

Annex A

Member Development Strategy 2021-25

Cabinet Member: Cllr M Chilcott – Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources

Division and Local Member: All

Lead Officer: Scott Wooldridge, Strategic Manager-Governance & Democratic Services

Author: Julia Jones, Governance Specialist- Democratic Services

Contact Details: jjones@somerset.gov.uk

1. Summary

- 1.1** This report sets out the Member Development Strategy for 2021-25. The Strategy aims to enable all members to carry out their roles efficiently and effectively at all times. The Strategy has been considered by the Member Development Panel at its last two meetings and amended following discussions in that forum. Members are asked to consider the Strategy and approve it for implementation in the next council year.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Somerset County Council approve the Member Development Strategy 2021-25 (attached as Appendix A)**

3. Background

- 3.1** Member Development and training has seen a significant setback for a large part of the past quadrennium due to budget restrictions. This has been acknowledged and there has been a recent injection of funding and at the same time a reinstatement of the Member Development Panel to oversee this area.

In order to prepare for the possibility of new council, in the event of an election in May 2021, Panel Members examined the current Member Development Strategy and amendments were made to ensure this was fit for purpose for the new council year.

A number of changes were made to the Strategy, including a greater emphasis on virtual learning and development opportunities and ensuring there was a clear offer of support to co-opted, independent and volunteer school appeal panel members of whom the Democratic Services Team have a responsibility for. In addition, there has been more importance placed on the use of IT and the necessary support from officers in that service area and the need to support with any needs or disabilities.

4. Implications

- 4.1** There are no direct financial, legal, risk or equalities implications arising from any of the proposals in this report. There are also no sustainability or community safety implications.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1** The proposed Member Development Strategy 2021-25 is shown in Appendix A.