Member Development Steering Group

Tuesday, 23 SEPTEMBER 2025 at 5.30 p.m. - Brooks Room - Council Offices, Narborough

Membership:

Cllr. Adrian Clifford (Chairman)
Cllr. Matt Tomeo (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr. Nick Brown	Cllr. Ande Savage	Cllr. Bob Waterton
Cllr. Luke Cousin	Cllr. Dillan Shikotra	Cllr. Jane Wolfe
Cllr. Susan Findlay	Cllr. Roger Stead	

Blaby District Council Council Offices Desford Road Narborough Leicestershire LE19 2EP
Telephone: 0116 275 0555   Web: www.blaby.gov.uk
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AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Notes of Last Meeting (Pages 3 - 8)

    To approve the notes of the meeting held on 23 July 2025.

3. Skillgate Modules

    A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

4. Member Development Programme (Pages 9 - 18)

    For Members to consider the current Member Development Programme and provide feedback on the courses delivered and proposed future training (enclosed).

5. Licensing and Regulatory Sub-Committee Attendance

    A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

6. Modern.Gov Registration Overview

    Members will receive a verbal update at the meeting.

7. Communication Options for Members

    For Members to feedback which additional methods of communication they would like considered.

8. Budget Update (Pages 19 - 20)

    To update Members on the Member Budget (enclosed).

9. Items for Next Agenda

10. Date of Next Meeting

    - 10 December 2025
    - 4 March 2026

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

WEDNESDAY, 23 JULY 2025

Present:-

Cllr. Adrian Clifford (Chairman)
Cllr. Matt Tomeo (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr. Nick Brown   Cllr. Ande Savage   Cllr. Bob Waterton
Cllr. Luke Cousin   Cllr. Roger Stead

Officers present:-

Sandeep Tiensa   -   Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny
Officer

Apologies:-

Cllr. Susan Findlay, Cllr. Dillan Shikotra and Cllr. Jane Wolfe

1.   **NOTES OF LAST MEETING**

The notes of the meeting held on 10 October 2024, as circulated, were
approved as a correct record.

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2. **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

The Chairman, Cllr. Adrian Clifford welcomed Members to the meeting and invited the Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer (SDSSO) to provide an update to Members. The update included:

Member Development Programme:
- Planning Masterclasses, dates of which would be circulated to Members once confirmed with Planning Officers.
- An upcoming training session on treasury management, which may be held in the late autumn/winter.
- Chairing Skills – costs involved in hosting this session were quite high, with training providers limiting the number that can attend. Members discussed various options and types of providers that Officers had sought, including utilising experienced Members to provide the training. The SDSSO added that new legislation may be introduced that may allow hybrid meetings, and Members would require a wide range of advanced chairing skills to run these meetings. Cllr Luke Cousin offered a training provider that had been used by NALC. It was agreed to use an external provider for this training session to ensure that Members had the appropriate skills. Members requested to view the training needs assessment from the Councillor Development Reviews at the next meeting to consider training and development opportunities identified.
- Cllr. Ande Savage requested that Artificial Intelligence (AI) be added to the Member Development Programme, he spoke of how AI has seen an increase in it's use in both the workplace and personal use. What could AI offer the Council and Members, what systems have benefited from AI. Members raised that they should be informed of the pitfalls of AI, e.g. not inputting sensitive information into apps and being aware of AI generated videos and scams. The SDSSO responded that an update would be provided at the next meeting.

Online training:
- Skillgate, the Council's new online training provider will be launched to Members soon. Members will be required to complete the Sexual Harassment Awareness and Cyber Security modules. Other courses that officers have completed are:
  o Fraud Awareness
  o The Importance of Environmental Sustainability
  o Carbon Literacy.

Priorities for year ahead:
The SDSSO sought feedback from Members on their learning and development priorities. The Member Development Strategy requires that a second Councillor Development Review will be completed in year 3 (2026/27) to identify skills and development needs for succession planning and preparation for induction and mentoring of new Members. Members

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discussed the impact of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and training/development opportunities to prepare Members for the transition. For induction, Members considered the importance of being prepared for any administration changes. Suggestions included induction programmes for new Members pitched at the correct level, preparing Officers and Members on the Member/Officer Protocol, sharing the LGA's 'Be a Councillor' guide with agents and prospective candidates so they're fully aware of what the role involves, building relations with the groups, providing information about practical things e.g. pay, parking provision, hours, times of meetings.

Members also added:
- Digitising the induction programme and providing a library of training.
- Creating prospective councillor videos – with explanations of what the role involves, including the role of the Monitoring Officer, decisions that Members can take, resources available and funding.
- That the Steering Group take stock of and review training provided previously.
- LGR will make it simpler to advise prospective candidates on their role, as it will be a single tier authority.
- Cllr Luke Cousin added that the Chief Executive had shared a useful infographic on the various roles of County, District and Parish – which he would share with the SDSSO to circulate.

3.   **LICENSING AND REGULATORY SUB-COMMITTEE**

Members considered the attendance of Members at Licensing and Regulatory Sub-Committees which were arranged as when a hearing was required. In these circumstances, Officers would contact Members of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee (13 Members) to see who is available. The hearings were previously held during the day, however due to Members availability, the last one was held in the evening.

Members suggested alternative means of communication where responses were required as soon as possible, they included:

- Sending a read receipt on an email, or setting a reminder on an email or calendar invitation
- Sending a calendar invitation of the sub-committee to all Members so they could accept/decline to show their availability
- WhatsApp Community/Group, with responses disabled allowing Officers to post updates or requests. Messages could also be broadcast to all Members. Additional groups could be set up in the community for Licensing and Regulatory Committee Members.
- Teams channel

It was agreed that an update on this would be provided at the next meeting.

4.   **I.T UPDATE AND FEEDBACK**

The Chairman, Cllr. Adrian Clifford provided Members with an update on Member laptops, with a significant number having been handed out. There are a couple of Members yet to make contact with Democratic Services to understand their requirements.

The Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer (SDSSO) added that Members would require a new link to enable them to access private/scrutiny agendas on the Modern.Gov App. Members requested that the link be sent as soon as possible, adding that officers clarify that a new link will be required for each device

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5.   BUDGET UPDATE

The Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer (SDSSO) provided an update on expenditure which had not been included in the budget update presented to Members, this included:

- LGA conference for the Leader and Deputy Leader.
- Cabinet Support - where following recent changes to the Cabinet Executive, some Members may require specialist briefings and learning and development for their portfolio.

Steering Group Members asked Officers to consider if the LGA conference ought to be funded from an alternative budget, to ensure that there was sufficient budget for the year to meet outstanding training needs and requirements.

6.   ITEMS/ACTIONS FOR NEXT AGENDA

1. Communicating with Members – using WhatsApp/Teams
2. Revisit training and development needs arising from Councillor Development Reviews
3. Disseminate attendees of Licensing and Regulatory Sub-Committees, recent training to Group Whips.

7.   DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 23 September 2025
- 10 December 2025

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.43 P.M.

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Member Development Programme 2025/2026

2025				
Date and Time	**Location**	**Mandatory, Optional or Advisory**	**Training Event:**	**Training Provider**
Thursday 16 January 2025 2:30-3:40pm	Virtual Event (MS Teams)	Optional	<u>Personal Safety for Councillors</u> This session will cover the following: • Practical advice and guidance • It will reference surgeries, canvassing, home visits and managing unexpected doorstep visitors	Local Government Association
Saturday 18 January – Sunday 19 January 2025 Programme starts at 9.30 on first day and finishes at 3.00pm on second day.	Warwick Conferences, Coventry CV4 7SH	Audit & Corporate Governance Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman only.	<u>Audit Committee: Leadership Essentials</u> This programme will discuss how Audit Committees can be most effective. Drawing on the insights of regulators and practitioners it will provide space for participants to reflect on the way their Committee functions and how it can gain maximum assurance that the council's governance arrangements are fit for purpose.	Local Government Association
Wednesday 26 February 2025 5:00pm - 7:30pm	Virtual Event (Microsoft Teams)	Optional (Advisory to Scrutiny	<u>Data and Managing Council Performance – Training for Councillors</u> The session will cover the following topics:	Local Government Association

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		Commission and iPlan Members)	• What is data? • Common ways in which data is analysed and presented • Key questions to ask of our data • Performance management – measuring what matters. <u>Why attend?</u> Good use of data within councils is crucial to informing decision-making and monitoring performance. This session will help you to: • Understand data • Interpret performance reports • Ask the right questions • Use data to make informed decisions.	
Monday 10 March 2025 5:30pm	Virtual Via MS Teams Please note: This session is going to be recorded.	Optional	<u>Council Tax & Benefits Member Training</u> • Council Tax Support • Benefits Overview • Qualifying Criteria & how to make a claim	BDC Officers

| Wednesday 19 March 2025

5:30pm | Virtual Session (MS Teams) | Advisory | Officer & Member Training Session

Purpose of this session is to understand and explore the importance of excellent working relationships between councillors and officers in an effective local authority.

The session will cover the following:

- The central importance of the relationship between members and officers in an effective council
- The respective roles of members and officers
- What happens when this goes wrong in a council
- Relevant codes and protocols including local codes and member/officer protocols
- Areas of potential risk/friction and how to avoid/mitigate these
- Mini scenarios – to out it all into practice! | BDC Officers & External |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thursday 22 May 2025

5:30pm | Council Chamber | Mandatory for Planning Committee Members & Substitute Members | Annual Planning Committee Training

The session will cover the following topics:

- Role of the Planning Committee
- The Code of Conduct
- Planning legislation and policy
- The structure of the committee day
- Making a decision on a planning application | BDC Officers |

*CANCELLED **TO BE RESHEDULED** Thursday 19 June 2025 5:30pm	Council Chamber	Advisory for Planning Committee Members & Substitute Members	<u>Planning Committee Masterclass</u> Topic TBC	BDC Officers
Tuesday 1 July 2025 5:30pm	Council Chamber	Advisory for Licensing & Regulatory Committee Members	<u>Licensing & Regulatory Member Training Session</u> This session will cover: • Introduction to the Team • Overview of the Licensing Department • Current Enforcement Action • Taxi Licensing	BDC Officers
Saturday, 13 September – Sunday, 14 September 2025	Warwick Conferences, Coventry CV4 7SH	Advisory for the Leader of the Council and Finance Portfolio Holder	<u>Leadership Essentials: Finance for Leaders and Finance Portfolio Holders</u> This two-day programme will help leaders and finance portfolio holders get to grips with the financial challenges facing their authority. Informed by experienced local government finance practitioners, we will discuss how councils can set strategies for sustainability in the medium-term, as well as balancing the budget on an annual basis. It will also consider how	LGA

			members can work effectively with officers to ensure that the Council is making the most of its opportunities. The course will explore: • The role of leaders and portfolio holders in a changing financial environment • Working with the CFO and other key officers to make sense of opportunities • Understanding the council's finances • Navigating the budget process • The financial aspects of new delivery models • Recognising a good business case for change • The latest finance challenges facing councils	
Wednesday 24 September 2025 1:30 – 3:00pm NEW	Virtual	Optional	<u>Supporting Better Mental Health: Looking after your own wellbeing as an elected member during stressful times</u> • Some of the definitions of mental health and illness • The concept of risk and protective factors • Basic psychology and tackling unhelpful thinking patterns • Why the role of councillor is vulnerable to additional stress	LGA

			• Managing social media • Managing relationships with colleagues and constituents • The role of exercise, diet, and green space.	
Tuesday 30 September 2025 10:30-12:00pm NEW	Virtual	Optional	Understanding the Finance and Risk Governance Divide Member Training • Expert insights into where scrutiny and audit roles align and diverge • Practical strategies to reduce duplication and avoid gaps • Interactive group discussions to share what works (and what doesn't) • Reflections and actions to take back to your authority	Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CFGS)
Monday 1 December 2025 2:00-3:30pm NEW	Virtual	Optional	Better Mental Health with Residents: Using council powers and influence to create mentally healthier communities • Social and commercial determinants of mental health • Environmental factors like housing, traffic, and pollution • Addressing issues around food, alcohol, and gambling	LGA

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			• Building social connections for community wellbeing.	
*DATE TBC	Council Chamber	Advisory for Chairs and Vice-Chairs	<u>Chairing Skills</u> • Roles, Rules and Reference Points • Preparation strategies • How to open meetings and navigate early standard items • Including challenging contributors, votes and outcomes • Summarising skills • Virtual Chairing hints and tips	Link Support Services (UK) Ltd
*DATE TBC	Council Chamber	Advisory for Planning Committee Members & Substitute Members	<u>Planning Committee Masterclass</u> <u>Section 106Highays</u>	BDC Officers
*DATE TBC	TBC	Advisory for Planning Committee Members &	<u>Planning Committee Masterclass</u> <u>Highways</u>	BDC Officers

		Substitute Members		
*DATE TBC	TBC	Advisory for Planning Committee Members & Substitute Members	Planning Committee Masterclass Material Considerations	BDC Officers
*DATE TBC	TBC	Advisory for Planning Committee Members & Substitute Members	Planning Committee Masterclass Developer Contributions	TBC
*DATE TBC	TBC	Optional	AI Training	TBC

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			1006 DJD	7,000.00
			Annual Budget =	**7,000.00**

Expenditure	Supplier	Ref	Payment Made / Order Raised Date	Actual £	Commitments £	Accruals £	Cumulative Total £	Budget Remaining £
Finance Programme	Local Government Association		11-Aug-25	670.00			670.00	6,330.00
Political Training	Local Government Association		11-Aug-25	670.00			1,340.00	5,660.00
Totals				**1,340.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**1,340.00**	**5,660.00**
				(1,340.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

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Agenda Item 8

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