



EASTSUFFOLK
C O U N C I L

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2023-2027

If you require this document in large print, audio or braille or in a different language, please email democraticservices@eastsoffolk.gov.uk or telephone 01502 523521.

Background

East Suffolk Council is proud to have achieved Charter Plus status for Councillor Development in September 2020 and is committed to supporting and developing Councillors in order to ensure that they can help support individuals, families and communities from across the whole District.

A cross party group of Councillors, including the three Group Leaders, regularly meet as a Member Development Steering Group and, using their knowledge and experience, have approved a Member Development Strategy and the key processes in the Strategy are identified below:



The Steering Group will also design and commission a Member Development Programme that will follow on from the successful Induction Programme which took place after the May 2023 elections. The Programme will provide a number of training/briefing sessions and site visits within the remainder of the first year to support Councillors to undertake their duties, together with sessions that provide specific training for individual roles, or for members of particular Committees.

The Future

Development will continue over the four year term of office to ensure that East Suffolk Councillors are continually supported and up to date, particularly in relation to the latest legislation and priorities. The Member Development Strategy and Programme will be reviewed annually by the Member Development Steering Group.

As part of the Programme, the Steering Group will develop Councillor Development Pathways to ensure Members know what training is required for specific roles and also develop an enhanced Leadership offer and support for Members in their new roles including, where necessary, a bespoke programme of support for

individual Councillors. A Member Development Workshop will also be held annually and a possible Councillor Development Workshop involving Town and Parish Councillors as well as Youth Councillors will be explored.

The Local Government Association Councillor Development Charter and Charter Plus

The Charter Mark and Charter Plus for Councillor Development is an accreditation similar to Investors in People (IIP) and is awarded to Councils for their constant commitment to Councillors' learning and development needs.

Waveney District Council, East Suffolk's predecessor authority, had a long and proud history of Member Development, having achieved the coveted 'gold standard' Charter Plus Award since 2009. East Suffolk Council confirmed its commitment towards Councillor Development and successfully achieved reaccreditation in September 2020 and again in December 2023.

Support for Members Accessing Member Development Opportunities

To enable Councillors to take part in this Programme, East Suffolk Council will pay mileage and reimburse expenditure for care of children or dependent relatives. Details of the terms for these payments can be found in Part 5 of East Suffolk Council's [Constitution](#) on the website.

Member Development 2023-24

Taking account of the Member Development Steering Group's recommendations, the first year of the Programme has been divided into four sections as follows:

1. **Induction Session** – East Suffolk Councillors attended the Induction Session in May 2023 which was designed and programmed to ensure that Members felt informed and supported as soon as they were elected in May throughout their first few months in office, in order to carry out their duties as quickly and effectively as possible.
2. **Essential training and briefing sessions to aid all East Suffolk Councillors** – Sessions are being organised to ensure that Councillors are up to date on legislation as well as having an understanding of how the Council and various services operate.
3. **Essential training sessions for specific Committees or roles** – These are a combination of those sessions that are required to ensure Members understand the law relating to specific quasi-judicial Committees they are appointed to such as Planning and Licensing, and other sessions that will really help Members appointed to specific roles such as the Chairman of certain Committees.
4. **Useful training/briefing sessions and visits for East Suffolk Councillors** – These are sessions that Councillors might find it useful to attend to get a broader understanding of the Council or will help them undertake their duties from a practical point of view.

Further sessions will be arranged for the remainder of 2023/24 and details of these will be emailed to Members as and when they become available. All sessions are generally held on Teams or in person at either East Suffolk House, Melton or the Riverside offices, Lowestoft. Members are asked to respond to the calendar invites for the training/briefing Sessions as soon as possible or email democraticservices@eastsuffolk.gov.uk.