

**Scrutiny Management Board**

Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 16 April 2024

Electoral Division affected:  
(All Divisions);

**Corporate Priorities:**  
N/A;

**Report on the activity of the Councillor Support Steering Group**

Contact for further information:

Gary Halsall, Tel: (01772) 536989, Senior Democratic Services Officer,  
gary.halsall@lancashire.gov.uk

**Brief Summary**

An overview of matters presented and considered by the Councillor Support Steering Group at its meeting held on 31 January 2024.

**Recommendation**

The Scrutiny Management Board is asked to receive the report of the Councillor Support Steering Group.

**Detail**

This report provides the Scrutiny Management Board with an overview of matters presented and considered by the Councillor Support Steering Group (CSSG) at its meeting held on 31 January 2024.

**Meeting held on 31 January 2024**

***Information Governance for Councillors***

Jo Winston, Information Governance Manager, presented a report that updated members on progress and further proposals to support councillors' understanding of information governance.

It was noted that despite all councillors having been registered and automatically enrolled on the corporate MeLearning platform for information governance e-learning, the number of councillors who have completed the course to date was low. It was reported that following the county council elections next year, all councillors will be required to complete the MeLearning course only once, at the beginning of their term of office, to provide basic guidance around data protection, freedom of



information and cyber security, but incumbent councillors are required to undertake the training now.

In response to councillor feedback, an enhanced bespoke e-learning training package specifically for elected members is currently being designed by the Skills and Learning Development team to further support councillors. Once it goes 'live', all councillors will be required to complete it on an annual basis to ensure they remain up to date with current information governance advice.

The Councillor Support Steering Group noted the report and agreed to form a pilot group for testing the new bespoke councillor information governance e-learning course and provide feedback. The group agreed that councillors who had not yet completed the e-learning course would be sent a reminder and the importance of completing the training would be discussed in group meetings.

### ***Lancashire Highways Dashboard for Councillors***

Paul Binks, Highways Asset Manager - Principal Engineer, provided an update on the councillor highways dashboard, stating that some new areas of work are to be added to the dashboard, namely tree works, gritting routes and traffic signal faults, but that no timeframe has been set for this to date.

The mobile version of the app and downloadable shortcut is now available to be installed on mobile devices. As numbers were low on who have downloaded the shortcut to date, it was reported that additional work will take place to encourage councillors to use the shortcut.

The Councillor Support Steering Group was reminded that training for the councillor highways dashboard also incorporates training for the love clean streets app. It was reported that the training session held in December had received some really positive feedback and that a further two sessions have already been arranged to take place over the next month. Subject to demand, additional sessions will be arranged as required, with a separate session being arranged for Cabinet and Lead Members.

### ***Digital Services Update for Councillors***

Andy Griffin, Business Relationship Manager, presented an update on Digital Services Support for Councillors, which included a summary of incidents raised by councillors via the Digital Services Helpdesk (councillors select option 4) and Digital Services portal and future/current ICT changes and software upgrades that may affect councillors.

### ***Member Systems Development***

Craig Alker, Democratic Services Officer (Technical), provided an update, confirming that the new elected members information system, which was to be used as a central archive for all members' information, is now live. Moving forward, all councillors will be able to update their own personal information – such as changing their address, contact information, emergency contacts, special requirements etc, as well as being able to view their own training history. Following a few minor adjustments, the system will be rolled out to all councillors, with training being provided as required.



It was reported that the development of a new system for local member grants has commenced this month, which, as well as allowing organisations to submit and monitor grant applications online, will enable councillors to view their own current and previous grant applications, including budgetary information and confirmation of spend by the organisation. Councillors will also be able to view any monitoring information for the applications they have supported. Once the new system has been developed, members of the Councillor Support Steering Group will be asked to take part in testing the system.

A new members allowances system is also to be developed by Digital Services to bring it up to date and make it easier for councillors to claim expenses. Democratic Services officers will be meeting with Digital Services over the next week to discuss initial requirements and functionality.

### ***C-First Developments***

Catherine Earnshaw Senior Democratic Services Officer, presented a report on C-First developments, highlighting the recent improvements made to enable councillors to access information 'on the go' on their mobile devices as well as via desktop devices.

Additionally, councillors can also subscribe to the C-First RSS news feed to readily access articles as soon as they are published; C-First is also aligned with the Modern.Gov system to provide a personalised calendar of meetings; a shortcut to the C-First app is now available for download onto mobile devices on which Microsoft Intune is installed and a monthly newsletter has just been launched that features a roundup of news, training, development and support for councillors.

### ***LCC Elections 2025***

Catherine Earnshaw, Senior Democratic Services Officer, provided a verbal update on the county council elections for 2025, reminding the Group of its previous decision to be consulted and involved in planning for the elections, particularly post election, especially with regard to ICT provision and the way in which councillors would like to access information going forward.

Planning work for the 2025 elections has already commenced. Initial discussions with the Local Government Association have also taken place with regard to our *Be A Councillor* resources to see if there are any opportunities to work with them. The Lancashire *Be A Councillor* resources will be refreshed to bring them up to date.

With regard to the district and Police and Crime Commissioner election in May 2024, it was reported that the pre-election publicity guidance will be issued to councillors and published on Staff News in the next week.

### **Future meetings**

The next scheduled meetings of the group for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year are as follows:

- 28 March 2024.
- 16 May.



## **Consultations**

N/A

## **Implications:**

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

### **Legal**

There are no significant legal implications detailed in the report.

### **Finance**

There are no significant financial implications detailed in the report.

### **Risk management**

This report has no significant risk implications detailed in the report.

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
-------	------	-------------

None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

