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Member Development and Standards Sub Committee

Date: **THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2026**

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: **COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL**

Members:

Philip Woodhouse (Chairman)
Deputy Jaspreet Hodgson (Deputy Chair)
Susan Farrington
Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP
Deputy Christopher Hayward
Deputy Caroline Haines
Sandra Jenner
Deputy Deborah Oliver
Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley
Deputy Henry Pollard
Naresh Hari Sonpar

Enquiries: **Isaac Thomas, Governance Officer**
isaac.thomas@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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https://www.youtube.com/@CityofLondonCorporation/streams

A recording of the public meeting will be available via the above link following the end of the public meeting for up to one civic year. Please note: Online meeting recordings do not constitute the formal minutes of the meeting; minutes are written and are available on the City of London Corporation's website. Recordings may be edited, at the discretion of the proper officer, to remove any inappropriate material.

Whilst we endeavour to livestream all of our public meetings, this is not always possible due to technical difficulties. In these instances, if possible, a recording will be uploaded following the end of the meeting.

Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MEMBER'S DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

3. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 11 June 2026.

For Decision
(Pages 5 - 12)

4. **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PANEL OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS**

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Decision
(Pages 13 - 26)

5. **MEMBERS' LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Discussion
(Pages 27 - 50)

6. **MEMBERS' COPILOT TRIAL SCHEME UPDATE**

To receive a verbal update from the Town Clerk.

For Information

7. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE**

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

9. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION, that – under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act or relate to functions of the Court of Common Council which are not subject to the provisions of Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

For Decision

10. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Decision
(Pages 51 - 52)

11. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

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MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND STANDARDS SUB COMMITTEE
Thursday, 11 June 2026

Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development and Standards Sub Committee held at COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL on Thursday, 11 June 2026 at 2.00 pm

Present

Members:
Philip Woodhouse (Chairman)
Deputy Jaspreet Hodgson (Deputy Chair)
Susan Farrington
Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP
Sandra Jenner
Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP
Deputy Deborah Oliver
Naresh Hari Sonpar

In attendance:
Charles Edward Lord
Benjamin Murphy

Officers:

Michael Cogher	-	Comptroller & City Solicitor
Gregory Moore	-	Deputy Town Clerk
Polly Dunn	-	Assistant Town Clerk
Gemma Stokley	-	Principal Governance & Member Services Manager
Isaac Thomas	-	Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**
Apologies were received from Deputy Henry Pollard, Deputy Caroline Haines, Deputy James Thomson, Deputy Christopher Hayward and Alderman Sir Andrew Charles Parmley. Deputy Henry Pollard and Deputy Caroline Haines joined the meeting virtually.

2. **MEMBER'S DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
No declarations were received.

3. **ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIR**
The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chair in accordance with Standing Order 29.

Deputy Jaspreet Hodgson, as the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected as Deputy Chairman for the year ensuing.

RESOLVED, that - Deputy Jaspreet Hodgson be elected Deputy Chairman of the Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee for the year ensuing.

4. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Sub-Committee considered the public minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2026. A Member queried the circulation of an organisational chart that had been referenced within the minutes. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that this would be made available to Members via the Members' Portal in due course.

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2026 be approved as a correct record.

5. **PROPOSAL FOR A COMMITTEE BUDDY SCHEME FOR NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning a proposal to introduce a Committee Buddy Scheme for newly appointed Members to Committees and Sub-Committees.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that feedback from newer Members had highlighted the challenges of joining Committees partway through ongoing work programmes, particularly where prior knowledge of issues was assumed. Turnover among Committee Clerks had also reduced the consistency of support that had previously been available, reinforcing the need for additional mechanisms to assist new Members in becoming familiar with Committee business. It was noted that the proposed scheme intended to provide a light-touch, informal mechanism for new Members to access support, through either the Chair or a nominated Member acting as a point of contact.

Members emphasised the importance of ensuring consistency in the approach adopted across Committees, whilst maintaining flexibility and avoiding an overly rigid or bureaucratic approach. It was suggested by a Member that the scheme should operate as a supplementary and optional support mechanism, rather than replacing existing support arrangements. Members agreed that the scheme should provide clear guidance but also retain flexibility for Committees to adapt arrangements to their specific circumstances.

A Member also raised the role of Ward Deputies, suggesting that they could provide a complementary source of support where they sit on the relevant Committees.

Members also reflected on the importance of retaining existing Committee briefing arrangements at the start of each municipal year and agreed that the proposed scheme should operate alongside these established practices.

Concerns were also expressed about the potential for undue influence where a buddy might present personal views rather than objective information to new Committee Members. Officers advised that a degree common sense would be required to mitigate this risk and new Committee Members were encouraged to draw on the multiple sources of information available, including Chairmen, committee clerks and buddies.

It was also observed that the potential provision of CoPilot licenses, due to be discussed at Item 6, might complement the proposed buddying scheme by supporting Members further in digesting Committee reports.

The Sub-Committee supported a flexible approach, whereby the Chair would have discretion to act as the buddy or nominate another appropriate Member and agreed that this should be taken forward as an additional support mechanism for new Members. The Deputy Town Clerk undertook to develop further operational guidance and implementation proposals for future consideration by the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED, that Members:

- Noted the report.
- Approved, in principle, the introduction of a Committee Buddy Scheme for Members newly appointed to Committees and Sub-Committees.
- Endorsed the principle that the Chair, Deputy Chair, or a Member nominated by the Chair should undertake the Committee Buddy role, supported by the Committee Clerk.
- Agreed that the Town Clerk develop further operational guidance and implementation proposals for future consideration by this Sub-Committee.

6. **PROPOSAL FOR A MICROSOFT COPILOT PILOT SCHEME FOR MEMBERS**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning a proposal for a Microsoft Copilot Pilot Scheme for Members.

The Deputy Town Clerk introduced the report, advising that the proposal had emerged from feedback from newer Members regarding the accessibility and digestibility of Committee reports. It was noted that, whilst work was ongoing to improve report writing standards, there remained an opportunity to explore the use of artificial intelligence tools to support Members in reviewing and understanding Committee papers. While Members already had access to the basic version of Microsoft Copilot known as ‘CoPilot Chat’, the proposal sought to test enhanced functionality through a controlled pilot of Copilot Premium.

Members acknowledged the value of testing the enhanced functionality provided by CoPilot Premium and noted that a pilot scheme would enable the organisation to assess user experience, to identify benefits and limitations, and develop lessons learned before any wider rollout to the full Court membership. Members emphasised the importance of establishing clear evaluation criteria, including how the tool was used, the quality of outputs generated, and the time commitment required from participants. Members also highlighted the importance of making those taking part in the trial aware of the time commitment required.

Several Members highlighted the need for careful selection of the pilot cohort. It was suggested that the group should include a representative mix of Members with varying levels of digital confidence as well as Members serving on different Committees. Some concern was expressed regarding fairness and the potential

perception of providing additional resources to a selected group. The Deputy Town Clerk emphasised that the proposal constituted a time-limited trial rather than a permanent allocation of resources.

Members discussed digital capability across the Court and noted that some were still developing familiarity with basic digital tools. Members emphasised the importance of continuing to strengthen foundational digital knowledge alongside any future introduction of premium functionality. Officers advised that the Copilot Chat training sessions delivered by DITS would continue to be offered to Members.

Members discussed other AI tools but noted that the pilot would focus on Microsoft Copilot in line with the City Corporation's existing systems and arrangements. In doing so, Members emphasised the importance of maintaining appropriate oversight and exercising critical judgement when reviewing AI-generated content.

It was further suggested that the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Digital Services Committee should be engaged in the development and oversight of the pilot, given their expertise and interest in digital transformation.

RESOLVED, that Members:

- Noted the contents of the report.
- Agreed to implement a limited pilot scheme involving a small cohort of volunteer Members trialling the premium version of Microsoft Copilot.
- Authorised the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Director of Digital Information & Technology and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of this Sub-Committee, to determine arrangements related to the cost, duration and cohort size, with funding for the pilot to be drawn from the Member Learning & Development budget.

7. **PROPOSAL FOR AN INFORMAL AND CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING MECHANISM FOR MEMBER BEHAVIOUR**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning a proposal for the introduction of an informal and confidential reporting mechanism for Member behaviour.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the proposal had arisen from discussions between the Chief Commoner and newer Members and intended to address behavioural concerns at an earlier stage and encourage positive behavioural standards. The mechanism would aim to enable lower-level behavioural concerns to be raised confidentially and addressed informally, where such matters did not meet the threshold for formal complaints under the existing Code of Conduct. It was noted that the proposal sought to complement rather than replace the City Corporation's established formal and informal processes.

Members were generally supportive of maintaining an informal approach to governing Member behaviour. The Chairman, also the Chief Commoner, expressed their preference for resolving issues through direct conversations with

Members where possible, and emphasised their wish that any adopted approach should not restrict future Chief Commoners. Members noted that informal discussions conducted by the Chief Commoner remained an important complementary approach to the statutory standards regime and had been successful in addressing concerns at an early stage and helping to resolve issues before they escalated into formal complaints.

In discussing the benefits of implementing a reporting mechanism, Members observed that maintaining a record could help officers develop a cumulative understanding of patterns of behaviour, particularly where individual incidents might not independently warrant a formal complaint but might indicate a concern when considered together collectively.

A Member queried the barriers that Members currently faced when reporting concerns and the rationale behind introducing a more formal mechanism. Officers replied that individuals may currently be reluctant to come forward due to a perception that they are being bothersome, particularly where matters are considered minor. An anonymous reporting framework could therefore help to alleviate these barriers. Officers further emphasised that the proposed mechanism would operate alongside, rather than replace, existing informal routes, such as speaking with the Chief Commoner or a Past Chief and would provide an additional means of capturing information to support a broader understanding of concerns. It was also noted that the reporting mechanism would be open to officers, who may not always feel they have a clear route for raising similar concerns.

Members discussed the role of data handling, confidentiality and the implications of creating and retaining written records. A Member voiced concern that the existence of a formal record could deter some Members from coming forward, as they may wish to raise issues informally. Another Member highlighted the potential for subject access requests and the associated risk that individuals may seek disclosure of information held about them.

Officers responded that while anonymity could be offered in certain circumstances, disclosures may be required depending on the nature of the request. In the event of a subject access request, information would need to be considered for disclosure, and where a complainant had not remained anonymous, a judgement would be required by officers as to whether their identity should be disclosed. It was emphasised that any such mechanism would need to be supported by clear governance arrangements, including an appropriate data retention schedule and protocols to govern access and disclosure.

The Sub-Committee agreed that further time was required for the Chief Commoner to become more familiar with the role and to assess the operation of existing informal resolution arrangements. It was therefore considered appropriate to defer consideration to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee, with a view to reflecting on current practices before developing any formalised approach.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the item should be brought back for further consideration at its next meeting on 15 October 2026.

RESOLVED, that Members;

- Agreed to defer a decision on the proposal until the next meeting of the Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee on 15 October 2026, pending further consideration of the effectiveness of current arrangements.

8. **CASEWORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – ORAL UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee received a verbal update from the Assistant Town Clerk on the development of a potential casework management system for Members.

The Assistant Town Clerk advised that a meeting was scheduled with the Director of Information Technology, to explore options for improving how Members' casework enquiries could be filtered and directed to the appropriate departments. It was noted that this work could also assist with the triaging of requests for information arising from committee activity.

Members were informed that no formal proposal had yet been developed, but were assured that this work was underway, with a further update expected in October.

A Member highlighted current challenges they were facing in navigating departmental contacts and noted that enquiries often required engagement with multiple officers across different departments, with limited coordination and visibility of similar requests raised by other Members. The Assistant Town Clerk responded that the proposed approach sought to address these issues by introducing a more centralised point of access, whereby enquiries could be directed automatically to the appropriate service area. This could include the use of shared or generic contact points to improve continuity and reduce delays in responding to Member enquiries. It was further noted that improved handling of enquiries could support the capture of data on the types and volume of requests received, providing greater insight into demand as well as the 'invisible' workload associated with casework.

A Member voiced concerns regarding the accessibility of the City Corporation's website, noting difficulties in locating relevant contact information. The Assistant Town Clerk confirmed that this would be considered as part of the ongoing work.

9. **MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Town Clerk which provided an update on Member Learning and Development activity delivered since February 2026 under the rolling programme of training events.

The Sub-Committee was advised that sessions relating to the research into the City Corporation's historic links to the Transatlantic Slave Trade (TTEAP) had been rescheduled and would now take place following the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 9 July. A Member expressed concern regarding the

revised timing, noting that the original intention had been for the training to take place in advance of the Committee's discussions, and that delivering it afterwards could limit Members' shared understanding of sensitive issues, including appropriate terminology and context.

Members were further informed that a draft evaluation form had been circulated to the Sub-Committee for comment, and feedback was invited on its usability and content. In response, a Member suggested that training sessions would benefit from clearly stated objectives and summary bullet points in advance, with evaluation questions more closely aligned to those objectives in order to provide more meaningful feedback. Officers agreed that this was a helpful suggestion.

A Member, also the Chair of EEDI Sub-Committee, expressed their appreciation to the facilitators of recent EEDI training sessions, noting that they had been well attended and had facilitated positive and constructive discussion.

RESOLVED, that Members;

- Noted the report and its contents.

10. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE**
No questions were raised.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**
There was none.

12. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
RESOLVED, That - under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

13. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
RESOLVED, that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2025 be approved as a correct record.

14. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**
There were no non-public questions.

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There were discussions around Member roles and responsibilities, Member cyber security training compliance, related party transactions and privileges of past Members.

The meeting ended at 3.25 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Isaac Thomas, Member Services Officer
isaac.thomas@cityoflondon.gov.uk

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Member Development & Standards Sub Committee	**Date:** 15 October 2026
Subject: Annual Report of the Panel of Independent Persons	**Public report:** For Decision
This proposal: • **delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes**	All
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Yes
If so, how much?	c.£15,000
What is the source of Funding?	To be agreed with Chamberlain's Department should MDSSC be supportive
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	See above
Report of:	Town Clerk
Report author:	Kate Doidge, Town Clerk's Department

Summary

This annual report presents activity undertaken by the Panel of Independent Persons in relation to both Complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct and applications for dispensation since June 2025. This report has been placed by the Town Clerk's office in the usual format, in order to facilitate submission to the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee ahead of its presentation to the Court of Common Council, where it will need to go as a report of the Policy and Resources Committee given that neither the Panel nor the Sub-Committee have any direct reporting mechanism.

This report also contains details of the Panel's recent recruitment activity and a proposal on the terms of office of the Independent Persons. Further, with the costs associated with the ongoing administration of the process having been calculated, an associated request to Members for an allocated budget for Standards-related activities is also incorporated.

Recommendation(s)

Members of the Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee are asked to:

1. Note the activity undertaken by the Panel of Independent Persons since June 2025.
2. Consider the request to amend the terms of office of Independent Persons to two terms of four years, with a maximum of two terms being served (applicable from the 2026 recruitment cohort onwards), and make recommendations to Policy & Resources Committee thereon.
3. Consider the proposal to extend the terms of Independent Persons Amanda Orchard, Rahul Sinha, Amina Hossain, and Karen McArthur, as set out in paragraphs 11 – 24 of the report, and make recommendations to Policy & Resources Committee thereon.
4. Consider the request for an allocated budget for Standards-related activities (c.£15,000), as set out in paragraphs 25 - 33, and make recommendations to Policy & Resources Committee thereon.

Main Report

Background

1. The Panel of Independent Persons (The Panel) was initially established by the City of London Corporation (the City Corporation) by way of Court of Common Council Resolution on 14 January 2021. This was following an independent Governance Review of the City Corporation, which proposed the establishment of an Independent Panel composed only of independent persons (convening as smaller sub-Panels of three), to receive allegations of misconduct under the Code of Conduct, determine whether to investigate, present findings to the Court, and hear any appeal. The Panel also has responsibility for making recommendations as to whether or not dispensations should be granted or refused.

2. The Panel was formally established in July 2021, initially consisting of nine members, with a further three members approved in October 2023, to bring the Panel to a total of twelve to ensure that adequate panel members were available to cover all necessary stages of a complaint noting that no one Independent Person may sit on more than one stage of the same complaint, but also to take into account availability and any potential conflicts of interest.

3. Details of all current members of the Panel can be found at Appendix 1. The Panel's current terms of reference are attached at Appendix 2 of this report, drafted by the Panel and subsequently received by the Court in October 2022.

4. Following a successful recruitment round, four new Independent Persons were appointed to the Panel in March 2026, and the Panel now sits at its full complement of twelve Independent Persons. The Panel have recognised the need for a healthy turnover, also noting that the recruitment activity was a resource-intensive process. At present, there are six Independent Persons who are due to complete their term limits in 2028, with an additional two in 2029.

Thus, the Panel have proposed an extension of up to two years for four of its current members, in order to better manage recruitment and to ensure that it retains the knowledge and expertise of its current membership, supporting those newly appointed members. This proposal is further discussed at paragraphs 11 – 24.

5. Related, the Panel request to amend its terms of reference, so that all appointments are for terms of four years, with a maximum of two terms being served. This is a maximum of eight years. This is discussed at paragraphs 11 - 16.

6. This report also contains a request for an allocated budget for Standards-related activities going forward. At present, there is no allocated budget, notwithstanding the legal obligation on the City Corporation to have in place and maintain a standards regime and the unavoidable costs associated therewith. In recent years, costs have been met by underspends or vacancy factors within the Deputy Town Clerk's budget in-year; the increasing costs mean that this is no longer sustainable, nor is it prudent budget management. This request is further discussed at paragraphs 25 – 33.

7. This report is being used by the Panel as the means of communicating its activity and the activity of all Assessment, Hearing, Appeal and Dispensations Sub-panels called to sit during the period June 2025 to September 2026.

Current Position

Operation of the Panel

8. The Panel operates within the framework of its terms of reference, and all Panel members agree to follow the Nolan Principles and also the Code of Conduct in place for members and co-opted members of the Corporation. Each of the Panel members Register of Interests can be found online. Robert Coyle has served as Chair since June 2025, with Tom Ketteley serving as Deputy Chair during this same period.

9. In terms of its own governance, the full Panel has met nine times since it was established and each of these meetings have been quorate within the terms of reference set, with agendas for these meetings approved by the Chair. These are distinct from those required for the Panel to formal consider complaints (i.e., Assessment, Hearing and Appeal Sub-Panels). At these meetings, the Panel regularly review its Terms of Reference to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. The Panel also take the opportunity to share best practice and undertake training relevant to their roles at full meetings. The Panel regularly review the Complaints Procedure as matters arise from time to time via its operation, such as if circumstances may be encountered which had not been envisaged at the time the Complaints Procedure was drafted. In these circumstances, where appropriate, the Panel uses these meetings to consider whether amendments are required and if so, make recommendations to the City Corporation. The Panel currently arranges an annual meeting, with any further meetings arranged to suit organisational requirements. The most recent meeting was held in September 2026.

10. Administrative and legal support to the Panel and all sub-panels is provided through the Town Clerk's Department, and Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department, respectively. Where there may be a perception that the Monitoring Officer's team might be in any way conflicted, or it is otherwise considered beneficial to obtain independent legal advice, external Counsel are called upon to assist the Panel.

Independent Person Terms of Office

11. The Panel had previously agreed that Independent Persons should 'rotate off' to allow for new recruitment. At the end of 2025, two Independent Persons retired from the Panel, and that, together with two pre-existing vacancies, meant that four new Independent Persons were recruited and appointed in 2026.

12. It became clear that the recruitment activity was a resource-intensive process, taking much longer than originally planned given the diaries involved and the number of applications on this occasion – commencing in summer 2025, with the appointment by Court of Common Council unable to take place until March 2026. The feedback from the Recruitment Panel was it would not recommend annual recruitment exercises given the amount of time required and difficulties with aligning diaries to allow time for shortlisting and interviews.

13. Whilst there is no desire to cease the 'rotate off' position, the Panel are keen to put in place term expiry dates to allow time to properly plan recruitment and allow for a year in-between recruitment exercises given current resource capacity.

14. The terms of reference of the Panel state that all appointments are for terms of up to two years, with a maximum of three terms being served. The Panel request to amend the terms of reference, so that now all appointments are for terms of four years, with a maximum of two terms being served. This is a maximum of eight years. This change is to increase the time in-between recruitment activity, allow for a longer training period (particularly if any Panel member should wish to also serve as Chair or Deputy Chair), and the sharing of knowledge and experience between newer and older Independent Persons. It also mirrors the governance arrangements previously in place for Independent Persons appointed by the then Standards Committee.

15. A tracked changes version of the terms of reference can be found at Appendix 2.

16. Members are therefore asked to consider whether is wishes to amend the terms of office for Independent Persons, as described above.

17. It is proposed that the above change only apply from the Independent Persons who were appointed in 2026 onwards. This means that their second term of office would end in 2034.

18. The Court of Common Council resolved, in October 2022, to extend the term of the Independent Persons sat on the Panel at the time by one year to allow them to begin to oversee the operation of the Complaints Process that they had

worked up and to allow them to have adequate time to reflect upon and share any lessons learned.

19. At present, there are therefore six existing Independent Persons who are shortly due to complete their six-year (plus one-year extension) limit in 2028:
    - Miranda Carruthers-Watt
    - Robert Coyle
    - Tom Ketteley
    - Amanda Orchard
    - Rahul Sinha
    - Atiyyah Younis

20. Should all the above Independent Persons retire in 2028, this would be a loss of a valuable source of knowledge and experience (50% of the existing Panel in one wave). Further, there are two Independent Persons who are due to retire in 2029:
    - Amina Hossain
    - Karen McArthur

21. Whilst this is a much smaller number than the first cohort, this would still be a loss of valuable sources of knowledge and experience, especially if six new Independent Persons are recruited in only the previous year. Further, if resource remains as is, which is likely, it will require consecutive years of a resource-intensive recruitment process, which may not be the best use of the Corporation's resources.

22. To better manage and stagger the 'rotate off' approach, in line with good governance, the Panel therefore recommends an extension to the terms of some of the above-mentioned Independent Persons. The recommendation is summarised below.

    For those Independent Persons due to end their terms of office in 2028:

    (i) 4 retire from the Panel in 2028, as previously planned. (Robert Coyle[1]; Miranda Carruthers-Watt; Atiyyah Younis and Tom Ketteley)

    (ii) 2 extend their terms by <u>two</u> years, to retire in 2030. (Amanda Orchard, Rahul Sinha)

    For those Independent Persons due to end their terms of office in 2029:

    (iii) 2 (i.e., both) extend by <u>one</u> year, to retire in 2030 (Amina Hossain; Karen McArthur).

    For those Independent Persons due to end their terms of office in 2034:

    (iv) The term limit is proposed to remain in line with the new term limits agreed by the Panel (two terms of four years), with these Independent Persons retiring in 2034 (Alison Abu; Aaqil Ahmed; Patrick Hodson; Christopher Lake).

[1] Note: Robert Coyle has indicated that he shall retire from the Panel at the end of 2026 but is listed here for illustrative purposes. Officers shall consider how to manage this vacancy in the interim, which could include holding the vacancy until the next planned round of recruitment in 2028.

23. To have confirmed dates for Independent Persons retiring from the Panel this far in advance would greatly assist in managing future recruitment activity. It would also assist in enabling the review of the two-year terms described in the terms of reference; so that, should an Independent Person wish to retire earlier than their maximum term limit, this vacancy can be incorporated into the next planned round of recruitment, rather than undertaking a recruitment round on an exceptional basis.

24. Members are asked to consider and discuss firstly whether it agrees to amend the terms of office of an Independent Person to terms of four years, with a maximum of two terms being served (applicable from the 2026 cohort onwards), and second, if it wishes to recommend to the Court of Common Council an extension of terms of Amanda Orchard, Rahul Sinha, Amina Hossain, and Karen McArthur.

Budget

25. At present, there is no allocated budget for Standards-related activities. Costs have historically been met in-year from the Deputy Town Clerk's local risk budget and managed locally by ensuring off-setting savings can be utilised (for example, through underspends or monies available through vacancy factors).

26. However, given the uncontrollable nature of the expenditure (i.e., there is no discretion as to whether or not to process complaints made under the Code in accordance with its provisions, and the fees to the Independent Persons and for legal support are fixed), local risk allocation is neither appropriate, nor is it sustainable as standards activity continues to expand and associated cost pressures grow.

27. Across 2024 to present, cumulative costs for various Standards-related activities were as follows:

    - Independent Person Claims (Day Rate and/or other Expenses) – approx. £10,000
    - External Third-Party Mediation – approx. £5,000
    - External Legal Counsel – approx. £5,500
    - Recruitment Activity Costs – approx. £3,000

28. This is an average cost of approximately £12,000 per year. This is inevitably a snapshot of costs.

29. Further, in September 2025, Policy & Resources Committee agreed an uplift to the day rate of Independent Persons, from £300 to £325. This will have an impact on costs.

30. Whilst it is impossible to accurately predict the number of complaints that will be received each year, it is unlikely that these costs will reduce. The Panel continues to encourage the use of informal resolution mechanisms (where appropriate) which has reduced the number of complaints received through formal processes (resulting in savings in day rate and travel expense claims and legal costs).

However, this requires the consent of both parties. In addition, when external third-party mediation is considered the most appropriate route for both parties, this still has a financial cost that has no allocated budget to meet it.

31. Good governance is for the Panel to have a healthy turnover of membership, with further recruitment activity anticipated in the near future as discussed earlier in this report, there shall be financial costs (such as for adverts, etc.). Again, there is no allocated budget to meet these anticipated costs.

32. Members are therefore requested to consider whether they wish to allocate a specific budget to meet costs relating standards-related activities. Based on average costs, it is suggested that this be c.£15,000 per annum. There are various funding mechanisms to be explored, which shall be discussed with Chamberlain's Department if the principle of an allocated budget for standards-related activities be agreed. If agreed, it is suggested that it be monitored and reported as part of the Annual Report going forward.

33. Members are therefore asked to consider and discuss this request. Subject to the views of this Sub-Committee, the report shall then be updated for submission to Policy & Resources Committee.

Matters considered by the Panel from June 2025 – September 2026.

Dispensations

34. The Panel have been asked to make recommendations on two applications for a dispensation in this reporting period. The Panel would like to use this platform to encourage all seeking dispensations to complete the necessary applications in sufficient detail with reference to the guidance provided and in sufficient time so as to enable decisions to be taken.

35. The outcome of the recommendations for all requests for a dispensation are published in the Register of Dispensations online. This also includes the certain types of straightforward requests for a dispensation that are granted by the Town Clerk via delegated authority, and those requests granted under urgency procedures by the Monitoring Officer.

Alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct

36. The Panel has completed its consideration of five complaints in this reporting period, summarised below. Matters that are currently ongoing will be reported once the Complaints Procedure has concluded.

37. In accordance with the Complaints Procedure, the first determination at Assessment must be whether or not a complaint is admissible and meets the following tests:
    (i) It is a complaint against one or more named members of the Corporation;
    (ii) The named member was in office at the time of the alleged conduct and the code of conduct was in force at the time;

(iii) The complaint, if proven, would be a breach of the code of conduct under which the member was operating at the time of the alleged misconduct;
(iv) The complaint is about something that happened or came to light within the last three months, or is connected to alleged misconduct within the last three months, unless there are reasonable grounds for the complaint not having been made within that time period.

If the complaint fails one or more of these tests, it is deemed 'inadmissible' and cannot be investigated as a breach of the code and the complainant will be informed by the Town Clerk that no further action will be taken in respect of this complaint.

38. Should a Member be found in breach of the Code, there are a number of sanctions available to the Panel to recommend. These must be reasonable and proportionate in all of the circumstances. The available sanctions for a breach of the code of conduct are:-
    (i) censure;
    (ii) withdrawal of Corporation hospitality for an appropriate period;
    (iii) removal from one or more committees;
    (iv) other action.

39. There is no power to impose any alternative sanctions, although the willingness of a member to co-operate in the matters listed below may have a bearing on any sanction that is imposed:-
    (i) that the member submits a written apology in a form specified;
    (ii) that the member undertakes specified training;
    (iii) that the member participates in such conciliation as is specified.

Matter No.	***Source of Complaint***	***Alleged breaches of the Code[2]***	***Outcome/Status***
01 – 25	*Officer v. Member*	*C1 – respect; C6 – Use of position; and failing to uphold leadership and accountability of the Seven Principles of Public Life.*	*Resolved via Informal Resolution (externally facilitated) on the agreement of both parties.*
01 – 26	*Member v. Member*	*C2 – bullying, harassment and discrimination.*	*Resolved via Informal Resolution (externally facilitated) on the agreement of both parties.*
02 - 26	*Public v. Member*	*C2 – bullying, harassment and discrimination; and failing*	*Complaint was deemed not*

[2] Where the specific provisions of the Code that had allegedly been breached were not specified by the complainant, this table has been populated based on the contents of the complaint. This is simply to indicate themes.

		to uphold integrity and honesty of the Seven Principles of Public Life.	*admissible at Assessment.*
03 – 26	*Public v. Member*	*Failing to uphold objectivity, integrity, accountability, openness, leadership and selflessness of the Seven Principles of Public Life.*	*Assessment ruled no further action be taken.*
04 – 26	*Officer v. Member*	*C2 – bullying, harassment and discrimination; C5 – disrepute.*	*Resolved via Informal Resolution (internally facilitated) on the agreement of both parties.*

40. The Panel therefore completed its consideration of five complaints in this reporting period. One was deemed inadmissible, one was decided to have no further action taken, none were upheld with a sanction, and three were resolved via informal resolution.

41. Informal resolution mechanisms (external or internal mediation if agreeable to all parties) continue to be encouraged through the Complaints Procedure, which includes the strong expectation that Member-on-Member complainants first explore a resolution through either the Chief Commoner, or the Chair of General Purposes Committee of Aldermen or the Chair of Nominations Committee of Aldermen, at an early stage.

42. Though informal resolution mechanisms are encouraged, if a complaint is considered through the full three-stage process (i.e., Assessment, Hearing and Appeal Sub-Panels), it is still considered necessary for the full Panel to comprise of twelve Independent Persons, in order for adequate panel members to be available to cover all necessary stages of a complaint noting that no one Independent Person may sit on more than one stage of the same complaint, but also to take into account availability and any potential conflicts of interest.

43. Members are asked to note this information and recommend it onwards to the Court of Common Council.

Conclusion

44. Over the almost five-year period that the Panel has been active, a number of matters have been considered as part of the formal Complaints Procedure, the latest of which have been presented in this report.

45. The Panel's continued aim is for the complaints procedure they operate to be effective and efficient, accessible and widely understood by both members of the public and members of the Corporation alike.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Panel Membership and Terms of Appointment
- Appendix 2 – Panel Terms of Reference (Tracked Changes)

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Appendix 1

PANEL MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

The current Independent Panel Members are:

Name	Appointment Date	Term Expiry
Alison Abu	Appointed 2026	2034
Aaqil Ahmed	Appointed 2026	2034
Miranda Carruthers-Watt*	Appointed 2021	2028
Robert Coyle*	Chair Appointed 2021	2028
Patrick Hodson	Appointed 2026	2034
Amina Hossain^	Appointed 2023	2030
Tom Ketteley*	Deputy Chair Appointed 2021	2028
Christopher Lake	Appointed 2026	2034
Karen McArthur^	Appointed 2023	2030
Amanda Orchard*^	Appointed 2021	2030
Rahul Sinha*^	Appointed 2021	2030
Atiyyah Younis*	Appointed 2021	2028

** = denotes Independent Persons whose terms of office were agreed to be extended by one year by way of resolution of the Court of Common Council in October 2022*

^ = denotes Independent Person whose term expiry is subject to the agreement of Court of Common Council extending their term of office.

Appendix 2

PANEL OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

Terms of Reference

Functions and Authority of the Panel

The Independent Persons Panel (the Panel) was established by the City of London Corporation Court of Common Council (the Corporation) by way of Court of Common Council Resolution on 14 January 2021.

The purpose and powers of the Panel is to establish and administer a Complaints Process and to also deal with the granting of Dispensations (the Scheme).

The Panel is to independently consider complaints made by anyone against an elected or co-opted member of the Corporation.

The Panel will also consider granting Dispensations for Members to participate in a particular item of business at a City Corporation meeting where a disclosable pecuniary interest exists that must be disclosed, relating to in any matter that is being considered.

The Panel has authority to develop the Policy on the process for dealing with complaints referring to any Sanctions that may be applied. The Panel is also authorised to consider Dispensations under the Scheme.

The Panel is responsible for providing from its membership, the persons to form Assessment, Hearing and Appeal Sub-panels, required to investigate and consider complaints, by informal and/or formal process under the Scheme.

The Panel considers all complaints referred to the Scheme and where formal process is followed will recommend to the Corporation the final outcome for approval. The Panel also issues the deciding determination on dispensation applications.

The Panel is responsible for developing a Policy for Publication of the outcomes of complaints, as recommended to the Corporation.

Membership

The Panel is formed of up to twelve members in total, comprised of all independent members.

All Panel members agree to follow the Nolan Principles and also the Code of Conduct in place for members and co-opted members of the Corporation.

The Panel will maintain a Register of Interests for all independent members which will be published on the City Corporation's Library webpages and updated regularly.

Independent panel members are selected by the Corporation. ~~All appointments are for terms of up to two years, with a maximum of three terms being served~~. All appointments are for terms of up to four years, with a maximum of two terms being served.

Chair and Deputy Chair

The members of the Panel shall elect one of its members as Chair, and another member as Deputy Chair, both for a period of 12 months which can be renewed for a maximum of up to 36 months

Where the Chair is not present at a meeting, or is conflicted, the Deputy Chair will take the Chair for the meeting or for any conflicted item

Quorum, Frequency and Records of Panel Meetings

The Panel quorum is five.

The Panel will as standard meet annually each municipal year, but meetings may be cancelled or called more frequently if required.

The Panel shall hold additional meetings as required to deal with any business arising at the request of the Executive of the Corporation or at the request of two members of the Panel.

At least three weeks' notice of the time, date and venue of each Panel meeting shall be provided to all members. All relating paperwork will be issued to all no later than five clear working days before each meeting wherever possible.

It is acceptable for routine business to be conducted electronically.

The Secretariat of the Corporation will prepare minutes and provide each member with a copy. Such minutes will be reviewed at the next meeting and, subject to any amendment, agreed and will be signed by the Chair. The amendment of minutes shall not affect the validity of decisions taken by the panel in the meeting to which the minutes relate.

Duties

The Panel is responsible for establishing and maintaining a Complaints Process and applying the Sanctions Policy, both of which should be reviewed regularly

The Panel is also responsible for considering applications for dispensations submitted by Members.

The complaints process and any guidance will be available to all who want to make a complaint.

The Dispensations form and related guidance will be available to all who wish to submit an application for consideration.

The Panel, and its Sub-panels, are to have regard to the Complaints Process; any Sanctions specified in legislation or in any Sanctions Policy; the Policy and Guidance on the granting of dispensations under the Localism Act 2011; and the Members Code of Conduct when dealing with any complaints or dispensation requests before it.

All formal complaints and/or appeal recommendations will be referred to the Corporation for oversight approval. After the matter has been addressed by the Corporation the outcome will be published where the process requires this.

A recommendation or other outcome at any stage of the complaints process, will be recorded in writing and reported to the next full Panel meeting after the end of the full process for that complaint.

All determinations made by the Corporation will also be reported back to the Panel.

The Panel will adhere to best practice in terms of managing data and do so in line with the City of London Corporation Data Subject Rights Policy.

The Panel will produce an Annual Report that will be published.

Sub-Panels

Each Sub-panel will be comprised of up to three persons.

Appointments to Sub-panels will be undertaken on a rota basis. The Panel can select particular members for a complaint to replace any rota allocations, if specific skills are required to deal with a particular complaint. Also allocations should ensure, as far as possible, a mix of persons to each Sub-panel to reflect the range of diversity within the panel.

A panel member cannot be part of more than one Sub-panel for each individual complaint.

Voting mechanism

The Panel or any Sub-panel, may vote on and determine any matter arising at the meeting and each member present at the meeting shall have one vote.

Decisions of the Panel or any Sub-panel shall be by simple majority of the votes cast (excluding any abstentions).

September 2026.

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee – For discussion	**Dated:** 15/10/26
Subject: Members' Learning and Development Update	**Public report:** For Discussion
This proposal: • **delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes** • **provides business enabling functions**	Diverse Engaged Communities
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Report author:	Isaac Thomas, Town Clerk's Department

Summary

This report provides the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee with an update on the rolling themes within the 2026/27 Member Learning and Development Programme, including the modules and learning opportunities offered to date. It also invites Members to suggest topics and modules for future delivery and provides an update on recent developments to the Members' Portal.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the update on the modules and learning opportunities provided to date; and
- Provide a steer on upcoming rolling programme themes and other training opportunities.

Main Report

Background

1. The Member Learning and Development Strategy 2025–2029, approved on 9 December 2025, established a rolling programme of development opportunities organised around quarterly themes.

2. The agreed themes for 2026/27 are:

Quarter	Period	Theme/Focus
Q1	April–June 2026	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Q2	July–September 2026	Leadership Skills
Q3	October–December 2026	Health, Safety & Wellbeing
Q4	January–March 2027	Data and Information

3. In addition to the quarterly themed programme, a number of ad hoc training opportunities have been provided to Members and are also covered in this report.

Quarter 1: Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (April-June 2026)

4. The quarterly theme delivered between April and June 2026 focused on Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI). The programme comprised three all-Member sessions offered in a hybrid format:

   - **Members and Legal EEDI Obligations**, covering the Members' Code of Conduct, discrimination and the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty and relevant legislative developments;

   - **Managing Bias with Cultural Intelligence**, covering how bias can form and operate and how Cultural Intelligence can help manage bias; and

   - **Engaging with Businesses and Workers in Your Ward**, providing an overview of the City Belonging Project and the City Corporation's worker engagement initiative.

5. More detailed attendance information and feedback from the sessions are provided at Appendix 1. Session materials and recordings, where possible, have also been made available through the Member Learning and Development section of the Members' Portal.

6. Feedback and lessons from the quarter will be used to develop and tailor the next EEDI-themed programme, scheduled for April to June 2027. Members are invited to provide any further insight, including requests for particular EEDI-related subjects or types of learning that they would find beneficial when this subject is revisited next year.

7. In designing the above modules, a significant steer from the EEDI Sub-Committee was that EEDI considerations should be embedded across the wider Member Learning and Development Programme rather than addressed solely

through the dedicated quarterly theme. Accordingly, the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee were invited to apply an EEDI lens to all learning opportunities, including consideration of accessibility, equality of access, inclusive content and delivery, and the differing needs of Members and the communities they represent.

8. A report considered by the EEDI Sub-Committee on 30 September 2026 titled 'Member Training and Development Progress Update' is attached as a background paper, for this Sub-Committee's reference. The report reviews participation and feedback from the three all-Member sessions and considers lessons and potential priorities to take forward in future Member EEDI learning and development.

9. A short note on the discussion held at EEDI Sub-Committee on 30 September in relation to Member Learning and Development, is provided below:

   - Members discussed Diversity Networks and initiatives, providing the suggestion that relevant information and links to resources could be added to the Members' Portal.
   - The Committee discussed the effectiveness of in-person versus hybrid training, with a view that face-to-face sessions can be particularly valuable when covering sensitive EEDI topics. Concerns were raised about low attendance and how to encourage greater participation in voluntary training.
   - Members considered the challenge of ensuring that training reaches those who would most benefit from it, particularly decision-makers, and reflected on how to increase engagement with important but non-mandatory learning opportunities.
   - It was noted that the EEDI training attendance compared favourably with some other Member training.
   - Alternative learning formats were discussed, including the use of podcasts and other flexible, on-demand resources which Members could engage with at a time convenient to them. While these formats may improve accessibility, it was observed that they do not always provide the same opportunities for discussion and reflection as in-person sessions.
   - Members agreed on the importance of clearly communicating the purpose and benefits of training, helping Members understand what they will gain from attending and improving take-up.
   - Members discussed e-learning and how the use of certificates can encourage participation.
   - Concerns were raised about the volume of invitations and briefings received by Members. It was suggested that officers should continue to review proposed training and briefing activity, clearly indicating what is essential, recommended, or optional, to help Members prioritise their time effectively.

Quarter 2: Leadership Skills (July-September 2026)

10. The quarterly theme for July to September 2026 was 'Leadership Skills'. In liaison with the City Corporation's Human Resources Learning & Organisational

Development team, the following short e-learning modules were identified and promoted to Members:

Module	Format	Duration	What the module covers
Managing Conflict	Online	30 minutes	Explains how to manage workplace conflict effectively and professionally, avoid friction and damage to team spirit, diagnose causes of conflict, resolve disagreements and restore unity. It also considers how well-managed conflict can support growth and innovation.
Handling Questions	Online	18 minutes	Explores how questions can help tailor a presentation to an audience's needs. Covers encouraging questions, preparing for them and responding effectively and confidently.
Having Difficult Conversations	Online	30 minutes	Explores how to approach challenging conversations with confidence and clarity, understand what makes them difficult, use practical strategies, communicate clearly and listen actively. It also covers overcoming challenges, offering support and keeping discussions productive.
Effective Delegation	Online	30 minutes	Covers how to hand over responsibility for a task while ensuring the person receiving it is set up to succeed. It aims to help learners use their time effectively and empower others to take on additional responsibilities and opportunities with confidence.
Communicating to Influence	Online	30 minutes	Covers listening and questioning skills, understanding body language, building rapport and trust, and communicating messages clearly to influence others.
Change Management: Dealing with Change	Online	15 minutes	Supports individuals to become more comfortable and confident with organisational change, play a positive role in implementing and supporting change, and make the most of opportunities arising from it.
Change Management: Change Leadership	Online	30 minutes	Builds on the principles of dealing positively with change and focuses on the skills and confidence needed to lead others through change initiatives.
Achieving Objectives and Delivering Results	Online	12 minutes	Explains the difference between objectives and goals, introduces SMART objectives and explores how to use them effectively.

11. The modules provided flexible development opportunities across conflict management, handling questions and challenging conversations, delegation, influencing, organisational change and objective-setting.

12. Alongside the e-learning modules, Members were signposted to the presentation and recording from the ‘Chairing City Corporation Committees’ training delivered on 27 November 2025 by the Deputy Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk. These resources were also added to the dedicated Leadership Skills page on the Members’ Portal.

13. The session was designed for current and aspiring Chairs and focused on the responsibilities and expectations associated with chairing City Corporation committees. It covered:

    - the Chair’s role within the City Corporation’s governance arrangements;
    - routes to becoming a Chair and developing relevant experience;
    - agenda planning, work programmes, report commissioning and callovers;
    - managing meetings, debate and procedural requirements;
    - delegated decisions, briefings and liaison with officers between meetings;
    - presenting committee business and responding to questions at the Court of Common Council; and
    - time commitments, external responsibilities, succession planning and effective handovers.

14. A dedicated Leadership Skills page was created on the Members’ Portal, bringing together the available e-learning modules, recordings, presentations, guidance and supporting resources in one accessible location.

15. Relevant Local Government Association training materials and webpages for committee Chairs were also circulated and added to the Members’ Portal. Together, these resources provide Members with continuing access to practical guidance on the responsibilities associated with chairing committees.

16. Due to capacity constraints, it was not possible to provide tailored, in-person sessions as part of the Leadership Skills quarter in 2026/27. However, we are pleased to report that a new PA and Member Services Officer was successfully recruited and joined the team in September 2026. This additional resource will provide valuable capacity to support the coordination, promotion and delivery of Member Learning and Development activities, helping to ensure that future learning opportunities are increasingly tailored to Members' needs and interests.

17. The previous modules delivered in 2023/24 under the Leadership Skills Quarter are summarised at Appendix 2 for your reference. Members are invited to review these previous learning opportunities and provide feedback on their value and relevance, including whether any of the sessions should be repeated or refreshed in 2027, and to suggest any additional subjects, skills, or delivery formats they would like to see incorporated into the Leadership Skills theme for 2027/28.

Ad-Hoc Training

18. Since the last meeting of this Sub-Committee, several ad-hoc training opportunities have been provided:

Emergency Planning and Major Incident Planning (July 2026)

19. A hybrid all-Member training session on Emergency Planning and Major Incident Planning was delivered on 2 July 2026 and was attended by 18 Members (2 in person and 14 online).

20. While a recording of the session was not circulated due to the ever-changing nature of Major Incident Planning and the risk of outdated information being relied upon, the City of London Risk Register and other documents were shared with Members and added to the Members' Portal.

21. The aim of the session was to equip Members with the knowledge to help the City of London prepare for and respond to emergencies. The learning outcomes were to enable Members to:

    - explain the threats and hazards facing the Square Mile;
    - understand how the City Corporation prepares for and responds to emergencies;
    - support communities as Members during an emergency; and
    - interact effectively with City Corporation response structures.

Digital Services All-Member Session: Microsoft CoPilot

22. A learning session entitled "Microsoft Copilot: Tips and General Use 101" was delivered on behalf of the Chairman of Digital Services Committee on 23 July 2026 by Ashlee Barnard, Head of Digital Solutions. This session was in-person only and was attended by 13 Members.

23. The session provided a practical introduction to Microsoft Copilot and demonstrated how it could support everyday tasks across Microsoft 365. Content included key features, useful prompts and examples of how Copilot could support productivity, save time and assist Members in working with information. Time was also provided for questions on specific use cases.

24. The session was suitable both for Members new to Copilot and those who had begun using it.

25. Further dedicated CoPilot session are due to be delivered as part of the pilot scheme.

Proactive Personal Security Briefings for Elected Members

26. The City of London Police delivered a series of proactive personal security briefings for elected Members on 28 July, 4 August, 11 August and 18 August 2026. Delivered by a Counter Terrorism Security Adviser via Microsoft Teams, the sessions were designed to raise awareness of the evolving threats faced by those serving in public office and to provide practical guidance on personal security, vigilance and protective security measures. The briefings were offered proactively, rather than in response to any specific threat, and were overseen through established CONTEST governance arrangements.

27. Members were provided with practical advice and signposted to a range of national resources, including ProtectUK guidance, Cyber Griffin, National Cyber Security Centre materials, personal security guidance for councillors, and the Local Government Association's Seven Principles for Safer Canvassing.

28. The sessions align with the proposed Quarter 3: Health, Safety and Wellbeing theme and provide a useful foundation for future learning opportunities relating to personal safety, lone working, online intimidation, canvassing, constituency engagement and other Member-facing security considerations.

Current Position

Proposals for Quarter 3: Health, Safety and Wellbeing (October-December 2026):

29. The Quarter 3 Health, Safety and Wellbeing theme will run from October to December 2026.

30. Members are invited to provide feedback on the proposed sessions set out below, including their relevance and suitability, and to suggest any additional topics, learning opportunities or delivery formats that they would like to see incorporated within this theme.

Preventing Harassment Training (SAP e-learning module)

- Date: Available to complete at any time
- Format: SAP e-module
- Presenter: N/A
- Recorded: No
- Cost: Free (in-house)
- Content: Responsibilities for preventing bullying, harassment and sexual harassment, fostering a positive culture, recognising warning signs, responding to concerns, supporting individuals and managing workplace risks. This is a new module that has recently been developed by the Learning & Organisational Development Team.

Further E-Modules available in-house

- Date: To be confirmed
- Format: E-learning
- Presenter: N/A
- Recorded: No
- Cost: Free (in-house)
- Content: Available modules include: mindfulness, stress awareness, avoiding burnout, .

In-House Health, Safety and Wellbeing Training Session

- Date: November 2026 (TBC)

- Format: Hybrid (Committee Rooms/Teams)
- Presenter: Learning and Organisational Development Team and Health and Safety Director
- Recorded: Yes
- Cost: Free (in-house)
- Proposed Content (TBC and subject to feedback):
  - Wellbeing support available to Members.
  - The City Corporation's People Strategy and wellbeing priorities.
  - Health and safety at the City Corporation and Members' role and responsibilities.
  - Personal safety and safe working practices.
  - Resilience, stress management and maintaining a healthy workload balance.
  - Promoting a positive, respectful and inclusive Member/committee culture.

In-House Police Safety Session

- Date: To be confirmed
- Format: Hybrid (Committee Rooms/Teams)
- Presenter: City of London Police Authority
- Recorded: Yes
- Cost: Free (in-house)
- Proposed content: Practical personal safety and security guidance for Members.

Staying Safe in Person as a Councillor

- Date: 4 November 2026, 2.00pm-3.30pm
- Format: Microsoft Teams
- Presenter: Local Government Association
- Recorded: No (slides provided)
- Cost: Free
- Content: This event, funded by Government, has been specially devised for councillors who want to improve their awareness of personal safety, either because they are new to the role or want to refresh their knowledge and procedures. Built specifically around the unique role of the elected member, the session will centre on practical advice and guidance. Included within the webinar is advice on surgeries, canvassing, home visits, lone working, public meetings and de-escalation.

Staying Safe Online as a Councillor

- Date: 18 November 2026, 2.00pm-3.30pm
- Format: Microsoft Teams
- Presenter: Local Government Association
- Recorded: No (slides provided)
- Cost: Free
- Content: This event, funded by Government, has been specially devised for councillors who want to improve their awareness of

handling threats and harassment online and how to engage safely in the digital world. Built specifically around the unique role of the elected member, the session will centre on practical advice and guidance. Included within the webinar is advice on moderation tools, settings, techniques for handling harassment, de-escalation and reporting channels.

Councillor Confidence: Building Self-Belief Beyond the Mask

- Date: 10 December 2026, 1.00pm-2.30pm
- Format: Microsoft Teams
- Presenter: Local Government Association
- Recorded: No (slides provided)
- Cost: Free
- Content: Building confidence, resilience and self-awareness, managing self-doubt, developing practical coping techniques and strengthening personal effectiveness in the Member role.

31. **Invitation to Health and Wellbeing Board – 18 November 2026**
Following positive feedback on the Suicide Prevention session delivered as part of the 2025 Member Induction Programme, the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board has extended an invitation to all Members of the Court to attend the upcoming Health and Wellbeing Board on 18 November 2026, which will include an update on suicide prevention. This is intended to provide Members with a useful introduction to the subject, with the potential for further Member-focused training and resources to be developed thereafter.

32. Appendix 2 sets out the learning opportunities provided under this theme in previous years, and Members are invited to comment on whether any of these should be repeated or refreshed.

33. Previous Local Government Association health, safety and wellbeing resources have also been added to the Members' Portal, providing Members with continuing access to relevant guidance and learning materials.

Quarter 4 -Data and Information (January–March 2027)

34. Members are invited to discuss topics that could be incorporated into Quarter 4 - Data and Information (January–March 2027), to help ensure that future learning and development opportunities remain relevant, timely and responsive to Members' needs.

Options

35. Members are asked to provide a steer on the recommended learning modules going forward.

Proposals

36. It is proposed that officers proceed with the development and coordination of the Quarter 3 Health, Safety and Wellbeing programme, taking account of the Sub-Committee's feedback on the proposed content, priorities and delivery methods. The programme would combine internally delivered sessions, external learning opportunities and self-directed resources.

37. Feedback from the Sub-Committee, participating Members and relevant service areas will inform future iterations of the rolling programme

Key Data

38. Attendance information, participation data and Member feedback and lessons are provided at Appendix 1.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – The proposals support the Corporate Plan 2024–2029 outcome of Diverse Engaged Communities by helping Members develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required to undertake their civic, representative and governance responsibilities effectively. The rolling programme also supports continuous Member development and access to relevant, timely and inclusive learning opportunities.

Financial implications - There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The proposed internal and external sessions are currently expected to be provided without additional cost.

Resource implications - Coordination and promotion of the programme will be undertaken within existing resources. The appointment of the new PA and Member Services Officer provides additional capacity to support the coordination and delivery of Member learning opportunities.

Legal implications - There are no direct legal implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Risk implications - There are no direct risk implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Equalities implications – There are no direct equalities implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Climate implications - There are no direct climate implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Security implications – There are no direct security implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Conclusion

39. This report has provided the Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee with an update on the rolling themes within the 2026/27 Member Learning and Development Programme.

40. Members are invited to provide feedback on the proposed programme, identify any additional development priorities, and offer a steer on future learning

opportunities to help shape the continued development of the Member Learning and Development Programme and the Members' Portal.

Background Papers

- Report to EEDI Sub-Committee, 30 September 2026: Member Training and Development Progress Update

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Summary of feedback
- Appendix 2 – Table of training provided under rolling themes in 2023-24

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Summary of feedback to training sessions

Appendix 1

Accessing Your Committee Papers Training (29 May and 1 June 2026)
Summary of Feedback for Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee

Feedback forms submitted by three respondents indicated that the training was generally well received and provided practical support in helping Members access and navigate their committee papers.

Key data:

- Two-thirds of respondents rated the session as *very helpful* and one-third as *somewhat helpful*, with no neutral or negative responses recorded.
- The session was particularly valued for resolving individual access issues, introducing the Modern.Gov system, and supporting Members to set up access on personal devices.
- Most respondents reported feeling better equipped to carry out their role following the session, particularly in relation to accessing committee papers more efficiently. However, one response indicated that confidence in fully utilising the system would depend on continued access and ongoing use.
- Confidence levels were mixed, with respondents evenly split between *very confident*, *confident*, and *unconfident*, suggesting that while the session was helpful, some Members may require further support to embed their learning.
- There was clear support for offering the training again. Respondents suggested that future sessions could be refined to improve clarity of demonstrations and would benefit from being offered as refresher sessions, particularly to support Members experiencing ongoing or future access issues.
- Suggestions for further development included follow-up engagement (for example, checking in after several months to assess progress), additional training sessions as required, and broader digital development opportunities, including learning on emerging tools such as artificial intelligence.
- Additional feedback highlighted the value of one-to-one support alongside group sessions.
- Overall, the feedback indicates that the training was effective in addressing immediate access needs and supporting digital capability, with further opportunities to provide ongoing support to Members.

Responses:

1. Overall, how helpful did you find this training session?

- Very helpful (2 responses)
- Somewhat helpful (1 response)
- No neutral or negative responses recorded

2. What aspects of the session were most and least effective, and why?

- Helpful in resolving individual access issues.
- Supported initial setup and introduction to the Modern.Gov system.

- Demonstrated system capabilities effectively.
- Some difficulty noted with the clarity and pace of the app demonstration.

3. Following this training, do you feel better equipped to fulfil your responsibilities as a Member?

- Most respondents felt better equipped.
- Improved ability to access committee papers more efficiently.
- One respondent noted that effectiveness depends on continued successful access and use of the system.

4. How confident do you feel in applying what you have learned?

- Very confident (1 response)
- Confident (1 response)
- Unconfident (1 response)
- Mixed confidence levels, indicating a need for further support for some Members.

5. Should this training be offered again in the future?

- All respondents supported offering the training again.
- Suggestions included refresher sessions and improvements to delivery based on feedback.

6. Do you have any suggestions for further learning or development arising from this session?

- Follow-up sessions to review progress after implementation (e.g. after several months).
- Additional training where required.
- Interest in wider digital development, including AI-related sessions.

7. Are there any additional comments, observations, or suggestions?

- One-to-one support was highlighted as particularly valuable.

Members' Equalities Law Training (1 June 2026)

Summary of Feedback for Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee

- Feedback received from six respondents indicated that the training session was well received and broadly effective in supporting Members' understanding of equalities law and their associated responsibilities.
- Overall, all respondents rated the session positively, with no negative feedback recorded. The training was described as clear, well-structured, and appropriately pitched, with several respondents noting that it served as a useful refresher. The legal context and practical framing were particularly valued, contributing to increased reassurance and awareness among Members.

- In terms of the training's delivery, the pace, format, and presentation style were generally regarded as effective. However, some respondents suggested that the session could be enhanced by incorporating a greater variety of delivery methods, including the use of multiple presenters, and allowing more time for discussion of complex issues. There was also interest in incorporating case studies to further illustrate practical challenges and support application of the material.
- Confidence in applying the learning was generally high, although several respondents noted the value of ongoing reinforcement to embed learning over time.
- There was strong support for repeating the training in future. Suggestions included offering the session on a regular basis, with some respondents advocating that it be made mandatory to ensure consistent understanding across the membership. It was also noted that attendance can be self-selecting, with those most engaged more likely to participate.
- Respondents identified several opportunities to build on the session, including refresher training, additional legal content, and more time for discussion.

Responses:

1. Overall, how helpful did you find this training session?

- The training session was perceived as helpful, with 80% rating it as 'Very helpful' and the remaining 20% as 'Somewhat helpful'.

2. What aspects of the session were most and least effective, and why?

- Delivery was generally described as clear, well-paced, and well-presented.
- Content was considered thorough and useful, particularly as a refresher.
- The legal background and practical context were valued.
- Suggestions for improvement included:
    - Having more than one presenter to vary delivery style.
    - Allowing more time for discussion and exploration of complex topics (session was only an hour).
    - Including additional opportunities for interaction.

3. Following this training, do you feel better equipped to fulfil your responsibilities as a Member?

- Most respondents reported feeling better equipped or reassured in their role.
- The session improved awareness, confidence, and understanding of equality law and responsibilities.
- Some noted the content was useful but would benefit from:
    - A concise reminder or reference document.
    - Regular refreshers to reinforce learning.

4. How confident do you feel in applying what you have learned?

- Confidence levels were generally positive, with 60% feeling 'Very confident' and 40% 'Confident'.
- Some respondents indicated a need for reinforcement to build further confidence over time.

5. Should this training be offered again in the future?

- Strong support for repeating the training.
- Several respondents suggested:
    - Making the session mandatory on a regular basis (e.g. annually).
    - Increasing attendance and encouraging wider participation.
- Recognition that those who attend may already be more engaged than those who do not.

6. Do you have any suggestions for further learning or development arising from this session?

- Suggested areas for further development included:
    - Refresher sessions and follow-up workshops.
    - Additional time for discussion and case-based learning.
    - Further legal content and clarification of roles and responsibilities.
    - Guidance on communication, including appropriate language and tone.

7. Are there any additional comments, observations, or suggestions?

- Most respondents provided no additional comments.
- One response expressed appreciation to organisers and presenters.

Member Training on Bias (9 June 2026)

Summary of Feedback for Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee

- Feedback from four respondents indicates a mixed but generally positive view of the training session.
- The facilitators were broadly well received, with most respondents agreeing that they were knowledgeable and engaging. The session was also considered valuable in supporting understanding of cultural intelligence, where the majority of responses were positive.
- However, feedback on the session's impact on understanding of bias was more mixed, with responses spread across positive, neutral, and negative ratings.
- Qualitative feedback highlighted strengths in the overall concept and messaging, However, several areas for improvement were identified. Respondents noted that the content could be more concise and better tailored to Members' needs.
- Suggestions for improvement included reducing reliance on text-heavy slides and ensuring clearer articulation of session objectives. There was also a view that

stronger use of evidence and practical application would enhance the session's impact.
- Respondents also indicated that the training was worthwhile and should be delivered on a recurring basis.
- Overall, the feedback suggests that while the session addressed an important and valued topic, there is scope to strengthen delivery in the next round to maximise its effectiveness for Members.

Responses:

1. The facilitators were knowledgeable and engaging

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neutral (1)
- Overall positive perception of facilitators

2. The session improved my understanding of bias

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (1)
- Neutral (1)
- Disagree (1)
- Mixed views, indicating inconsistency in learning outcomes

3. The session improved my understanding of Cultural Intelligence

- Strongly agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neutral (1)
- No negative responses recorded
- Generally positive impact on understanding

4**. What could be improved?**

- Content could be more concise and less wordy.
- Need for clearer responses to Member questions.

5**. What was the most valuable content?**

- Explanation and promotion of cultural intelligence concepts.
- Recognition and acceptance of difference.
- Opportunity for discussion and reflection.

6**. What was the least valuable content?**

- Overly simplistic visuals.
- Slides containing too much text.
- Desire for more detailed and substantive content.

7**. Any other thoughts or feedback?**

- Suggestion that the session should be delivered regularly (e.g. annually).

Engaging with Businesses and Workers in your Ward (16 June 2026)

Summary of Feedback for Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee

- Three Members provided feedback. Overall, the responses were positive, with two rating the session “Very helpful” and one rating it “Somewhat helpful.”
- Respondents particularly valued the practical ideas, useful information and opportunities for interaction, including advice on engaging businesses, non-voting workers and residents.
- All three respondents supported offering the training again, although suggested frequencies varied between six-monthly, annually and more generally in future.
- Two respondents felt better equipped to fulfil their responsibilities following the training, while one felt their preparedness was broadly unchanged.
- A recurring practical request was for Members to receive the presentation slides and reusable tools or materials following the session.
- As the findings are based on three responses, they provide helpful qualitative feedback but should be treated as indicative rather than representative of all attendees.

1. **How helpful did you find the training session?**

    - Two respondents found the session very helpful, while one found it somewhat helpful.

2. **What aspects were most and least effective, and why?**

    - The most effective elements included information about City Belonging, practical ideas for engaging businesses and workers, and reassurance that Members across different wards faced similar engagement challenges.
    - The balance between information, inspiration and interaction was positively received.

3. **Do you feel better equipped to fulfil your responsibilities as a Member?**

    - Two respondents said the session had better equipped them, particularly by providing practical ideas and highlighting opportunities to work more closely with the City Belonging team.
    - One respondent felt approximately as equipped as before.

4. **How confident do you feel in applying what you learned?**

    - Two respondents reported feeling very confident, while one felt confident.

5. **Should this training be offered again?**

    - All three respondents supported offering the session again.

6. **Suggestions for further learning:**

    - Suggested approaches included a quarterly or six-monthly update, or an annual refresher.

- The online facilitation was also praised, particularly the presenter's efforts to involve and regularly check in with remote participants.
- Respondents requested access to practical tools and materials that could be used when engaging businesses, including the presentation slides. (These were shared on the Portal following the session).

7. Additional comments, observations or suggestions:

- One respondent expressed that they intended to follow up directly with relevant officers about the City Belonging ideas discussed during the session.

Emergency Planning and Major Incident Planning (2 July 2026)

Summary of Feedback for Member Development & Standards Sub-Committee

The session was attended by 18 Members, comprising 16 online attendees and 2 attendees in person. Although no feedback forms were completed, it was well attended and received positive verbal feedback from Members in the room. A Members also contacted officers afterwards to request supporting resources, indicating engagement with the subject matter.

Table detailing training modules provided under rolling L&D themes in 2023-24

Appendix 2

Quarter and period	Theme / focus	Previous session	Date(s)	Aim and delivery	Feedback
Q1: April–June	**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**	**No directly applicable completed session identified**	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Q2: July–September	**Leadership Skills**	**Charitable Responsibilities and Obligations**	Delivered during April–June 2023;	The session aimed to support Members in meeting their charity trustee duties and leadership responsibilities. It provided an overview of charity law, the role of the Charity Commission, and relevant legislation and regulation. It was delivered by the specialist charity law firm Bates Wells, with the question-and-answer session led by Alderman Alison Gowman, drawing on her experience as a charity trustee and former Chair of City Bridge Trust.	The session was described as well attended and received positive feedback.
Q2: July–September	**Leadership Skills**	**Committee Participation Skills**	Delivered during April–June 2023;	The session aimed to help Members participate effectively, collegiately and constructively in decision-making, whether serving as a committee	The previous papers did not record attendance figures or specific participant feedback.

			precise date not stated	member or as a Chair. It was delivered by the Local Government Association.	
Q2: July–September	**Leadership Skills**	**Decision Making and Influencing Change**	13 September 2023	The session aimed to help Members navigate the City Corporation's decision-making processes and become more effective in seeking change. It was delivered in-house by the Town Clerk's Department.	Six Members attended. Feedback was generally positive, with three of four respondents confirming that the intended outcomes had been met. Suggested improvements included using case studies on Standing Orders.
Q2: July–September	**Leadership Skills**	**Chairing in the City**	19 September 2023	The session aimed to explain the specific requirements, responsibilities and time commitments associated with chairing a City Corporation committee. It was delivered in-house by the Town Clerk's department and was intended to complement wider training on meeting participation and decision-making.	Eight Members attended. Feedback on the presentation, content and presenter's knowledge was positive. Attendees suggested that the session should be identified as essential or highly recommended for new and prospective Chairs.
Q2: July–September	**Leadership Skills**	**Member Behaviour, Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Charter**	2 October 2023	The session aimed to raise awareness of the Members' Code of Conduct, the Member/Officer Charter and the legal framework governing the conduct of Members and Co-opted Members. It	Feedback was positive. Suggestions included placing more emphasis on responsibilities relating to charities and outside bodies, circulating slides earlier, and making the training

				was delivered in-house by the Town Clerk's Department.	compulsory following the next Ward elections.
Q2: July–September	**Leadership Skills**	**Speech Writing**	11 October 2023	The session aimed to develop the confidence of Members and Co-opted Members in formulating and writing effective speeches. It was delivered in-house by a senior City Corporation speechwriter and was designed to complement the subsequent practical session on delivering a speech.	The limited feedback received was positive. Participants subsequently supported arranging further speech-writing training.
Q2: July–September	**Leadership Skills**	**Delivering a Speech**	18 October 2023	The session aimed to help Members and Co-opted Members understand and apply the key considerations involved in delivering an effective speech. It was delivered externally by professionals from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and included practical exercises. The recorded cost was £450.	Five participants attended. Participants valued the practical guidance on breathing, preparation, speaking style and defining key objectives. Feedback indicated that in-person attendance was more effective than online participation, and there was strong support for repeating the session and providing additional public-speaking training.
Q2: July–September	**Leadership Skills**	**Corporate Parenting**	14 November 2023	The session aimed to support Members in understanding and discharging the City Corporation's corporate parenting responsibilities.	Six Members attended, comprising five in person and one remotely. The

				The agendas confirmed that it was offered to all Members but did not identify the facilitator or specify whether it was delivered internally or externally.	agenda did not include a separate evaluation or feedback summary.
Q3: October–December	**Health, Safety & Wellbeing**	**Mental Health for City of London Councillors**	11 March 2024	The session aimed to introduce evidence-based techniques for supporting Members' mental health and wellbeing and to consider how local government powers could be used to create mentally healthier circumstances for residents, workers and visitors. It was delivered externally by an experienced former London councillor, Local Government Association Expert Peer and mental health policy specialist. The recorded cost was £1,000.	Respondents described it as informative and worth repeating, with one suggesting that it should be compulsory.
Q3: October–December	**Health, Safety & Wellbeing**	**Health and Safety Governance**	17 May 2024	The session aimed to educate and update Members on discharging their governance responsibilities under health and safety legislation. It was delivered by internally.	All respondents confirmed that the objectives had been met, praised the presenters' knowledge and said that they would recommend the session.

Q4: January–March	**Data and Information**	**IT and Microsoft Office Skills**	18 April and 8 May 2024	The sessions aimed to improve Members' IT skills and confidence in using Microsoft applications, supporting their capacity and productivity. They were delivered in-house and combined presentations, demonstrations, questions and answers, and individual drop-in support.	Six Members attended the first session and two attended the repeat session. Feedback was generally favourable. Respondents requested further sessions, although one felt that frequent individual questions had interrupted the main presentation.
Q4: January–March	**Data and Information**	**Cyber Security**	12 and 13 June 2024	The sessions aimed to raise Members' baseline understanding of cyber security. They covered the psychology and methods of hackers and defenders, examples of modern security breaches, and current advice and insights from industry experts and the National Cyber Security Centre. They were delivered in-house, with input originally scoped from the City of London Police.	Nineteen attendances were recorded across the two sessions, comprising 11 at the first and 8 at the second. Feedback was positive.
Q4: January–March	**Data and Information**	**Civica and the Mod.Gov App**	17 and 25 June 2024	The sessions aimed to introduce Members to the Modern.Gov application and support its practical use through demonstrations, shortcuts	Seventeen attendances were recorded across the two sessions, with the first session attracting 12 online attendees. Feedback indicated

				and problem-solving guidance. They were delivered externally by Civica at a recorded cost of approximately £1,052.	that the application and training should be promoted more actively. Some Members had not received access before attending, which limited their participation, and it was suggested that IT support should be available at future sessions to assist with installation.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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