

Ethics Committee
Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities
Council

19 March 2026
23 March 2026
24 March 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities – Councillor AS Khan

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Ward(s) affected:

N/A

Title:

Elected Members Training and Development Strategy 2026-30

Is this a key decision?

No - although the proposals affect more than two electoral wards, the impact is not expected to be significant.

Executive summary:

The environment in which Councillors' work is constantly changing. Ensuring that Councillors are properly supported to help them meet the high demands placed on them to carry out this challenging role effectively is increasingly important. To respond to this need, the Elected Members Training and Development Strategy was agreed at Council on 22 March 2022 which provided a strategic approach to the training and development offer to Elected Members. To ensure that the offer to Elected Members is still relevant the strategy has been refreshed to ensure it still meets those needs.

During the lifetime of the current strategy the offer and uptake of training by Elected Members has increased from 5 courses delivered internally or organised for Elected Members in 2018-19, resulting in 57 attendances to 41 courses delivered or arranged internally resulting in 206 attendances, in 2024-25.

A further consultation with Members took place between December 2025 and March 2026. The result of this suggests there is increased support for a core training programme, as well as improved communication and satisfaction with the offer provided.

The strategy covers:

- Purpose of the Strategy
- Assessing Need and Requesting Training
- Training Matrix
- Governance and Delivery

Recommendations:

The Ethics Committee is requested to:

- 1) Support the refreshed Elected Members Training and Development Strategy
- 2) Agree to receive an annual report on delivery of the Strategy as well as any progress reports as requested

The Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities is requested to:

- 1) Recommend that Council approve the refreshed Elected Members Training and Development Strategy as appended to the report
- 2) Recommend that Council approve the proposals for core training for Elected Members as identified in Section 3 of the report.

Council is recommended to:

- 1) Approve the refreshed Elected Members Training and Development Strategy as appended to the report
- 2) Approve the proposals for core training for Elected Members as identified in Section 3 of the report.

List of Appendices included:

The following appendices are attached to the report:

Appendix A – Refreshed Elected Members Training and Development Strategy 2026-2030

Appendix B – Data 2026

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

None

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

Yes

Members Training and Development Cabinet Member Advisory Panel – 5 March 2026

Ethics Committee – 19 March 2026

Will this report go to Council?

Yes - 24 March 2026

Report title: Elected Members Training and Development Strategy 2026-30

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. The Elected Members Training and Development Strategy was agreed at Council on 22 March 2022 and provided a strategic approach to the training and development offer to Elected Members.
- 1.2. In the four years since the Strategy's implementation there has been an increase in the offer of training for Elected Members, as well as a broader offer and a higher uptake of training by Elected Members.
- 1.3. This can be seen in the fact that in the municipal year 2018-19 there were 5 courses delivered internally or organised for Elected Members, resulting in 57 attendances, in 2024-25 there were 41 courses delivered or arranged internally resulting in 206 attendances. The data from 2024-25 does not include one off external training, as this was not recorded during 2018-19, however there were 17 external opportunities taken up, resulting in an additional 43 sessions attended. More detailed data can be found in Appendix B of this report.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1. **Do nothing** (Not recommended)
- 2.2. The current Elected Members Training Strategy was agreed in 2022. It is good practise to review and refresh all strategies to ensure that they reflect changing needs and practice of those intended to benefit from the implementation of the strategy. To ensure that the Strategy remains relevant to Elected Members training needs this option is not recommended.
- 2.3. **Not have an Elected Members Training Strategy** (Not recommended)
- 2.4. Before the implementation of the current Elected Members Training Strategy there was an ad hoc approach to Elected Members training, which resulted in a poor offer and subsequently a poor uptake of training by Elected Members. Therefore, this option is not recommended.
- 2.5. **Approve the refreshed Elected Members Training and Development Strategy** (Recommended proposal)
- 2.6. The role of an Elected Member is ever changing as demands from residents and Council policy and services evolve over time. In addition, there are legislative changes and requirements (for example in relation to planning) that need to be taken in account. Therefore, to be able to ensure that the Elected Members Training and Development Strategy is relevant to those demands and changes it is considered necessary to review and refresh the Strategy which had been in place since 2022.
- 2.7. The timing of this refresh means that all current Elected Members will have served their term of office under the previous Strategy, so are able to contribute to the review of that Strategy through a process of surveys and via the Members Training and Development Cabinet Member Advisory Panel. The proposed refreshed Strategy can be found at Appendix A of this report. The Strategy covers:
 - Purpose of the Strategy
 - Assessing Need and Requesting Training

- Training Matrix
- Governance and Delivery
- Appendix 1 – Example Training Matrix
- Appendix 2 – Revised Terms of Reference for Elected Members Training and Development Advisory Panel

- 2.8. To support the refresh of the strategy, the survey undertaken in 2019 was repeated to provide a comparison on how training is viewed by Elected Members compared to before there was a strategy in place. There has been an increase in support for a core training programme for all Elected Members (94.4% in 2026 compared to 83.3% in 2019).
- 2.9. There has also been improved communication about training. 94% receive information from Internal Communication compared to 78% in 2019. Also, in 2019 28% of respondents said they received no information about training. In 2026 this was 0%.
- 2.10. Elected Members feel the Council is better meeting their training needs. 89% feel the Council is meeting their training needs “A lot” or “A Moderate amount” compared to 62.5% in 2019. Also, in 2019 12.5% said the Council wasn’t meeting their needs at all. In 2026 this was 0%. More information on the results can be found at Appendix B.
- 2.11. As well as being based on more recent Elected Member feedback, the updated Strategy reflects the changes in how the Strategy is administered by Governance Services, as well identifying a process to assess the added value of one-off training requests that have a cost associated with it. It is proposed that this will be assessed by the Monitoring Office in consultation with the Chair of the Member Training and Development Cabinet Member Advisory Panel.
- 2.12. In reviewing the Strategy, it was considered that the terms of reference for the Member Training and Development Cabinet Member Advisory Panel should also be reviewed to ensure that they reflect the way in which the delivery of the Strategy has evolved over time. The membership of the Advisory Panel is cross-party, chaired by a representative from the controlling group, and also invites newly elected Members to attend as observers.
- 2.13. The terms of reference have been amended to include a requirement to submit an annual report to the Ethics Committee who have taken an interest in Elected Member training and have requested regular reports on delivery of the Strategy, including receiving an update of the core training requirements. The amended terms of reference can be found in Appendix 2 of the Strategy.

3. Core Training

- 3.1. In order to ensure that a wide range of training and development is offered to Elected Members, a training matrix will be developed and endorsed by the Members Training and Development Advisory Panel. The training matrix will be regularly reviewed and evaluated to ensure it meets Elected Members’ training needs.
- 3.2. The training matrix will provide a programme of core training which all Elected Members will be required to complete throughout their term of office. In addition to this there will be role specific core training for those Elected Members with special responsibilities, or who sit on specific Committees. An example of the training matrix can be found at Appendix 1 of the Strategy document.

3.3. Core training for all Elected Members will include:

- Code of Conduct
- Induction programme for newly elected Members
- Personal Safety
- Equalities
- Data Protection and Cyber Security
- Health and Safety

3.4. Elected Members appointed to Planning Committee and Licensing and Regulatory Committee will also be required to complete training to sit on those Committees in accordance with the Constitution.

4. Supplementary Training and Development

- 4.1. There will also be a programme of regular in-house supplementary training, identified by regular training needs analysis through consultation with Elected Members. This will be organised and arranged, but not necessarily delivered, internally by Council officers.
- 4.2. In addition to an in-house programme, Elected Members may request to attend ad hoc one-off training requests delivered by external organisations, such as the Local Government Association (LGA). A training request pro-forma will be developed and managed by Governance Services. There will be a budget allocated to enable one-off requests.
- 4.3. Elected Members will also be able to request additional training, where several Elected Members have identified that a greater understanding of an issue is required and is not covered by the current offer. This will enable the training and development programme to be responsive and flexible to Elected Members training needs.
- 4.4. The training strategy provides a framework in which there is flexibility to offer a variety of training methods as well as insight from Members directly through surveys as well as strategic oversight from a Members advisory panel

5. Results of consultation undertaken

- 5.1. Elected Members are regularly consulted on their training needs to ensure that the offer is relevant and accessible. An additional survey repeating the original survey in 2019 was conducted in December 2025- February 2026. The findings of this survey have informed the development of this Strategy. The Members Training and Development Cabinet Member Advisory Panel considered and supported the proposed refreshed Strategy as their meeting on 5 March, 2026.

6. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 6.1. Once agreed by Council the Strategy can be implemented from May 2026.

7. Comments from Director of Finance and Resources and Director of Law and Governance

7.1. Financial Implications

There is no cost of developing the strategy other than officer time as this will be delivered by existing officers. There is already a budget allocated for Members training and development. These proposals would be delivered within the existing budget allocation.

7.2. Legal Implications

The provision of a training and development Strategy and core training will further the ability of Elected Members to undertake their roles and make robust and informed decisions

8. Other implications

8.1. **How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?**

By enabling a well-trained cohort of Elected Members with the skills and knowledge to deliver the One Coventry Plan.

How is risk being managed?

By providing the opportunity for Elected Members to have access to good quality training and development, the risk to the organisation is reduced. Elected Members with appropriate skills and knowledge leads to good decision making. In Councils where poor decision making has taken place, this has led to poor management and significant risks to the organisation.

8.2. **What is the impact on the organisation?**

By delivering the Strategy, Elected Members will continue to have access to relevant training, meaning the Council will be better equipped to deliver the ambitions in the One Coventry Plan. Responsibility for managing the Elected Members Training and Development Strategy lies with the Head of Governance Services.

8.3. **Equalities / EIA?**

The implementation of an Elected Members Training and Development Strategy will include needs assessment in terms of accessibility, to ensure that there are no negative impacts on any protected group.

8.4. **Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?**

There will be no implications or impact on climate change or the environment as a result of implementing the Elected Members Training and Development Strategy

8.5. **Implications for partner organisations?**

None

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