

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2025

Present:-

Cllr. Adrian Clifford (Chairman)

Cllr. Nick Brown
Cllr. Luke Cousin

Cllr. Roger Stead
Cllr. Bob Waterton

Cllr. Jane Wolfe

Officers present:-

Sandeep Tiensa	- Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer
Avisa Birchenough	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer

Apologies:-

Cllr. Matt Tomeo, Cllr. Susan Findlay, Cllr. Ande Savage and Cllr. Dillan Shikotra

2. NOTES OF LAST MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 23 July 2025, as circulated, were approved as a correct record.

3. SKILLGATE MODULES

The Chairman, Cllr. Adrian Clifford welcomed Members to the meeting and invited the Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer (SDSSO) to provide a demonstration of the SkillGate Portal and covered-

- How to access the Mandatory Training Section of the Portal.
- What Compliant and Non-Compliance looks like.
- The reporting feature to record what Modules have been completed.
- Which Modules BDC staff complete as Mandatory.

Members considered which modules were appropriate for them to complete as mandatory. Feedback centred on:

- Pressure to complete modules within a certain time,
- Facing conflicting demands from family, day job and councillor role,
- Whether the content of the modules was appropriate for councillors,
- The consequences of members not completing mandatory training
- Not completing the modules, could increase exposing members to risk, not being informed, unable to serve/support residents. Completing the modules could also provide members with personal development, being informed about key, current topics.

6 provisional modules were agreed upon by Members, pending the findings of Cllr Luke Cousin and Cllr Jane Wolfe who volunteered to trial each module to assess the content suitability for Members.

- Cyber Awareness and Staying Safe Online
- Essential Safeguarding for Children, Young People and Adults
- Fraud Awareness
- Introduction to Data Protection
- Sexual Harassment Awareness for Employees
- EDI

The Chairman, Cllr. Adrian Clifford requested a clear rollout of SkillGate to include-

- An introductory email is formulated by the Chairman and SDSSO to give clear guidance to all on the expectations of time scales and modules to be completed by all Members. An initial 6 month period was proposed.
- All Group Whips to have access to the reporting feature to monitoring completion rates for each Member. The SDSSO would find out if this feature was available to Members.

- Ensure any potential technical problems are ironed out before the live date to Members, allowing for launch at the beginning of 2026 if necessary.
- Cllrs Cousin and Wolfe to provide feedback on the proposed 6 initial Mandatory Modules.
- A concise short description of each module is provided so Members can better understand the content.
- Consider what other Modules should be included for Members who sit on specific Committees.

4. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The SDSSO presented to Members the current Member Development Programme and provide feedback on the courses delivered and proposed future training.

- Chairing Skills – currently liaising with a training provider following Members feedback.
- Planning masterclasses are currently on hold as the new Development Services and Enforcement Officer is due to start in October 2025.
- A summary of the Councillor Development Reviews was provided as requested at the last meeting.

Members urged that officers place importance on arranging Planning Masterclasses as soon as possible. The SDSSO responded that she will make the Group Manager aware of the urgency for dates to be provided by the new Development Services and Enforcement Officer

An update will be provided at the next meeting if dates have not already been circulated.

Members also asked for a briefing on the role and purpose of a Monitoring Officer.

A briefing note will be prepared and circulated to Members via the Newsletter in the Learning and Development Section of the Members SharePoint site. Members also discussed the previous Council meeting, where they felt that some Councillors were unaware of specific procedures, and that perhaps some sections ought to be shared. It was agreed that a summary of the rules of procedure be shared on the newsletter.

5. LICENSING AND REGULATORY SUB-COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE

This item has been deferred until the next meeting on 10 December 2025.

6. MODERN.GOV REGISTRATION OVERVIEW

The DSSO gave an overview of results from the registration emails sent out during August 2025.

- 36 registration emails were sent throughout August
- 13 members have successfully enabled the app
- 23 members have yet to register the app on their device

As the registration email is only valid for 48 hours, Members were asked to encourage fellow Members to contact Democratic services to send a further registration email, to enable them to use the app. Democratic Services will publish this information in the Members Newsletter.

Cllr Bob Waterton left the meeting at 6.53pm.

7. COMMUNICATION OPTIONS FOR MEMBERS

The SDSSO advised Members, the options have been presented to the Corporate Services Group Manager and I.T. This is still under consideration, and an update will be provided in due course.

8. BUDGET UPDATE

The SDSSO advised Members, that both lines on the budget report had been duplicated due to a system error. This will be rectified for the next meeting's budget update.

Cllr Jane Wolfe left the meeting at 7.00pm

9. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

1. Update on SkillGate progress
2. Planning Masterclass Dates

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 10 December 2025
- 4 March 2026

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 7.06 P.M.