

Rother District Council

Report to:	Council
Date:	20 May 2024
Title:	Annual Report of the Member Development Task Group
Report of:	Councillor Killeen, Member Training Champion and Chair of the Member Development Task Group
Purpose of Report:	To inform Members of the first annual update on Member Training and Development issues since the elections in May 2023.
Officer	
Recommendation(s):	It be RESOLVED : That the report be noted.

Introduction

1. The Member Development Task Group (MDTG) provides a structured and on-going Member-led approach to Member training and development. This report provides Members with the first annual update on Member Training and Development issues since the elections in May 2023.
2. The Membership of the MDTG is usually fixed for the life of the Council (as far as possible) but one change was made in the last year with Councillor Killeen being appointed (on a temporary basis) as the Member Training and Development Champion in Councillor Prochak's absence. The current membership is confirmed as: Councillors Killeen (Member Training and Development Champion, Liberal Democrat Leader and Chair), Bayliss (Labour Group Leader), Clark (Independent Member), Coupar (newly elected 2023 Member), Delany (newly elected 2023 Member), Gray (Green Leader), Oliver (Rother Associations of Independents Group Leader), Osborne (Conservative Group representative) and Winter (Independent Member). All Group Leaders can send a substitute if they are unable to attend; to date, no substitutes have attended.
3. All Members are encouraged to contact their respective representatives if they have any training and development issues to be brought to the attention of the MDTG.
4. The minutes arising from the meetings are highlighted within the Members' Bulletin e-zine and published on the ModGov system on the Intranet.
5. The last 12 months has been a very busy period for Member Training and Development following the elections in May 2023 and this report highlights the key events and work of the MDTG during this period.

Member Training Induction Programme 2023

6. In accordance with the Council's Member Training and Development Strategy, a comprehensive induction programme was provided for all Members following

the elections in May 2023. It is pleasing to report that all newly elected Members, as well as the majority of returned Members embraced the learning and development opportunities offered to them and most of the events were well attended.

7. The MDTG has considered the feedback received and this will be used to ensure that the induction programme following the 2027 elections and other training and development events will be adjusted accordingly to take account of the feedback. It is really encouraging to see that the feedback response rate has remained relatively high and this reinforces the importance and commitment Members have to their learning and development.

Training and Development Programme

8. As well as providing a full and thorough Member Induction Programme, Members were asked to complete a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) which has been used to compile the ongoing training and development programme for Members; a 94% return rate was achieved for the TNA.
9. The TNA results were considered by the MDTG at its meeting in October last year when it was agreed that, as Members had been subject to an extensive induction programme since the elections, the training and development activity identified through the TNA would be programmed from May 2024 onwards.
10. The information gathered via the TNA will be used to further develop the training programme over the coming 12-18 months. A second TNA will take place in year 3 of this Council (2025/26) to ascertain on going requirements and to help evaluate the success of the programme delivered thus far.
11. A full list of the development activities that have been offered to Members since the elections in May 2023 is published in the Members' Library on the Intranet.
12. In tandem with the Training and Development Programme, the Council has implemented a series of Member Briefings to complement Members' learning and understanding of key issues facing the Council. These are usually held each month, on a Thursday evening, at 5:30pm on MS Teams. To date the briefings have been well received and well attended. Sessions are recorded and are available for Members to view in their own time if they were unable to attend the live session.
13. Given the success of delivery sessions on the MS Teams platform, it is likely that this will be the main delivery platform for training and development moving forward in future years.

Finance

14. The Council continues to allocate both human and financial resources to Member Development and had a training budget of £15,000 per annum up until the end of 2023/24 financial year and is subject to quarterly reporting to the MDTG. A higher expenditure is usual in years 1 and 2 with less activity in years 3 and 4 with any underspent budget not being carried forward year-on-year.
15. In light of budget reductions, and in order to ensure value for money (vfm), it is essential that once Members have requested a place on a training session that

the date is reserved, particularly where an external consultant or other additional expenditure such as transport is involved.

16. As part of the Council's new 'Fit for the Future' financial resilience programme, it has been agreed that from the next financial year (2024/25) the member training budget will be reduced by £6,000 to £9,000 per annum.

Member Training and Development Attendance Statistics

17. The MDTG continues to receive an update at each meeting on the number of training events each Member has attended since the elections in May 2023; this information is primarily for use by the Group Leaders and the most recent update is attached is detailed below:

Pearce, Chas – 25	Maynard, Carl – 11
Gray, Polly – 24	Stanger, Jimmy – 11
Coupar, Beverley – 23	Cook, Vikki – 10
Barnes, John – 22	Ganly, Tony – 10
Killeen, Teresa – 22	Hayward, Andrew – 10
Mier, Andrew – 21	Osborne, Paul – 10
Timpe, Hazel – 20	Coleman, Sam – 9
Biggs, Tony – 19	Kirby-Green, Eleanor – 9
Burton, Sue – 19	Winter, Connor – 9
Prochak, Sue – 17	Chowdhury, Fazlul – 7
Rathbone Ariel, Arren – 17	Drayson, Brian – 7
Barnes, Mary – 16	Field, Kathryn – 7
Thomas, Richard – 15	Grohne, Tim – 7
Oliver, Doug – 13	McGurk, Simon – 7
Legg, Mark – 13	Bayliss, Christine – 6
McCourt, Ruairi – 13	Gordon, Neil – 2
Creaser, Cheryl – 12	Clark, Charles – 1
Delany, Gareth – 12	Jeeawon, Ashan – 1
Byrne, Terry – 11	Hacking, Lizzie – 0

18. Training and Development is not compulsory, except for those Members serving on the Council's regulatory committees; each Member has very specific training and development requirements, based on their own personal circumstances which will include experience, role (both internal and external to Rother), interests, availability and length of service as a Councillor.
19. All training events (organised by the Council) attended by Councillors have been uploaded to the ModGov system and are displayed on each Councillors' individual website page.

Conclusions

20. This civic year has been a challenging time for Member Training and Development – a new Council to train and develop, which has gone extremely well, under the stewardship of Councillor Prochak, up until her current period of absence.
21. This civic year will see the continued delivery of identified training needs, the mandatory annual training for licensing and planning, together with any other

service specific training / development requirements as a result of service changes / new legislation etc.

22. I am pleased to take this opportunity, on behalf of Councillor Prochak to thank formally the fellow Task Group Members, Bayliss, Clark, Coupar, Delany, Gray, Oliver, Osborne and Winter for the contribution they have made over the past year and the officer support that is provided both directly by Democratic Services and indirectly through all staff involved in guiding and providing assistance to Members.
23. I look forward to working with Members and Officers to ensure that the excellent training and development activities provided by the Council continue, particularly considering budget constraints moving forward.

Corporate Plan and Climate Strategy / Action Plan

24. N/A

Financial Implications

25. As detailed at paragraphs 14 to 16 in the report.

Legal Implications

26. There are no legal implications for the proposals within this report.

Human Resources Implications

27. There are no Human Resource implications for the proposals within this report.

Human Rights

28. There are no Human Rights implications for the proposals within this report.

Crime and Disorder

29. There are no Crime and Disorder implications for the proposals within this report.

Environmental / Insert Carbon and Co-Benefits Decision Support Tool Result (if applicable)

30. There are no Environmental implications for the proposals within this report.

Risk Management

31. There are no Risk Management implications for the proposals within this report.

GDPR / Data Protection

32. There are no GDPR / Data Protection implications for the proposals within this report.

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

33. There are no Equalities, Diversity, Inclusion implications for the proposals within this report.

Socio Economic Duty

34. There are no implications for the Council under its' Socio Economic Duty for the proposals within this report.

Exempt from publication

35. This report is not confidential.

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Appendices:	None
Relevant Previous Minutes:	None
Background Papers:	None
Reference Documents:	None