

**REPORT TITLE: Member Development Framework**

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>11 March 2026</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b> (if applicable)	<b>Cllr Dad - Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Corporate</b>
<b>Key Decision Eligible for Call In</b>	<b>No</b> <b>No</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b> This report sets out details of a draft Member Development Framework that seeks to support the development of all Councillors in Kirklees, providing them with the skills and knowledge to carry out their roles.	
<b>Recommendations</b> Council are asked to <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve the Member Development Framework set out at Appendix 1</li> <li>2. Delegate authority for any minor amendments and consequential constitutional changes to the Code of Conduct or other relevant constitutional documents, incorporating reference to the Framework, to the Monitoring Officer.</li> </ol> <b>Reasons for Recommendations</b> Approving the Member Development Framework will ensure that all councillors are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and support needed to carry out their roles effectively.	
<b>Resource Implications:</b> There are no direct resource implications. The training and development opportunities included in the Framework will be met from within existing resources, requiring input from relevant departments as required	
<b>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> &amp; name</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?</b>	<b>Rachel Spencer-Henshall</b> – Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director for Public Health and Corporate Resources   <b>Samantha Lawton</b> – Service Director Legal & Commissioning

**Electoral wards affected:** All

**Ward councillors consulted:** Group Leaders and individual independent Councillors were consulted on the draft scope of the Framework.

**Public or private:** Public

**Has GDPR been considered?** Not applicable

## **1. Executive Summary**

1.1 The attached Member Development Framework (Appendix 1) has been drafted following a recommendation from the Corporate Peer Challenge. The Framework sets out our commitment to supporting Members with their continuous development, and details how we will equip Members with the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil their roles effectively.

## **2. Information required to take a decision**

2.1 The Local Government Association (LGA) came to Kirklees Council in November 2024 to carry out a corporate peer challenge, which is a key part of the LGA's improvement and assurance framework and is required at least every five years. The LGA produced a feedback report which included a number of recommendations which were incorporated into an action plan which was agreed by Cabinet on 8<sup>th</sup> April. One recommendation related to the importance of the Council continuing to work at good governance across a range of issues including Member Development Programmes.

2.2 The Councillor Development Framework sets out Kirklees Council's approach to supporting the ongoing development and excellence of its elected councillors. The framework outlines a clear vision: to ensure all councillors have the skills, knowledge, and support needed to fulfil their roles effectively and to deliver the Council's strategic priorities. Developed in consultation with councillors, the framework is designed to be flexible and inclusive, offering a range of learning opportunities regardless of experience, seniority, or political affiliation.

2.3 Key elements include:

- **A robust induction programme** for councillors, ensuring they are well-prepared for their roles.
- **Ongoing training and development** covering core skills, committee responsibilities, compliance, and leadership.
- **Support for all councillors and the Mayor**, with training delivered through a mix of in-person, online, and partnership-based methods.
- **Commitment to inclusivity and accessibility**, ensuring all councillors can participate fully, with adjustments for different needs and learning styles.
- **Regular review and evaluation** of the framework to ensure it remains relevant and effective, with feedback mechanisms in place.

2.4 The framework also includes an illustrative schedule of development sessions for 2025–2026, covering induction, IT support, chairing skills, corporate parenting, service overviews, and social media training. This approach aims to equip councillors with the tools and confidence to serve their communities and contribute to the Council’s ambitions for Kirklees.

### **3. Implications for the Council**

#### **3.1 Council Plan**

The Member Development Framework aligns closely to the Council Plan to ensure all activities contribute to delivery of key priorities to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

#### **3.2 Financial Implications**

None directly

#### **3.3 Legal Implications**

The Localism Act, 2011, requires the Council to have a Code of Conduct and a formal standards process in place. It is important for the Council to make sure that it complies with this obligation and ensures that elected members are both trained and supported in modelling good behaviours.

#### **3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality**

None directly

#### **3.5 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

None directly

### **4. Consultation**

Prior to drafting the Member Development Framework, consultation on the scope of the Framework was undertaken with all Group Leaders via individual in person sessions. Individual Independent Councillors were also contacted for views and input on the proposed scope along with Group Business Manager and the Standards Committee. Members were generally supportive of the proposed approach and whilst recognising the importance of ensuring all Members are equipped with the skills and knowledge to fulfil their duties, the responsibilities of individual Members and Groups within the process was also raised.

The draft Framework was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for input and comment. The Committee welcomed the Framework and suggested that all Councillors be consulted rather than limiting to those referred to above. The Committee welcomed reference to the Member–Officer Protocol to help manage expectations and to support improved understanding of processes. It was acknowledged that the provision of detailed information on the purpose and remit of committees would assist those interested in sitting on specific committee.

### **5. Engagement**

Subject to the Framework being approved by Council, engagement will take place with all Councillors to finalise a programme of events/sessions.

The Member Development Framework will be subject to ongoing engagement with Elected Members through regular evaluation and discussion with Member Champions, Group Business Managers and wider Councillors.

## **6. Options**

### **6.1 Options considered**

The option of not developing the Framework would have resulted in the Council not responding to a recommendation arising from the Corporate Peer Challenge.

### **6.2 Reasons for recommended option**

Approving the Member Development Framework will ensure that all councillors are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and support needed to carry out their roles effectively.

## **7. Next steps and timelines**

Subject to being approved by Council, the Member Development Framework, will be introduced during the upcoming induction sessions and delivered during the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

## **8. Contact officers**

Leigh Webb - Head of Governance email – [leigh.webb@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:leigh.webb@kirklees.gov.uk)  
Deborah Nicholson - Councillor Support & Liaison Manager email – [deborah.nicholson@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:deborah.nicholson@kirklees.gov.uk)

## **9. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

## **10. Appendices**

Appendix A – Member Development Framework

## **11. Service Director responsible**

Samantha Lawton, Service Director Legal & Commissioning