

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	18 February 2025
REPORT TITLE	Learning and Development Provision for Members
PURPOSE	Submit an update of provision from the Learning and Development service to Members
RECOMMENDATION	The Committee is invited to offer any further suggestions before receiving the report.
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1. OVERVIEW

1.1 There are 7 core areas identified to Members. The core titles here are the minimum titles that all Members need to be able to do their job effectively i.e. the crucial training courses. They relate to statutory areas that all Members need to be aware of when scrutinising or making decisions, as examples. It can raise governance risks for the Council when decisions are made without a full understanding of the implications in these areas. Ideally all Members should be completing these in the first year, or certainly the second year of the electoral calendar, which would then allow them to operate with certainty for the remainder of the electoral season and allow the training programme to progress to more elective or developmental subjects over the rest of the electoral calendar.

1.2 Following work to ensure that everyone completes the core titles required for all Members to achieve as a minimum, we have run various sessions since May 2022 and have now reached the third election year. This remaining period gives us the opportunity to offer a wider range of coaching titles that can focus on personal and innovative development.

Here's an update of where we're at with the core titles:

Core Title	Number completed	% completed	Number not completed
Leading Safely and Personal Safety	51	74	18
Code of Conduct	54	78	15
Well-being and Future Generations Act	34	49	35
Safeguarding Children and Adults	57	83	12
Your Responsibility for Equality	39	56	30
Information about People	52	75	17
Corporate Parenting	46	67	23

1.3 The table below shows the progress that has been made on the numbers who have completed the core titles during the past year:

Core Title	February 2024	November 2024	February 2025	Progress (February 2024-2025)
Leading Safely and Personal Safety	44	50	51	+ 7
Code of Conduct	39	50	54	+ 15
Well-being of Future Generations Act	14	27	34	+ 20
Safeguarding Children and Adults	33	33	57	+ 24
Your Responsibility for Equality	27	39	39	0
Information about People : Your Responsibility	45	51	52	+ 7
Corporate Parenting	39	46	46	+ 7

1.4 Supporting Members to complete core courses is a **priority**. As an effort to facilitate this, recordings of the 7 Core Titles are now available on the Members Intranet. It is hoped that by having this resource online, it will make things easier for Members to access and complete the Core titles at a time convenient to them.

1.5 The detailed work continues of establishing clear systems to publish the information about what training Members have completed. The new system of publishing numbers who have completed the core training is planned to start from April 2025 before moving on to publishing other training completed by Members in due course.

1.6 You are aware that the VAWDASV (Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and sexual violence) training is important to have whilst in a Member role. Sessions have already run in 2024 through Welsh Women's Aid and a further session is scheduled to run in April this year. Discussions are underway for this training to be allocated as a Core training to reflect the statutory requirement, and a few neighbouring Councils have already taken this route.

2. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS QUESTIONNAIRE

2.1 You're aware of the consultation process with you, as Members, that took place in September 2024. The questionnaire was open for a period of 6 weeks, and we obtained responses from 24 Members. The responses from the questionnaire gave us an understanding, whilst responding to the Self-Assessment Framework for Councillors, of wishes and Members' priorities in regards to training needs.

2.2 Following collecting feedback from the questionnaire, work has and is being carried out to respond to the findings that came from the questionnaire results.

- 2.3** From the questionnaire, it was found that Members identified the need for support with aspects of using IT. Some Members have already had one-on-one sessions with an officer from the Learning and Development Team. The Members' Bulletin has sent several messages asking any Member wishing any IT support, to contact the Learning and Development Team.
- 2.4** Two sessions were held in January 2025 on the Members Intranet, these were practical sessions to familiarise Members through the various pages on the Intranet, guiding them through the plethora of information available to support in their duties. These sessions were also an opportunity for Members give any feedback/ideas for modifying/improving the Intranet for the future.
- 2.5** Further to these workshops, other courses and workshops have been identified for the Training Programme, such as Helping Constituents with cost support live, Scam Awareness, media and delivery training, training scrutiny, work skills and advocacy case to support Members' demands following collecting feedback from the questionnaire.
- 2.6** Further work is being undertaken to continue to respond to the questionnaire results from within the Learning and Development service to ensure we target Members' needs and priorities as required.

3. TRAINING PROGRAMME

- 3.1** The latest training programme has already been delivered to you and further work will take place over the next few months to further populate it in line with the results of the questionnaire and what the Departments wish to include in the programme.
- 3.2** Following a conversation on democracy issues on the 15th of January 2024, we discussed how to support cabinet members and have made an application to prioritise three specific trainings over the next period namely:
- Good decisions and issues for Cabinet Members to be aware of (e.g. the Wellbeing Act).
 - Considerations for Cabinet Members regarding information handling and data protection.
 - Raising awareness of developments with Gwynedd Road.

4. ATTENDING CONFERENCES

- 4.1** Opportunities can reach you to attend conferences or courses. It is possible for the Council to assist Members with the costs of attending Conferences/Courses and many may be considered as 'development'. However, under the current financial climate with resources scarce these days, the conference or course area needs to be

relevant to your work as a Member in order for the Council to support your application.

This matter is brought to your attention as a Committee as a few cases have come up recently where it is clear that not everyone understands the procedure. Consideration needs to be given to the most effective method of raising awareness of all members' arrangements to follow, and the guidance on the matter available on the Members Intranet.

The Committee is invited to consider the training arrangements, comment and approve the proposed steps.

Due to the statutory requirement regarding the VAWDASV (Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence), the Committee is asked to support the recommendation to add this training as an additional core title.