



# Council Training Plan

## 1. Introduction and policy statement

The council has a statutory duty under section 67 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to make a plan setting out what it proposes to do to address the training needs of its councillors and staff. This became a requirement May 2022.

The purpose of the training plan is designed to ensure that collectively, councillors and staff, possess the knowledge and awareness needed for the council to operate effectively. It is not necessary for all councillors and staff to have received the same training and develop the same expertise.

A new training plan must be put in place after each ordinary election of community councillors to reflect the training needs resulting from changes to the council membership and to provide for the election of new councillors. This is the council's first training plan but hereinafter it will review the plan from time to time to keep it up to date and relevant.

In regards to council staff, annual performance appraisals identify individual training opportunities on an on-going basis, whereas in determining councillors' immediate training priorities an initial training assessment has been made of the essential skills needed and whether the council feels there is sufficient coverage and depth across the council for it to operate effectively going forward.

Notwithstanding this, there are core areas to address to ensure the council has sufficient skills and understanding. These are:

- Basic induction for councillors;
- The Code of Conduct for members of local authorities in Wales;
- Financial management and governance.

## 2. Evaluation and review of training

All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the Council to gauge its relevance, content and appropriateness. Any additional training needs highlighted as a result will be brought into the training identification process stated in section 4 above.

Training will be reviewed in the light of changes to legislation or any applicable regulations relevant to the Council: This will include requirements for new qualifications; new equipment; complaints received; incidents which highlight training needs; requests from the Clerk, Councillors etc.

In addition to these areas, the council will want to consider if there are new challenges and opportunities it may wish to explore for example, such as those offered by the General Power of Competence. In which case it may decide there are new skills for councillors and staff to attain going forward from the publication of this inaugural training plan.

The council has approved the publication of this training plan having identified its initial requirements to take the council forward following the local government ordinary elections on 5 May 2022. The plan is a snapshot of the training requirements at this point in time and will be revisited and updated periodically over the next five years and leading up to the next set of local government ordinary elections planned for May 2027.

The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by themselves and Councillors.

In terms of the council's initial plans these are set out as follows:

### **New councillors**

Induction by the Clerk, supported by the Chair, and the signing of the Acceptance of the Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests before the first meeting

### **Modules to complete within 18 months**

- The Council (module 1)
- The Councillor (module 2)
- The Council Meeting (module 5)
- Code of Conduct (module 9)

### **Re-elected councillors** (recommended every term of office)

- Code of Conduct
- Rolling programme of refresher training as per committee membership

### **Committee Members**

Councillors are recommended to attend the training detailed below within 12 months of being elected on to the Committee unless members have previous qualifications in the subject.

### **Finance and Audit Committee**

- Local Government Finance (Module 6)
- Understanding Local Government Finance – Advanced (Module 21)

### **Personnel/HR Committee**

- The Council as an Employer (Module 3)
- Managing Your Staff (Module 18)
- Equality & Diversity (Module 14)

### **Maintenance Committee**

- Local Government Finance (Module 6)
- Understanding Local Government Finance – Advanced (Module 21)

### **Wellbeing Committee**

- Introduction to Community Engagement (Module 8)

### **Chairs/Vice-Chairs**

- Chairing Skills (Module 10)

### **Optional training for all Councillors**

- Understanding the Law (Module 4)
- Information Management (Module 15)
- Use of IT, Websites & Social Media (Module 16)

### **Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer**

1. Induction sessions/handover where possible, such as attendance at a 'New Clerks' training course, or similar – within three months of the date on which they are employed.
2. Provision of a Councillor Information pack which contains copies of 'The Good Councillor's Guide', Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and a list of the policies of the Council, together with any other information deemed relevant – this is to be provided within first month days of the date on which they are employed.
3. Gaining the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) within 15 months of appointment. This is a condition of employment.
4. Any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as Data Protection Act, Legal Powers, Finance and understanding the planning system, identified through regular training needs and assessments – within three (3) months of the need being identified.

5. Attendance at relevant training courses, conferences and/or local meetings of external bodies such as One Voice Wales, Town and Community Council Forum, Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and Clerks peer support forum

The Council will meet the costs of all pre-approved training undertaken or meetings attended, including mileage or public transport.

The Council will pay for pre-approved subscriptions to relevant publications and advice services, including the purchase of the approved handbook, Charles Arnold- Baker, Local Council Administration where it supports training and development.

## **2. Training needs identified**

- Training requirements for Councillors will be ongoing but will usually be identified by the Councillors, the Chair and/or the Clerk with opportunities to attend courses being investigated by the Clerk and brought to the attention of full Council.
- Annually the Council will formally review the training needs of the Councillors and the Clerk at a meeting of the Community Council.
- Training needs for the Clerk will be identified initially through the recruitment process for new Clerks, including the application form and interview, and then through formal and informal discussions and annual staff appraisals.
- The Clerk is expected to keep up to date with developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training and support required.

## **3. Resourcing training**

Training costs are met by the council, although bursary schemes for councillors may be available from the Welsh Government to subsidise these costs. At the date of writing this plan, each module costs £35.00 per member. Councillor training is subject to module provision by One Voice Wales.

Annually an allocation will be made in the budget to encourage and enable necessary training and development to take place. The Clerk will ensure the Council accesses/draws down any discounts and bursaries that may be available to NHCC.

For more information on what each module covers, go to <http://www.onevoicewales.org.uk/OVWeb/UserFiles/Files/Training/Overview%20Modules%20Jan%202017%20ENG.pdf>

## **4. Review**

This training plan is subject to annual review.