

Proposal for West Lindsey District Council

Member Development Programme

Introduction

We are delighted to make this proposal to you. You have asked us to outline how we would approach the delivery of a number of governance-related member development sessions. These will be part of an ongoing, structured programme to support your councillors (many of whom are newly elected) with their roles and responsibilities.

You have explained to us that you want revisit some of the core governance topics around roles, responsibilities and behaviours in a programme running from October through to the New Year 2024. You will then explore offering more specialised subjects, focusing on specific roles, later in the programme.

There may also be merit in badging all the governance-related training sessions together as one integrated programme, with attendance at all the training events generating a certificate for the successful members.

Our approach is to make all sessions practical and tailored to the particular council and audience. We will prepare material for each of the sessions in advance which you can review and approve, to ensure that it absolutely fits your needs

We set out below our thoughts on content for the initial four sessions which we have identified as the core governance modules.

We are happy to discuss all this further with you/colleagues and to design it to exactly meet your needs.

Good governance and decision-making – what makes an effective Council

Purpose of session	To give all councillors an understanding of the building blocks of good governance which underpin the most effective councils, and to outline how decisions are made.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does good governance mean? • What are the elements of good governance in a council? • What can we learn from recent reports on problems in other councils? • What/who are the guarantors of good governance including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scrutiny, standards and audit ○ Corporate Governance Code and Annual Statement ○ Statutory officers ○ Key rules/protocols/codes • How to make robust decisions • Mini scenarios – putting it all into practice.
Outcome of session	That all councillors feel confident in the legal and governance framework of the Council and in their roles and responsibilities

Standards of conduct and behaviour as a councillor

Purpose of session	To consider the responsibilities of councillors, to understand the standards of behaviour required (including the registration and declaration of interests) and to explore the arrangements for dealing with breaches of standards.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of probity in public life – why does it matter? • The Nolan Principles revisited • The conduct and behaviour expected of elected councillors including examples of good and bad behaviour • Your council’s code of conduct and arrangements for dealing with complaints of breach and sanctions • Interests, conflicts, bias and predetermination • Mini scenarios for discussion
Outcome of session	That all councillors fully understand the standards of conduct and behaviour required of an elected councillor and are confident in the codes and protocols which apply.

Roles and relationships: officer/member relations

Purpose of session	To address the key relationship between councillors and officers, to consider the potential areas of friction/risk, to review good practice and guidance and to consider relevant codes of conduct.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The role of elected councillors in local government• The role of officers (including statutory officers)• The central importance of the relationship between members and officers in an effective council• Good practice and guidance• Relevant codes and protocols including any local codes and member/officer protocols• Areas of potential risk/friction and how to avoid/mitigate these
Outcome of session	That councillors fully understand the inter-dependent roles of members and officers and are confident in the codes, protocols and legal requirements which apply to the relationship.