

# Member Development – The Essex (County Council) Story



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**Hop on board...**



# Lord Hanningfield [+ Add to myFT](#)

MAY 31, 2011 [Westminster blog Jim Pickard](#)  
Tory peer jailed for 12 months

MAY 26, 2011 [UK politics & policy](#)  
Peer convicted over expenses

JULY 30, 2010 [UK politics & policy](#)  
Ex-MPs and peer lose expenses appeal

JUNE 11, 2010 [UK politics & policy](#)  
Peer and MPs to face trial over expenses

MARCH 11, 2010 [UK politics & policy](#)  
MPs and peer plead innocence in court

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## Lord Hanningfield charged with expenses fraud

The former Tory peer will appear before Westminster Magistrates' Court on October 29, charged with false accounting



## Jailed peer Lord Hanningfield rues expenses 'mistake'



**Deborah McGurran**  
Political editor, East of England

🕒 29 November 2011 | 📄

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"I didn't know I was doing wrong." These are the words of a man who spent nine weeks in jail after being convicted of dishonestly claiming £14,000 from the House of Lords.

In his first television interview since his release in September, Lord Hanningfield maintained he was only sorry he had made a "mistake in filling out the forms" and he did not apologise for over-claiming.

He told the BBC's Stewart White that he did not know he was doing wrong at the time

I should have thought more about it and consulted people and not filled in the forms as I did."



### Lord Hanningfield - Former Conservative Peer

Gavin Esler talks to Lord Hanningfield, a former Conservative peer and former leader of Essex County Council, who was jailed in the wake of the expenses scandal.

🕒 25 minutes

Reassessed and achieved  
Charter Plus (March 2018)

2017 election and induction

Achieved Charter Plus  
(November 2014)

Candidates told about  
Member Development

New Council induction  
programme (2013)

Achieve Charter Status  
(March 2013)

Committed to Charter Plus  
(March 2013)

Members 'buy-in' to Member  
Development

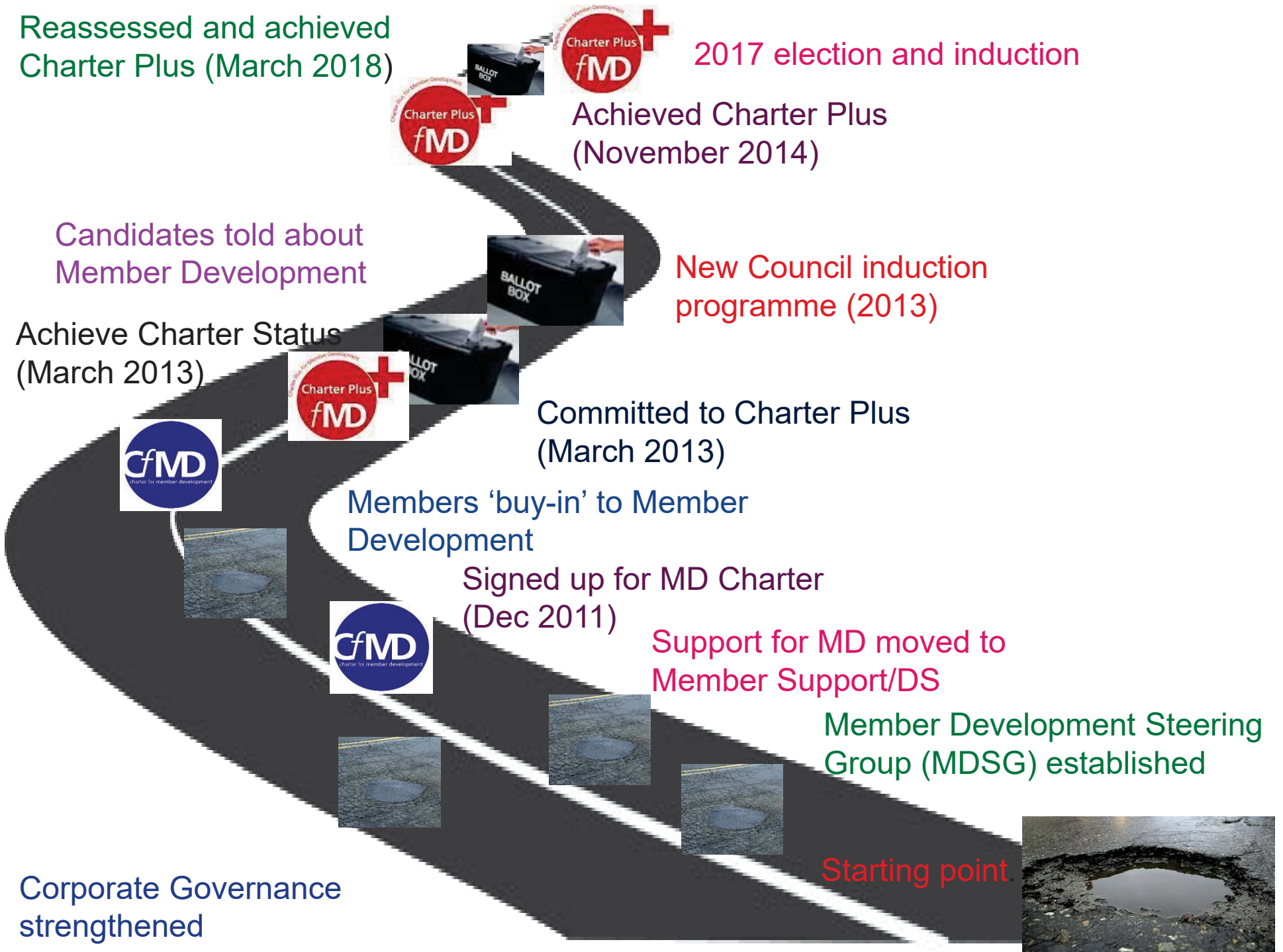
Signed up for MD Charter  
(Dec 2011)

Support for MD moved to  
Member Support/DS

Member Development Steering  
Group (MDSG) established

Corporate Governance  
strengthened

Starting point



# Key drivers to our success

- Able to demonstrate good ethical governance
- Induction – Goldilocks principle
- Quality drives attendance
- Formation of Democratic Services
- Competitive edge
- Member ownership and engagement
- Leading by example
- Framework and national standard
- Feedback process and learning

# What is our offer now?

- In-house briefings, workshops and seminars
- Skills training sessions
- Attendance at external conferences and seminars
- Peer coaching and mentoring
- Engagement with other authorities
- E-learning
- Books, workbooks, information guides
- Training with partners and external bodies
- Personal development planning process

# Some of our sessions in the last year

- Brexit – implications for Essex
- PREVENT
- Autism and Asperger's
- Virtual Dementia Tour
- Sensory Awareness
- GDPR and data protection
- Corporate Parenting: interactive session with our young people
- Highways: Winter Briefing
- Care Homes and the Care Market
- School Admissions and Appeals
- Garden Communities
- County Lines: Essex impact

# Member Development Steering Group

- To develop and review the Member Development Strategy
- To identify the development needs
- To develop, monitor, evaluate and review the Member Development Programme
- To promote Digital working practices
- To promote community leadership
- To promote the role of a councillor
- To provide direction and guidance to officers
- To review member session attendance and evaluation information
- To provide leadership and communicate with members of the Council
- To promote best practice in respect of Member Development
- To encourage the highest level of participation and engagement
- To be proactive with regard to joint member development activities with partners
- To lead and oversee Essex County Council's commitment to the East of England Member Development Charter Plus
- To monitor the Member development budget.



# Member Development Strategy

The aims of this strategy are:

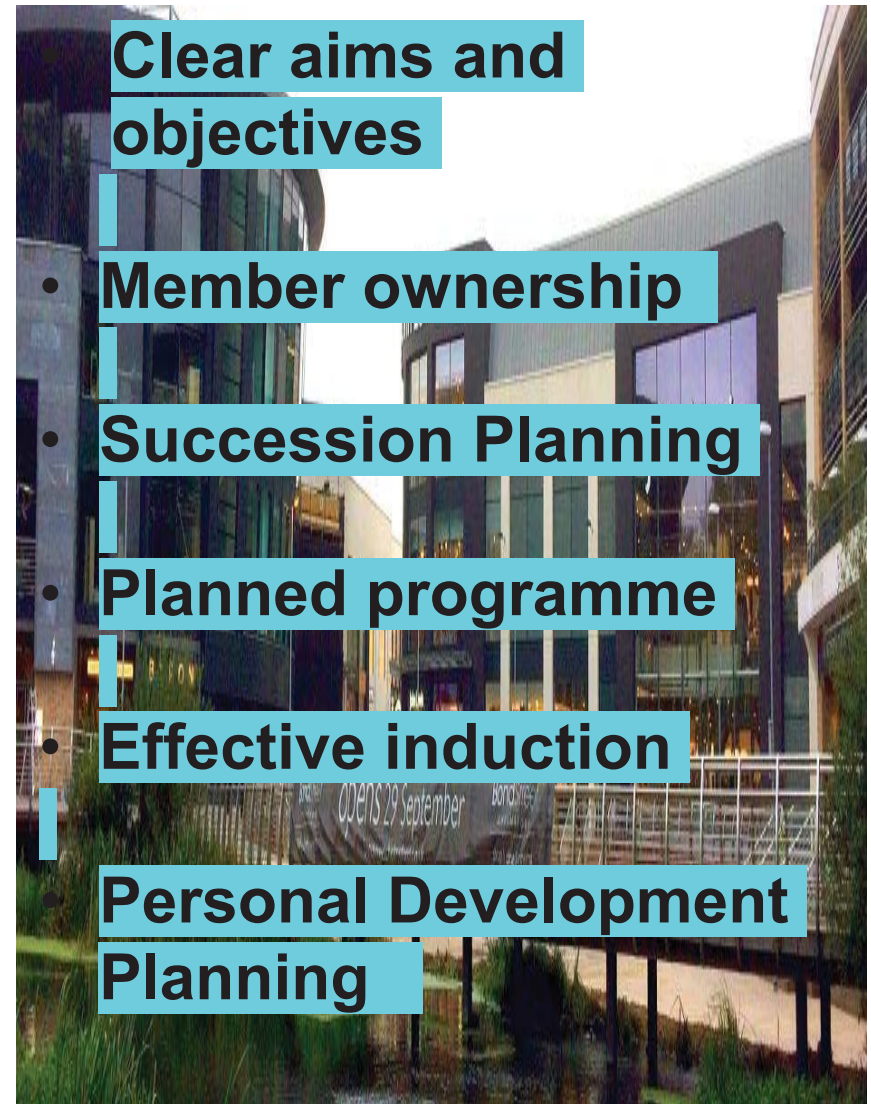
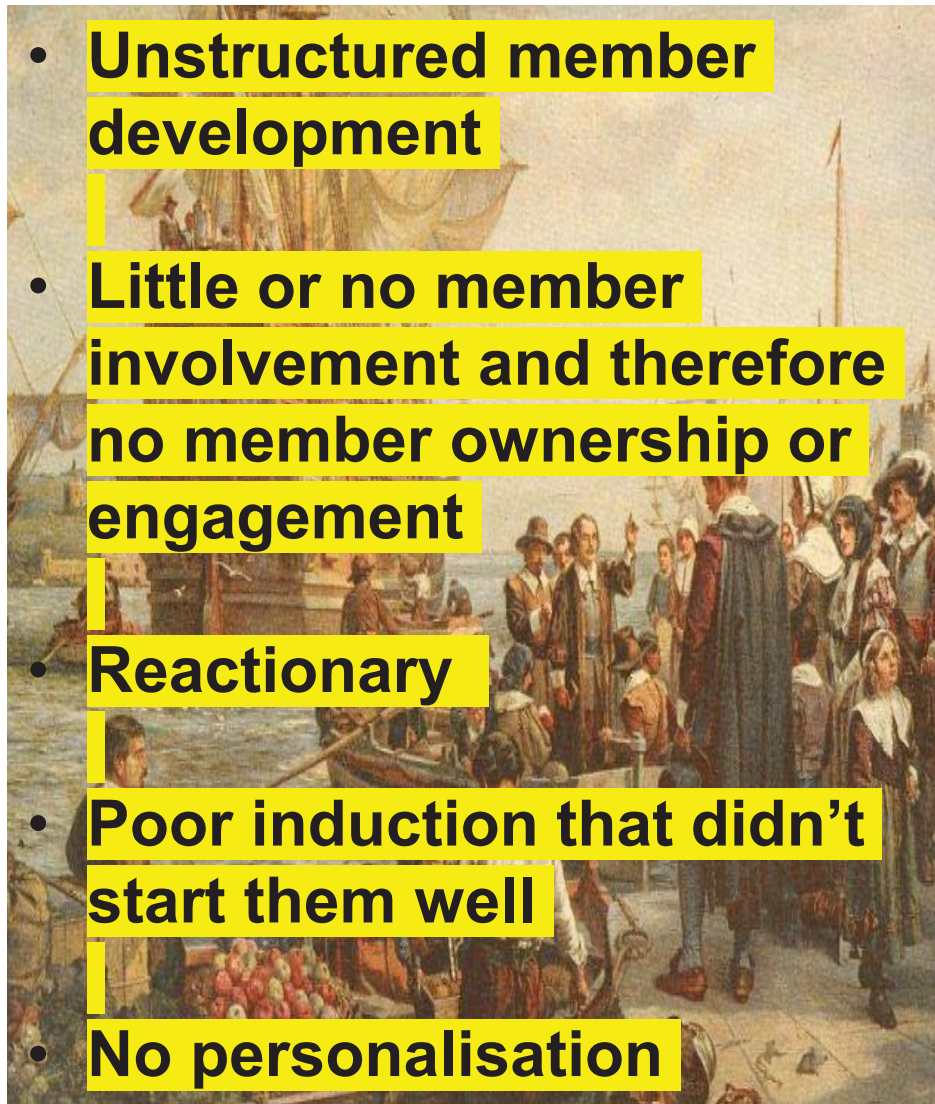
- to ensure that there is support in place
- to clearly define Member responsibilities
- to clearly define officer responsibilities
- to identify adequate resources
- to retain the Member Development Charter Plus Status



**We have arrived  
at our  
destination...**



# Then and now



# What do members say now?



**Councillor  
Lesley  
Wagland**

“My experience here has changed how I look at training. Poor training is so prevalent elsewhere that it’s common for people to approach development with a negative mindset. Unfortunately that becomes something of a self-fulfilling prophecy: we get nothing out of training because we expect nothing.

Here, we’ve transformed the perceptions of training from ‘necessary evil’ to ‘mission critical’. We believe in the value of learning and development (and the processes underpinning it) because we’re experiencing the benefits. I came into local government wanting to give back and change things for the better, but it’s changed me just as much. I’m hungry to learn more.”

# What do members say now?



**Councillor  
David  
Finch**

“Discipline and engagement around development is far better today than in the past. Learning and development has a much stronger profile in the Member arena. Members are more willing to reflect on their knowledge and understanding and recognise any gaps and need for training. They have a much greater appreciation and respect for what we provide.”

# What do members say now?



**Councillor  
Malcolm  
Maddocks**

“You cannot overestimate how important it is to be able to respond effectively to questions from the public. Nobody wants to get caught out. We’ve got the answers because we’ve had the training. Our Members can competently handle questions they might never have been able to answer before. They’ve got the correct information immediately to hand and they’re comfortable delivering it.

It’s creating better dialogue between the council and residents. It’s changing the relationship. Some of our residents are making a point of attending Member’s surgeries just so they can say ‘thank you’.”

# What do members say now?



**Councillor  
David  
Finch**

“Our training helps to create a level playing field for all our Members, regardless of party and background, and provides a common language for them to engage with one another.”

# What do members say now?



**Councillor  
Malcolm  
Maddocks**

“Our new approach is far more in tune with our Members and far more sympathetic to their needs. Any fear about ‘not knowing’ is greatly reduced. If they have an issue, they can ask for help. If they don’t understand, they can ask for clarification. This encourages the one-to-one dialogue that helps us make sure everyone gets what they need.”



# What do members say now?

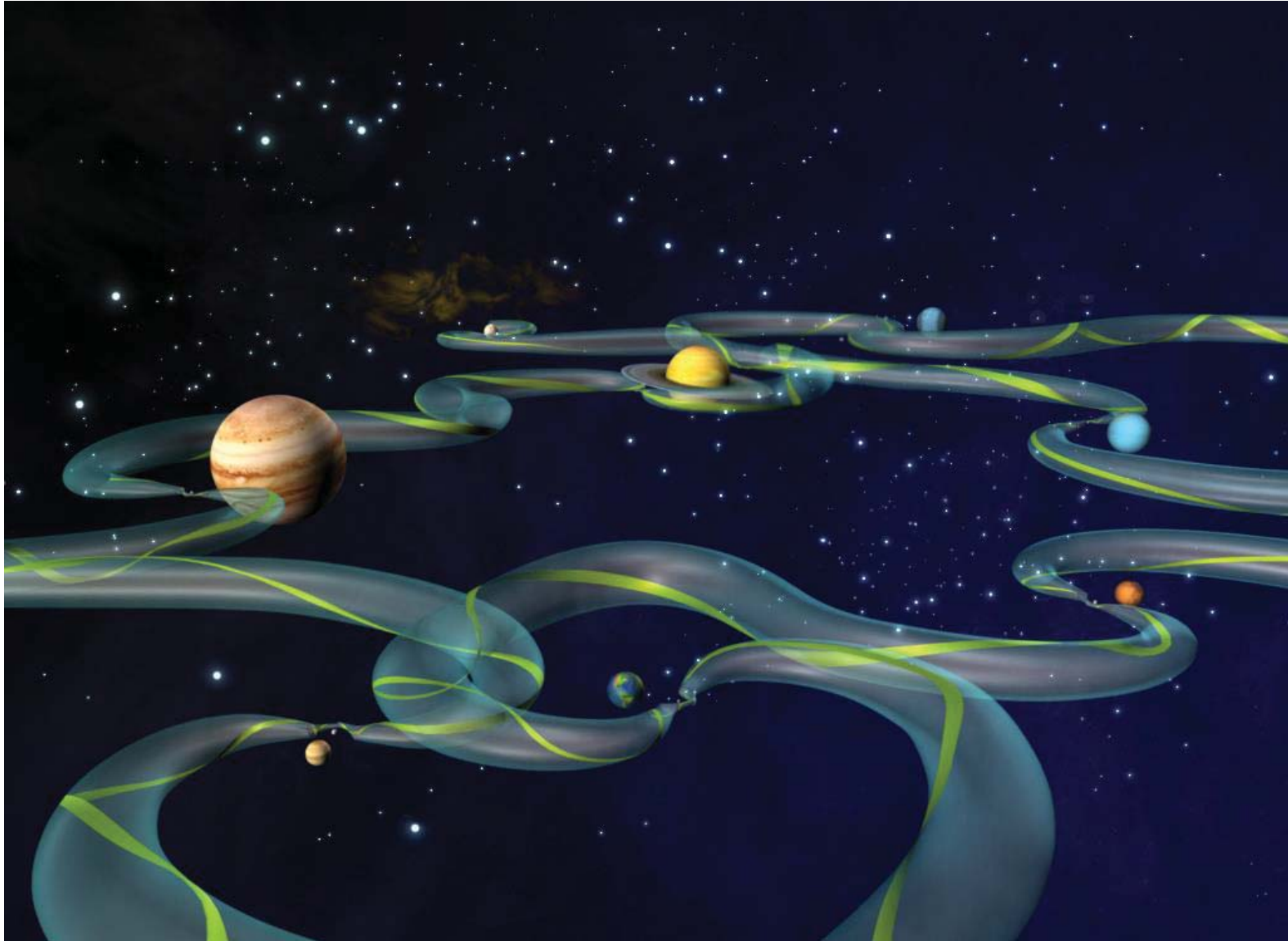


**Councillor  
Lesley  
Wagland**

“You can feel disoriented as a newly-elected councillor, regardless of your background. You need a solid foundation of knowledge and understanding and you need it quickly. The induction here is intellectually rigorous and a great way of getting to grips with complex topics. We all found it invaluable. It’s especially helpful to understand the science and theory behind it all. It’s enabled me to think about and articulate the high-level concepts far more clearly.

A lot of what we do is explaining and influencing – communicating confidently with residents and translating troublesome topics for their benefit. In this era of ‘fake news’, our audience is far more wary than ever before. Influence depends on trust, confidence and knowledge. Being able to share our learning with residents, and tell them we have had this training, is helping us to create a bedrock of trust.”

**The future... where next...**





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