.2.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 section 18B requires that local authorities designate the polling places within their Parliamentary constituencies. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, Returning Officers have the right to use certain public buildings (including a room in a school that receives public funds) for use as polling stations at elections [Chapter 2, Schedule 1, Part III, paragraph 22].

Section 18B (4) of the RPA 1983 states that in conducting a review of polling places the authority must:

A) seek to ensure that all the electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
B)   seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all electors, including those who

are disabled, and when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

6.2.2   In addition, the polling place for a polling district must be within the area of the district unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area either wholly or partly outside of the polling district.

6.3   Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:
No implications

7. Resident Impact Assessment:
7.1   The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

7.2   Electoral Services considered a review of all possible polling places and used a suitability and access checklist. This was drawn largely from the recommendations in Scope's Poll Report 4 published following the 2005 General Election. One checklist has been completed for each existing poll place and all proposed new polling places.

7.3   All polling staff receives equalities training as part of the induction for working on the election.
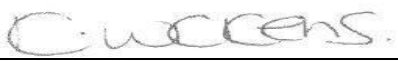
8.   Reason for recommendations
8.1   The building that was used for the last election in the polling district is no longer suitable and will be unable to be used for any future elections. There are no other suitable venues in the polling district.

9.   Appendices
9.1   Appendix 1 – Map of Laycock Ward with new previous and proposed polling station location highlighted

10.   Background papers: None.

Signed by:	C.Wickens.	
	Kerry Wickens, Assistant Director of Elections and Corporate Support Services	Date 26 October 2023

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Democratic Services
Town Hall, London N1 2UD

Report of: Corporate Director of Resources

Meeting of: Audit & Risk Committee

Date: 20 November 2023

Ward(s): All

Subject: Member Development Strategy 2023/26

1. Synopsis

1.1. The Member Learning & Development Strategy sets out the council's commitment to provide effective learning and development opportunities to its elected members. It is aligned to the council's Islington Together 2030 Plan and ensures the priorities reflect the Islington Promise.

1.2. The strategy is also aligned to the principles of the Local Government Association (LGA) Charter framework, which the council has committed to achieving by 2026. The Charter's aim is to help councils ensure their members are appropriately developed and supported to be effective in their appointed roles.

1.3. The strategy has been approved by the Member Learning & Development Steering Group (MLDSG), chaired by Cllr Roulin Khondoker, for submission to Audit and Risk committee for formal approval.

2. Recommendations

2.1. To approve the strategy, attached as Appendix 1.

3. Background

3.1. The Member Learning and Development Strategy recognises the significant, diverse, and sometimes challenging roles fulfilled by elected members, including setting the council's priorities and budget, approving strategy and policy, as

community leaders, decision makers, scrutineers and acting as advocates for residents.

3.2.   The strategy sets out the learning and development programme offered to members and takes into consideration lessons learnt from previous years to build an effective training programme to enhance members skills and support their ongoing development.

3.3.   The programme offers a structured approach to training, including events for potential candidates prior to elections, an induction process after election and a schedule of training sessions relating to appointments to committees and senior positions, corporate needs, and community leadership.

3.4.   The development offered includes mentoring especially for newly elected members or those appointed to senior positions. Elected members are also invited to undertake training needs analysis and personal development plans to manage their individual professional development.

3.5.   The programme ensures accessibility, equality, diversity, and inclusion providing support for each member at every stage of their journey.

3.6.   The strategy will be reviewed every three years by the MLDSG to ensure it remains effective and relevant. It is recommended that any amendments to the strategy arising from future reviews are presented to the Audit and Risk Committee for approval.

4.   Implications

4.1.   **Financial Implications**

4.1.1   The cost of implementing the Member Learning and Development Strategy is contained within the allocated annual member development budget of £37,500.

4.2.   **Legal Implications**

4.2.1   There are no legal implications arising from this report.

4.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

4.3.1   There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

4.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

4.4.1   The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant

protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

4.4.2   An Equalities Impact Assessment screening has been completed. The report has no negative impacts on protected characteristics and a full Equalities Impact Assessment is therefore not required.

5.   Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1.   If approved, the Member Learning and Development Strategy will provide a structured, responsive, and strategic approach to elected member development.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Member Development Strategy 2023 - 2026

Background papers:

- None

Final report clearance:

Authorised by:

David Hodgkinson, Corporate Director of Resources
Date:

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Member Learning and Development Strategy

2023/26

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."
– John F Kennedy

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Contents

Appendices

1. Executive Summary

This Strategy sets out the council's commitment to learning and development for its elected members. It ensures there is support for elected members[1] at every stage of their journey and tenure, starting before a person becomes a councillor to being appointed to committees and other senior positions. Its aim is to inspire and enhance the skills of our elected members in their development and growth as local leaders.

The strategy is aligned with the council's [Corporate Strategy: Islington Together 2030 Plan](#) and the [Local Government Association (LGA) Charter framework](#) for member development, and ensures accessibility, equality, diversity, and inclusion.

It is endorsed by the Member Learning & Development Steering Group (MLDSG), made up of cross-party members, the chief executive, and the member development manager, to oversee and shape the member development programme.

What we offer

We are committed to helping all elected members develop personal resilience and having a positive work-life balance whilst fulfilling this incredibly demanding role.

This strategy sets out the training programme in detail, from pre-election events and induction through to training for specific roles, briefings on local council services, core skills and community leadership development. Training and development will run throughout the four-year term and where possible, two or more sessions on a topic will be arranged to give everyone an opportunity to attend. The courses are facilitated by the council or external providers, including the LGA, Centre for Governance & Scrutiny (CfGS) and The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA).

We will offer mentoring or coaching to newly elected members or those appointed to senior positions. We will also invite members to participate in personal development planning (PDP) to identify their own developmental needs. The personal development programme will be facilitated by an external consultancy organisation that supports the public sector in building a resilient workforce.

The strategy encourages members to discuss any personal needs so that relevant support or reasonable adjustments can be arranged.

What we expect from elected members

We encourage members to attend all training, especially those focussed on governance matters, standards of conduct in public life and specific committee roles. These are identified as 'essential' on the training programme.

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[1] The term member means 'member of the council' or 'elected member' or 'councillor'.

Whilst the member development programme covers a broad range of learning, we ask members to take personal responsibility for their own development and will offer the support to them to do so.

Training Programme Overview

Pre-election period
Local Democracy week
- 'Be a councillor' event
- Service-led events across the borough

Year 1:
Mentoring
- Induction Programme: Members Code of Conduct, Declarations, and Casework Management
- Introduction to Council Services
- Role-specific training: Committee and Executive appointments
- Corporate Training: for example, safeguarding and early intervention for adults and children

Year 2:
Member Needs Analysis/Personal Development Plans
Local Democracy week
- Core Skills Development: for example, disability awareness and LGBTQ+ allyship
- Refresher Training on governance matters, corporate priorities, and regulatory committees
- Community leadership development
- Update on council services

Year 3:
Local Democracy week
- Refresher Training on governance matters and regulatory committees
- Core Skills Development
- Update on council services

Year 4:
- Refresher Training on governance matters and regulatory committees
- Core Skills Development
- Update on council services

A full list of the member-related training for 2023/24 is available in Appendix 2 and the Councillors' digital workplace area, Sharepoint at https://islingtoncouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/ic

Councillors can also access the council's corporate learning platform My Learning LBI: Log in to the site (islington.gov.uk) which offers a wide range of foundational and relational skills training.

We will circulate bulletins from the LGA, ADSO, ModernGov and other facilitators offering member training regularly to all councillors.

2. Introduction

Islington is a wonderfully diverse borough, a vibrant, thriving area with a rich cultural heritage and a strong community that pulls together. However, it is also ranked as one of the most deprived local authorities in England, where some families are living in poverty or face complex and multiple challenges.

Our elected members reflect the community they serve and are integral to helping the council achieve its ambition, **"to create a more equal future for Islington, where everyone who lives here is able to thrive."** They know their community and what matters to residents, are corporate parents for our looked-after children and young people, often overseeing multi-million-pound programmes, and are responsible for considering and approving major policies affecting residents in the borough, such as planning and transport, housing, and education.

In recognition of the challenges and responsibilities placed on members, the council made member development a priority to ensure that the training provided to members is relevant and engaging, empowering members to get the best outcomes for their communities, and to provide more effective political leadership and guidance to the council.

We will ensure the training and development offered will enhance members' skills, consider their individual preferences, address any inequalities they may face in conducting their role, and enable effective relationships with stakeholders.

We will take into consideration the time constraints placed on members, balancing work and personal responsibilities with the demands of the councillor role. We will categorise the training in the programme to help members identify training that are 'essential', 'strongly recommended' or 'recommended' sessions.

Taking all the above into consideration, this strategy sets out our intention to ensure:

- Any training proposed is relevant to current needs or issues.
- The training informs and improves members' knowledge of public services.
- Members are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Members are aware of the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders.
- Members have good relationships with the council and external agencies.
- Appropriate resources are in place to support members in their roles.
- All meetings, training sessions and events are fully accessible and inclusive to all members.

We have aligned the strategy to the principles of the LGA Charter framework, which we have committed to achieving by 2026. The Charter provides the foundation to establish a highly effective learning programme for our existing and future members. We are confident we are starting from a good place, with elected members who are fully committed and motivated to achieving the Council's mission.

3. Our Vision

We want to inspire and empower our elected members to provide political leadership and help the council to achieve its ambition to create a more equal future for Islington's citizens by 2030. To do so, we will create a training and development offer that provides members with the opportunity to enhance their skills and increase confidence to conduct their roles effectively and efficiently.

Our elected members are the bridge between the council and the community, inspired and driven to improve the borough to make a positive difference to the lives of the residents. Our aim is to provide the right support and resources to enable them to be more effective and confident in their roles.

To achieve our vision, we will:

1. Promote learning and development as a key component of the success of the delivery of the council's vision by providing members with the support that will enable them to successfully perform their roles as individuals and teams in the democratic process of local government.

2. Create a clear framework for the development of elected members based on their individual needs and the needs of the Council as a whole.

3. Ensure all elected members are fully aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities, the principles, and standards of conduct in public life, legal requirements and matters of probity.

4. Ensure that all elected members feel confident to undertake their roles.

5. Ensure that we offer training for specific committee roles such as regulatory committees, standards committee, and scrutiny committees.

6. Support continued development of all elected members to help them prepare for the roles they may fulfil in the future.

7. Evaluate all the learning and development opportunities to ensure our approach and delivery is cost effective and provides value in terms of the development of the contribution by elected members.

8. Ensure a consistent approach to training and development throughout the 4-year term of elected members.

9. Ensure all training is accessible and inclusive.

Where necessary, for example, specific committee roles, we will extend training to co-opted members.

4. Our Promise

To create a more equal Islington by 2030, where everyone who lives here has the opportunity and an equal chance to thrive. The council's Promise sets out what the local people can expect from us and what we are asking from them. We promise that our member development offer will ensure accessibility, equality, diversity, and inclusion, providing support for each member at every stage of their journey.

The training and development activities will reflect the Islington Promise to:

❖ **Relentlessly tackle inequality by** regularly updating members in all areas of equalities and inclusion so they can fully support their constituents.

❖ **Always be on the side of the residents by** offering training and development in all aspects of public services. We will support members to engage with local communities and ensure residents' views are represented in democratic decision making.

❖ **Be bolder and more innovative by** holding a local democracy week for our residents so they can attend events in their community, hear about what the council is doing and have a voice in the decisions that matter to their lives.

❖ **Provide accessible help and support** by recognising people learn in different ways and formats. We will ensure all elected members can access quality learning opportunities, tailored to suit their individual circumstances. We will also invite members to complete a training needs analysis, to help us to identify any specific development that they will need to enable them to be more effective leaders in their communities.

❖ **Invest in the local economy** by using available local training and development resources.

5. Making it Happen

This strategy sets out the council's principles of learning and development to fully equip our elected members for their roles and responsibilities, providing them with opportunities to refresh learning previously undertaken and ensuring equal access by making reasonable adjustments where needed. The training and development aim to support new and experienced councillors to further develop their skills and knowledge to be effective in their role.

Overall management of the strategy

This strategy has been developed by the Executive Member for Equalities, Culture & Inclusion, who has responsibility for member development, and the Member Development Manager. It is endorsed by the Member Learning & Development Steering group (MLDSG), whose membership is made up as follows:

Executive Member for Equalities, Culture & Inclusion (Chair)
Leader (Deputy Chair)
Chief Whip (Labour Party)
Leader of the Opposition (Green Party)
Backbench councillor
The Chief Executive
Member Development Manager

Please refer to Appendix 3 for a full copy of the Group's Terms of Reference.

The MLDSG will review the Strategy every year and will put forward any proposed changes to Audit and Risk Committee for approval.

Member Development Programme

The Journey so far

Following the elections in 2018 and 2022, we provided a comprehensive member induction programme for new and returning councillors in the first six months, covering all key areas including corporate priorities, the budget, governance and code of conduct, committee specific training and information governance and data protection.

There were key learning points from these programmes, particularly to there being too many events and information in the first year of term.

We have reviewed the programme of activities to ensure it offers flexibility, considers the time pressures on members, and meets the council's commitment to accessibility.

The Programme

The member development programme offers a broad range of topics including:

Knowledge-based skills that councillors need to be effective in their role:

- Getting to know the council and the purpose of council meetings, how decisions are made, the constitution and code of conduct, committee roles, scrutiny, and performance.
- Understanding the role of officers, including key statutory roles such as the monitoring officer.
- Understanding the process, how things work in the council and how to get things done, including administrative and casework management support.
- Providing up-to-date information on the services provided by the council, for example, housing, environmental issues, and adult safeguarding.
- Understanding the council finances, how the budget works and other funding systems.
- The community – getting to know the local area.
- Emerging topics – keeping up to date on topical issues and using horizon scanning to understand future opportunities or threats.

Practical skills to help councillors manage challenges that can affect personal wellbeing and confidence, for example:

- Leadership
- Personal safety
- Communication skills
- Chairing skills
- Collaborating effectively with officers
- Tackling inequalities
- Mental health awareness
- Mentoring / coaching
- Use of IT

Training is at 6 or 6.30pm to accommodate members who have full-time jobs and for any other council evening meetings that start mostly at 7.30pm and at the Town Hall.

The schedule of events

Whilst this strategy was developed during the second year of an election term, it has considered the requirements for the full four-year tenure.

Pre-election events: two years before local elections, the council will host events to encourage residents to get involved in local democracy and have their say. To achieve this vision, we will:

- Have a 'What is a councillor' page on council website, including the role of a councillor and what a typical day involves.

- We will run a series of events to promote local services and initiatives.
- Hold a 'Be a councillor' event during local democracy week to encourage and motivate potential candidates particularly from under-represented groups. Our aim is to have members who reflect the different people, identities, and cultures in Islington regardless of their age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Election Day: all elected members will be asked to sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and given a welcome pack including a copy of the Induction and member development programme for the year.

Induction: on Day One of Induction all members will be invited to meet the Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Monitoring Officer, and Democratic Services management team, attend briefings on Member's Code of Conduct, Member Declarations, and casework management, complete all necessary paperwork, have their photograph taken for the council website, collect IT equipment and ID badge and have a tour of the town hall.

We will hold a Freshers Fair style event in the first two to six weeks following the elections for members to learn about each directorate's priorities and projects, meet senior officers in an informal setting and to hear about project initiatives and service delivery. We will hold Fresher Fair style events every two years to give members and officers an opportunity to meet informally and discuss new initiatives and projects.

We will arrange further briefings on the council's commitments and priorities and of their own commitment and responsibility as elected members, for example, civil emergencies, local government finance, corporate parenting, and adult safeguarding. We will hold these sessions in the first year of term with refresher sessions in subsequent years.

Role specific training: There will be bespoke training for the roles and duties that elected members must fulfil, as outlined in the Council's Constitution.

We will ensure members appointed to any regulatory committee, such as planning and licensing, undertake the relevant training before attending any committee meetings to ensure they are compliant with the legislation.

We will ensure all newly appointed executive members are fully briefed on their responsibilities and the process of decision-making governance. We will also encourage them to attend the LGA Leadership Academy programme, designed to help elected members in leadership positions to effectively address modern challenges faced by local government.

Every two years, we will offer mayoral coaching training to the newly appointed Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Corporate training needs: These sessions will ensure that members are up to date and informed on key issues such as policy initiatives, organisational priorities or external changes impacting the council. They will align with the council's corporate objectives to include topics on:
- Inequalities
- Good scrutiny of service delivery

- Council housing safety
- Climate change issues
- Safeguarding and early intervention for adults and children
- Cost of living crisis

Corporate leadership: We will hold regular team building workshops for members and senior officers to maintain effective leadership of the council.

Community leadership: To be able to work with local communities to make a difference, we will offer training and development in soft skills and developing good relationships:

- **Network building**: briefings for members with partner organisations and officers to hear about their work, share concerns and discuss solutions to the challenges faced locally. We will also ensure our members have up-to-date information on the council services and will arrange regular briefings on council policies and procedures to support them in their representative role.

- **Community engagement**: developing the role as ward councillor, training in social media, public speaking, IT, effective chairing skills, managing difficult conversations, conflict resolution and collaborating with diverse communities.

- **Good governance**: we will run workshops on governance, how decisions are made, the role of backbench members, and offer bespoke scrutiny training to all scrutiny committee members to enable them to contribute to good governance, both inside and outside of the council, by acting as a critical friend and inviting decision makers to give an account of their plans and performance.

In addition to the training listed in the member development programme, all elected members have access to the Council's corporate learning platform My Learning LBI: Log in to the site (islington.gov.uk) which offers a wide range of foundational and relational skills training. These are available online, in person or via webinars and include a suite of free e-learning courses allowing members to learn at their own pace and convenience.

We will circulate bulletins from the LGA, ADSO, ModernGov and other facilitators offering member training regularly to all councillors.

Identifying member development needs

In a world that is constantly changing, budget challenges and the demand for high quality and efficient services, we must ensure our members are fully informed and have the opportunities, tools, and flexibility to grow in their role.

This strategy seeks to help our members to:

- develop their role for a specific responsibility, for example, as a ward councillor or an executive member.

- develop their role as a member of a committee.

- develop their role as part of a group with a common goal to improve the lives of residents.

- understand their responsibilities and accountabilities in accordance with the council's legal and governance framework.

- increase their knowledge and skills as part of their personal and professional development.

Whilst the member development programme covers a broad range of learning, we want our members to take personal responsibility for their own development, to think about how we can support them in shaping their future, in their current role as a councillor and beyond.

To help members to identify their areas of strength, weakness, challenges, or developmental needs in terms of local leadership skills:

- Within the first six months, we will encourage newly elected members to be mentored by a more experienced member as part of their learning and development.

- In the second year of tenure, we will invite members to complete a member needs analysis, developed using the LGA's Political Skills Toolkit, to review and support individual member's development needs.

- Members will be offered personal development planning, facilitated by an external consultancy organisation that supports the public sector in building a resilient workforce. In addition to providing each member with a personal development plan, the council will receive a non-attributable summary report of identified member training needs to inform future member training.

- We will provide mentoring or coaching for newly appointed executive members or where an executive member is appointed to another executive position, so they can confidently contribute to the collective Executive expertise and focus.

- We will provide regular updates of upcoming training and development opportunities, including those offered by external partners such as the LGA, ADSO, London Councils and LGiU.

Please refer to Appendices 1 and 2 for a copy of the action plan and training programme for 2023/24.

Making learning and training accessible and inclusive

The council is committed to engaging with all councillors in member development activity and to encourage participation, we will:

- Ensure we support any member with disabilities to attend and fully participate in the training session.

- Send out advanced notice and reminders of upcoming sessions.

- Encourage feedback from all members on the training programme.

- Encourage members to put forward training/development suggestions.

- Share copies of the presentation in advance, if available.

Resources

Budget allocation: the Council allocates an annual budget for member training and development. The Member Development Manager is responsible for managing the budget and provides quarterly reports to the MLDSG.

The MLDSG considers all proposed group training and agrees the training programme for the upcoming year.

For individual training requests, members must complete an application form stating why they want to attend the training and the benefits to the council. The training request must be authorised by the Chief Whip (for Labour Party members) or Opposition Leader (for Green Party members) and the Head of Democratic Services.

Staff: In December 2021, the council appointed a Member Development Manager to review the member training and development opportunities, put a member development strategy in place, programme the annual training plan and organise and facilitate member training.

The Leader and Executive team, have a team of personal assistants providing general administrative support and management of the diaries, inboxes, and casework enquiries. Backbench councillors have a backbench support team that provides basic administrative support and assistance with casework enquiries.

ICT: Due to the increase in online/hybrid meetings following the national pandemic, the restricted access to the Council's website for members using their own devices and the increase in cyber-attacks, all members are offered council laptops.

There is a dedicated members' digital workplace area available via Sharepoint https://islingtoncouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/ic which holds all relevant corporate documents, forms and guidance, members handbook and presentations delivered as part of the training and development.

The council implemented a casework management system, iCasework, for use by all elected members and their support staff to assist with the processing of constituent/resident enquiries. This system and the support arrangements in place will be beneficial in helping members to fully investigate their residents' concerns and/or needs.

All laptops issued to members have the Modern.Gov app, a particularly useful tool for supporting paperless meetings as it helps with automatically downloading, viewing, and annotating council meeting papers. Training on how to use the App is available on request.

Business Continuity

If there is an event or situation that prevents normal working practices, we will endeavour to ensure business continuity by taking the following actions:

Business Continuity Risk	Impact	Mitigations / Actions
Cyberattack Unplanned IT outage Interruption to power supply	No or limited access to network	We will inform all elected members and facilitators of the issue/s and the event will be re-organised to a later date.
Adverse weather Terrorist / Security incident Fire / Flood / Utility outage Pandemic / lockdown	Town Hall not useable as office or meeting location	We will inform all elected members and facilitators of the issue/s and will arrange an online session instead if possible
Public transport systems unavailable	Elected member unable to travel to training venue	We will advise the training provider/facilitator and will ask members to join online or attend at a later date.

6. Evaluating Member Learning and Development

This strategy will continue to track progress to evaluate the effectiveness of the member learning and development programme. It will remain a live document and will respond to changes in circumstances and need.

It is our intention that every member would have had the opportunity to learn, upskill and broaden their knowledge to enhance the effectiveness of their political leadership of the council through the following key performance measures:

1	We will ensure that the training and development offered is relevant to members needs and that all members have consistent and equal access to training and development opportunities.	**We will measure success if:** ❖ **80% of members participated in all the 'Essential' training.** ❖ **60% of members completed 'highly recommended' training.** ❖ **40% of members attended the recommended training.** ❖ **80% of members expressed overall satisfaction with the development programme.**
2	We will ask members to complete a bespoke training evaluation survey after each session to ascertain if the training was relevant or useful.	**We will measure success if 90% of the feedback reported that the objectives of each learning / training session have been met.**
3	Broaden knowledge around council business to ensure that members feel confident that they have the information to work effectively.	**We will measure success, if 90% of feedback reported that the training and development offered provided the knowledge to fulfil their duties.**
4	We applied for the LGA Charter Status in April 2023 as a commitment to councillor development and to ensure our learning and development plan is effective in building on elected members' skills and knowledge.	**We achieve the Charter Status accreditation for member development by May 2026.**

The Member Learning & Development Steering Group are committed to getting this right and will review progress quarterly, using the feedback to revise the programme if needed.

APPENDIX 1

Member Development Action Plan 2023/24

Member Development Strategy

Action Plan 2023/26

Member Development Action Plan Key actions related to the member development strategy 2023/26					
No	Action	Outcomes	Start date / deadline	How we will measure success	Person(s) responsible
1	Effective collaboration between officers and members	To complete the actions proposed by the LGA following workshop held in May 2023.	1 June 2024	90% of the follow-up actions have been completed	Head of HR Monitoring Officer Head of Democratic Services Leader Chief Executive
2.	Members to complete Training Needs Analysis	To identify where future member development sessions should be focussed.	February 2024	60% of members complete the training needs analysis	Mark Palmer of South East Employers with the support of the Member Development Manager
3.	Annual Survey to gather data on progress and satisfaction of the training programme	To ascertain any successes or failures	April 2024	80% of the responses confirmed they were satisfied with training and development offered	Member Development Manager

	Member Development Action Plan				
	Key actions related to the member development strategy 2023/26				
No	Action	Outcomes	Start date / deadline	How we will measure success	Person(s) responsible
4.	Design and implement personal development plans.	Councillors given the option to have an annual plan that sets out their goals and how they will achieve them.	Project to commence in March 2024, to be completed within one year	30 councillors completing the plans	Mark Palmer of South East Employers with the support of the Member Development Manager
5.	Update the Councillors' handbook	Improved access to essential information	May 2024	Feedback from councillors via the annual survey	Member Development Manager
6.	Hold Local Democracy Week to promote democratic participation in Islington including having What is a councillor' page on council website.	Promote local services and initiatives. Encourage potential candidates from under-represented groups to consider becoming a councillor	October 2024	Good turnout to events across the borough	CMB Communications Directorate Member Development Manager
7.	Charter status accreditation	Ensures councillors are appropriately developed and supported to be effective in their roles.	March 2023 – March 2026	Accreditation Status	Member Development Manager

Member Development Action Plan					
Key actions related to the member development strategy 2023/26					
No	Action	Outcomes	Start date / deadline	How we will measure success	Person(s) responsible
8.	Diverse Council	Increase diversity in local government	September 2023 – May 2026	Increased diversity in candidates standing at the next election. Councillors confirm they are fully supported through annual survey. Achieving the Charter status	Head of Labour Group Office Leader of the Opposition Head of Democratic Services Committee Services Manager Member Development Manager

APPENDIX 2
Member Development Programme 2023/24

Training Programme

May 2023 – June 2024 (green highlights – to be confirmed)

Date	Audience	Session Overview	Facilitator(s)
15 May 2023 09.30	Executive and Corporate Management Board **ESSENTIAL**	**LGA Workshop: Providing Impactful Collective Leadership** Venue: Resource for London, Holloway Road This would provide an opportunity to explore how Cabinet and the Senior Management Team will work together as a Top Team, providing joined up political and managerial leadership team. This session would have a slightly broader focus to look at questions such as: • Reflections on both individual sessions • One team approach – what are the characteristics of a high performing team? • How will you collectively support and challenge each other to deliver this? • How can you best equip colleagues to deliver on your agreed priorities? • Reflecting as the political and officer leadership on how to effectively challenge and support each other to build trust, confidence, and transparency in delivering the council's strategic plan.	Kate Herbert, Facilitator (LGA) Cllr Claire Holland, Leader – Lambeth Council

15 May 2023 14.00	Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Consort and Mayor's support staff **ESSENTIAL**	**Mayoral coaching** Room 102, Town Hall A lively, practical, and informative session, serving as a base to enable progression in the mayor's role. The course will contain three key components: 1. Knowledge briefing and practice session: Chairing full Council - equipping the mayor to manage this unique and demanding role. 2. Knowledge briefing and practice session if time permits delivering a 'Magic Minute' Civic speech at a (mock) civic event 3. Discussion - key hurdles and potholes to avoid in the year ahead	Phil O'Brien, National Association of Civic Officers and Link Services
15 May 2023 18.00	All councillors **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**	**Fresher's Fair** CR1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 - Town Hall An opportunity for senior officers to update elected members on the recent realignment of services and of the projects and latest developments in their respective areas, and to answer members' questions.	All Directorates
18 May 2023 18.00	Planning Committee Members only **ESSENTIAL**	**Planning Committee (for planning committee members only)** CR4 – Town Hall (in person) This is an introductory and refresher training for new and returning members appointed to planning committee before attending their first planning committee meeting for the municipal year. The session will cover:	Nathaniel Baker and Geraldine Knipe, Heads of Development Management

		• Decision making, material considerations and committee. • Managing risks on appeal	
22 May 2023 18.00 AND 6 June 2023 18.00	All councillors **ESSENTIAL**	**Governance, Monitoring Officer, and Code of Conduct** Hybrid – CR4, Town Hall The seminar will provide an overview of the legal and governance framework which underpins the role of a councillor in local government, covering: • The basics of how a local authority operates • Local authority functions and powers • The role of an elected councillor – decision making, scrutiny, ward representation, quasi-judicial roles • Councillor decision making – collective and individual • Good Governance and why it matters • Update on Review of Islington Constitution • Discussion on members roles and responsibilities in ensuring good governance	Cllr Diarmaid Ward Marie Rosenthal, Interim Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
5 June 2023 18.00	Licensing Committee Members only **ESSENTIAL**	**Licensing Committee** In person, CR1 – Town Hall This is an introductory and refresher training for new and returning members appointed to licensing committee before attending their first planning committee meeting for the municipal year. The session will cover: • The role of the committee and sub-committees • Licensing applications and objectives • Licensing policy • Decision making	Terrie Lane, Licensing Manager Imogen Wooder – Licensing and Prosecution Lawyer

19 June 2023 18.30	All Councillors **RECOMMENDED**	**Unconscious Bias / Creating a diverse workforce** Online only This session will cover: • The nature of bias from a psychological and scientific perspective • How to identify and challenge engrained beliefs and bias systems • How to be more considered in decision making for gender inclusivity	Laura Drury, Laughology
26 June 2023 18.00 AND 4 July 2023 18.00	All Councillors **RECOMMENDED**	**Housing – Damp & Mould** Hybrid - CR5, Town Hall An information session covering: • What is damp and mould • The health risks • The risks in Islington properties • The Law • The Islington process for reporting issues • How councillors can help • Challenges and costs	Mike Hall, Assistant Director Housing Property Services (Repairs) Matt West, Director - Housing Property Services
18 July 2023 18.00	Scrutiny Committees' Chairs & Vice Chairs **ESSENTIAL**	**Chairing Scrutiny Meetings** Online / Teams A briefing session on: • The role of the scrutiny chair • Review of Scrutiny and Committee Procedure Rules • Member, Officer and witness relations	Marie Rosenthal, Interim Director for Law & Governance Philippa Green, Head of Democratic Services

		• Effective Management of committees • How to involve the public more in the role of scrutiny	
12 September 2023 18.00	All councillors **ESSENTIAL**	**Code of Conduct** Online / Teams A half hour refresher session on the Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests.	Marie Rosenthal, Interim Director for Law & Governance Marina Lipscomb, Chief Litigation Lawyer
18 September 2023 18.00 (online) AND 19 September 2023 18.00 (in-person)	Scrutiny Committees' members including Chairs and Vice Chairs **ESSENTIAL**	**Scrutiny Committee** One online session and one in-person session (CR5, Town Hall) This session will focus on participating in meetings, asking good questions, and supporting good scrutiny.	Ed Hammond, Interim Chief Executive – Centre for Governance & Scrutiny
3 October 2023 18.00	All councillors **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**	**Adult Safeguarding refresher** CR1, Town Hall / Hybrid A re-run of the training session to brief members on what is adult safeguarding, what to do if you are aware of a safeguarding issue and our role as a council. Topics will include: • Safeguarding Adults in context; a Strengths Based Approach, The Care Act and Mental Capacity	Jenefer Rees, Acting Assistant Director for Quality, Safeguarding and Workforce (Adults) Pooja Dhar, Acting Head of Safeguarding, MCA and DoLS

		• Types of abuse, where abuse can occur, and who can cause abuse • Prevention, Early Intervention and Protection from abuse • Making Safeguarding Personal and the Safeguarding Process • Who is responsible/what to do if you suspect abuse • Q&A/Discussion	
6 November 2023 18.00 AND 23 November 2023 18.00	All councillors **RECOMMENDED**	**Disability Awareness** Hybrid– CR1, Town Hall A session on disability equalities to help members to understand how they can support residents, especially those with hidden disabilities, for example, neuro-diverse, sensory, and mental health. It will focus on the members' legal obligations as set out under the Equality Act 2010, language and practical approaches members can use when interacting with residents, colleagues, and staff, making it more inclusive and accessible.	Phil Stevens, Disability Action in Islington
14 November 2023 18.00	All councillors **RECOMMENDED**	**Council support for non-council tenants** Hybrid – CR4, Town Hall A session covering the support offered by the council to private tenants and housing association tenants to ensure they are living in safe, decent, and secure accommodation. Learn how tenants can report issues to the council and what the council will do to assist them. It is also an opportunity to hear how the council is managing empty homes and to have an update on the Landlord Licensing scheme.	Janice Gibbons, Service Manager – Environmental Health Besserat Atsebaha Director of Community Safety, Security & Resilience
12 December 2023	All councillors	**Health & Care / NHS Briefing** Online or in-person – CR5, Town Hall	Jonathan O'Sullivan Director of Public Health

18.00	**ESSENTIAL**	This session will give an overview on NHS changes, primary care, and the new NHS Body in North Central London (the Integrated Care Board)	Tbc: Clare Henderson
16 January 2024 18.00	**Scrutiny committee members** **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**	**Financial Scrutiny - tbc** Online or in-person – CR4, Town Hall Supporting members to understand and tackle their duties around financial oversight and scrutiny. Topics covered will include local authority finance in general and focussing on scrutiny's approach to in-year review of financial performance and the role of scrutiny in budget development and the medium-term financial strategy. The session will also look at scrutiny's relationship with the council's Audit Committee.	Ed Hammond, Interim Chief Executive – Centre for Governance & Scrutiny
1 February 2024 18.00	All councillors **RECOMMENDED**	**LGBTQ+ Awareness** Online - Zoom This workshop will equip you with the knowledge and confidence to be active and vocal allies in the community. The session will cover: • **Understand** the definitions of key LGBTQ+ terminology and how our identity shapes the way we navigate through the world. • **Explore** LGBTQ+ people's experiences and why it is so important that we talk LGBTQ+ inclusion. We will also unpick what it means to be an ally and what allyship looks like. • **Action** putting the new knowledge to the test with case studies and create an achievable action plan.	Stonewall

| 5 February 2024

18.00 | All councillors

RECOMMENDED | **Managing Difficult Conversations / Conflict Resolution**
Online

Learn how to communicate effectively with a diverse range of stakeholders by delivering your messages well, involving others and really listening to resolve a wide range of conflict situations effectively.

The session will cover:

• Understand ego states
• Use assertive questioning to involve people in solutions
• Respond rather than react
• Vary your influencing style to connect with a wide range of people
• Use words, tone, and body language to positive effect
• Listen to understand, rather than to respond
• Break through to persistently challenging people | Graham Elder (independent facilitator) |
| 5 March 2024

18.00 | All councillors

RECOMMENDED | **Social Media**
Online and in person – CR4, Town Hall

This session will cover:

• why use social media and how it fits in with your responsibilities as a councillor.

• What channels to use and why: overview of key channels and usage, where should you invest your time?

• Creating useful content; the type of content that works*, how best to use it to engage with your local community. | Alex Moate Communications and Content Manager (Digital) |

		• The council's social media channels: how you can help share and amplify the council's messages** and ensure your followers have access to essential information. • How to keep yourself safe: what to be aware of when posting as a councillor, how to approach online abuse • Q&A	
23 April 2024 18.00	All councillors **ESSENTIAL**	**Information Governance (refresher training)**	Leila Ridley, Assistant Director of Information Governance, Digital Assurance and Contracts
20 May 2024 18.00	All councillors **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**	**Civil Protection & Community Safety** Online and/or in person – CR4, Town Hall This is a refresher training on civic emergencies and emergency planning and an opportunity to hear from the local Police and the Fire Brigade.	Daniel Lawson Assistant Director - Civil Protection Community Safety, Security and Resilience Police Fire Brigade
23 May 2024 18.00	Newly appointed scrutiny committee members **ESSENTIAL**	**The Role of Scrutiny Committee** In person – CR4, Town Hall An introductory and refresher training for new and returning members appointed to scrutiny committee. The session will cover: • The role of Scrutiny Committees / it's function and purpose, inc. any special statutory functions	Jonathan Moore, Deputy Head of Democratic Services Philippa Green, Head of Democratic Services

		• The powers and responsibilities of Scrutiny committees • The remit and TOR of each committee • The review process • The role of PPS • The Committee Chair's Role • Work planning / working collectively • Tips on asking good questions, selecting topics, and writing good recommendations	
3 June 2024 18.00	Newly appointed licensing committee members **ESSENTIAL**	**The Role of Licensing Committee** In person – CR4, Town Hall This is an introductory and refresher training for new and returning members appointed to licensing committee before attending their first planning committee meeting for the municipal year. The session will cover: • The role of the committee and sub-committees • Licensing applications and objectives • Licensing policy • Decision making • Planning support with applications	Terrie Lane, Licensing Manager Nathaniel Baker, Director of Planning and Development
17 June 2024	Newly appointed planning committee members **ESSENTIAL**	**The Role of Planning Committee** In person – CR4, Town Hall An introductory and refresher training for new and returning members appointed to planning committee. The session will cover: • Decision making, material considerations and committee • Managing risks on appeal	Nathaniel Baker and Geraldine Knipe, Heads of Development Management

| 24 June 2024

18.00 | All councillors

RECOMMENDED | **Housing – Investment and Capital Delivery (cyclical works)**
Online and In person – CR1, Town Hall

The agenda will cover:

• How the council decides what to invest where? (Business Plan)
• Cyclical works
• Asset Management
• Changes and improvements we are making to planning and investment
• How a capital project works (stages and times)
• How the council engages with residents
• Managing contractors
• The difference we make (CSR) and improved homes
• Challenges | Stephen Platt, Assistant Director – Housing Property Services

Ian Swift, Director – Housing Needs and Strategy

Matt West, Director - Housing Property Services |

APPENDIX 3

Member Learning & Development Steering Group
Terms of Reference

Member Learning & Development Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Composition

Elected Members:

- Executive Member for Equalities, Culture & Inclusion (Chair)
- Leader of the Council (Deputy Chair)
- Labour Group Chief Whip
- Leader of the Opposition
- Backbench Member (Labour)

Officers:

- Chief Executive
- Member Development Manager

When apologies are received, the Leader of each Group may nominate an appropriate substitute.

Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the Group will be four, made up of members and officers.

Purpose

The Steering Group to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss and review the Council's progress in ensuring effective training and development of its elected representatives.

The terms of reference of the Steering Group are as follows:

1. To advocate for, and promote, the learning and development of all members.

2. To ensure the member development strategy is relevant and up to date.

3. To review and consider all training, learning and development needs with a view to developing a comprehensive 4-year induction, training, and development programme.

4. To approve requests and suggestions for group training from members, in particular, requests for external training with a cost implication.

5. To monitor training budget spend.

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6. To take a leading role in helping the Council to achieve the LGA's Elected Member Development Charter and Charter plus status.

Items for consideration at these meetings should be submitted through the Member Development Manager, who will draw up and circulate an agenda prior to each meeting. The Member Development Manager will also circulate notes and actions following each meeting.

APPENDIX 4

Training Request Form

AUTHORISATION OF COUNCILLORS' TRAINING/CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

(Parts 1-5 to be completed by Councillor)

1.   **Title of Training/Conference and organising body:**

2.   **Date of Training/Conference**

3.   **Councillor(s) interested**

4.   **Please state your reasons for wishing to attend this training**

5.   **What benefit will the Council receive from your attendance?**

6.   **Expenditure**

7.   **Budget provision remaining prior to this request   £**

8.   **Officer contact – Name:**   **Tel……………………………….**

                                                        Date……………………………

9.   **Approval by Chief Whip/Leader of the Opposition**

        (signed)   **Date…………………………………**

10.   **Approval by Democratic Services Manager**

        (signed)   **Date…………………………………**

SEE OVER FOR PROCEDURAL NOTES

Procedural notes

1. Councillors should complete Parts 1-5 then pass to the Member Development Manager.

2. The Member Development Manager complete the budget figures.

3. The form, with full supporting papers, to be forwarded to the Chief Whip/Leader of the Opposition.

4. Once signed by the Chief Whip/Leader of the Opposition, the Head of Democratic Services will approve and action the form.

5. When all signatures have been obtained, the original form will be retained by the Member Development Manager and the Democratic Services Finance and Admin Assistant (for use in payment purposes and to update the budget). The Democratic Services Finance and Admin Assistant will make the necessary conference arrangements for the Councillor concerned.

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