

STANDARDS COMMITTEE



Report subject	Councillor Training Update
Meeting date	8 July 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report provides an overview of the training deemed to be essential for all councillors to complete in addition to the Code of Conduct training that all councillors have completed as part of the induction programme.</p> <p>The report provides a breakdown of the completion records for each councillor, although the names of individual councillors have been removed to protect the council's interests. This will form the baseline for future updates.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the training completion records be noted as a baseline for future annual reporting;(b) all councillors be sent a quarterly update on their individual performance;(c) political group leaders be sent a quarterly report on the progress of their members performance with a request to encourage uptake;(d) the training modules deemed as mandatory for employees be designated as mandatory for councillors.
Reason for recommendations	The recommendations will seek to encourage all councillors to achieve a 100% completion record of their training.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Janie Berry, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Standards Committee is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct, ethical standards and ensuring appropriate advice and training is provided to councillors.
2. This report focuses on the provision of training on topics excluding the Code of Conduct and those directly relating to specialist committee training (e.g., planning, licensing and appeals). This training, together with a library of other resources, is available through the Councillor's Virtual Resource Room on the Intranet.

Mandatory Training

3. The council has established a comprehensive mandatory training programme for all employees which forms part of the performance development framework. This training is also considered essential for all councillors, some of which directly flows from policy, such as the safeguarding strategy, whilst other elements are to protect the interests of the council. All councillors are encouraged to complete the training both directly and via their political group leader.
4. This training initiative aims to ensure that all members are well-equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their duties effectively, comply with statutory requirements, and uphold the council's standards and values.

Purpose of Mandatory Training

5. The mandatory training programme is designed to mitigate key risks around statutory topics, societal challenges, and industry recommendations. The training ensures that councillors and officers are compliant with legal requirements and are prepared to handle various responsibilities associated with their roles.

Key Training Modules

6. The council has identified several essential training modules that are classified as mandatory. These modules cover a range of critical topics, including:
 - **Cyber Awareness and Staying Safe Online:** Protects the council and individuals from cyber threats and malicious attacks.

- **Fraud Prevention and Awareness:** Educates on anti-bribery, corruption, and anti-money laundering risks.
 - **Introduction to Data Protection:** Ensures compliance with data protection legislation and safeguards personal data.
 - **The Importance of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** Mitigates the risk of discriminatory claims and promotes an inclusive environment.
 - **Working Safely - An Introduction to Workplace Health and Safety:** Promotes health and safety in the workplace.
 - **Working Together to Safeguard Adults:** Educates on safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable adults.
 - **Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People:** Ensures understanding of safeguarding responsibilities for children and young people.
7. These training modules are delivered through the council's SkillGate platform, which allows councillors and officers to complete the courses online. Completion rates are monitored, and reminders are sent to individuals who have not yet completed their mandatory training. The training modules are required to be completed every three years.
 8. In addition, mandatory cyber security training and awareness is provided through the MetaCompliance platform and includes several key modules designed to safeguard the council. These modules are delivered in short, bite-sized video formats, making them accessible and engaging for all users. The training covers essential topics such as cyber security, data protection, and compliance with legal requirements.

Importance of Compliance

9. Failure to complete the mandatory training can lead to significant consequences, including criticism, financial penalties, and potential personal liability. It is crucial for councillors and officers to complete the training to avoid these risks and to ensure they are adequately prepared to fulfil their roles.

Reporting and Monitoring

10. This is the first report to the Standards Committee on the mandatory training programme. Attached at appendix 1 is a breakdown of each councillor's training completion record, however, individual names have been removed to protect the council's interests. Whilst it may be in the public interest to know which councillors have and have not completed their training, the disclosure of individual records could expose vulnerabilities and present a risk to data, systems and financial interests.
11. It is proposed to report training performance to the committee annually but to send individual councillors and political group leaders quarterly updates and reminders to encourage uptake. The annual report will ensure transparency and accountability in the training process and further motivate completion.

Current Performance

12. The overall performance for each of the training modules is set out below. This is divided into the seven modules provided through SkillGate and the 12 bite-size modules through MetaCompliance.

SkillGate

Module	Completion Rate
Cyber Awareness and Staying Safe Online	88%
Fraud Prevention and Awareness	87%
Introduction to Data Protection	82%
The Importance of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	87%
Working Safely - An Introduction to Workplace Health and Safety	83%
Working Together to Safeguard Adults	86%
Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People	86%

MetaCompliance

Module	Completion Rate
BCP 2023 - Personal cyber part 2	68%
BCP January 2025	54%
Cyber and AI	66%
Cyber Police Season 1, Episode 1 and 2	57%
Cyber Police Season 1, Episode 3 and 4	58%
Cyber Police Season 1, Episode 5 and 6 V2	55%
Cyber Security Season 1, Episode 7 v2	57%
Cyber Police Season 2, Episode 8 and 9	53%
Cyber Police Season 2, Episode 10 and 11	50%
Deep Fakes and Bar codes	58%
MFA and phishing 2	58%
Xmas course 2024	54%

Conclusion

13. The mandatory training programme is an essential component of the council's efforts to maintain high standards of governance and service delivery. By ensuring that all councillors and officers complete the required training, the council can mitigate risks, comply with legal requirements, and provide a safe and inclusive environment.

Options Appraisal

14. The Committee is required to promote and maintain high standards of conduct, and the monitoring of the training programme supports ambition. The Committee may choose to seek more regular updates, however, this would have a resource implication. A formal annual report is considered appropriate by officers. The committee may also consider other measures to promote uptake of the training and suggestions would be welcomed.

Summary of financial implications

15. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Summary of legal implications

16. The mandatory training programme is designed to mitigate key risks around statutory topics, security challenges, and compliance recommendations. The training ensures that councillors are compliant with legal requirements and are prepared to handle various responsibilities associated with their roles.
17. Failure to complete the mandatory training could lead to significant consequences, including reputational and operational damage for the council, personal criticism, financial penalties, potential personal liability and legal challenge. It is crucial for councillors complete the training to avoid these risks and to ensure they are adequately prepared to fulfil their roles.

Summary of human resources implications

18. There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

19. There are no sustainability impacts arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

20. There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

21. There are no direct equality implications arising from this report, however, where individual councillors require additional support, reasonable adjustments will be discussed on an individual basis.

Summary of risk assessment

22. The mandatory training programme is designed to mitigate key risks around specific topic areas as detailed in the report.

Background papers

Published works

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Anonymised record of training for each councillor.