

Llanrug Community Council

The Council's Training Policy

Background

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (section 67) notes that it is essential for the council to prepare and issue a training plan which outlines its offer in relation to the training provision for its members and staff. The training plan should note what it intends to do to identify and address the training needs of its councillors and staff.

The purpose of the training plan is to ensure that councillors and members of staff together have the required information and awareness for the council to operate efficiently. There is no need for every councillor and staff member to have received the same training or develop the same expertise.

The training plan must be implemented after each general election of community councillors to reflect the training needs deriving from changes to the council's membership and to provide for the election of new councillors. This is the council's first training scheme. However, from now on it will periodically review the scheme to keep it current and relevant.

Regarding council staff, there are annual conversations which identify the individual training opportunities continuously. An initial assessment will be made of the essential skills required when setting the training priorities for councillors, and does the council feel that there is enough knowledge and depth across the council to operate efficiently going forwards from May 2022. However, there are core areas to address to ensure that the council has sufficient skills and understanding. These are:

- Fundamental training to each new councillor;
- Training on the Code of Conduct for members of local authorities in Wales;
- Training on financial and governance management.

1. Evaluating and reviewing training

All training undertaken will be evaluated by the council to measure its relevance, contents, and appropriateness. Any additional training needs highlighted as a result will be included in the training identification process.

Training will be reviewed in view of changes to legislation or any regulations which are relevant to the Council. This will include requirements for new qualifications; new equipment; complaints received; events which highlight training needs; requests by the clerk, councillors, or volunteers.

In addition to these areas, the council will consider if there are new challenges and opportunities which it would like to explore, for example, those offered by the General Power of Competence. Therefore, it might decide that councillors and members of staff require training or new skills in the future after issuing this first training plan.

The council has approved issuing this training plan after noting its initial requirements to move the council forward following the local government general election on 5 May 2022. This is a snapshot of the training requirements at this point, and it will be reviewed and updated periodically over the next five years and up to the next local government general election scheduled for May 2027.

The Clerk will keep a record of training attended by its councillors.

Regarding the initial plans of the council, these are noted as follows, which are training courses provided via One Voice Wales. It is possible that other providers also provide training courses.

New Councillors

Induction by the Clerk, supported by the Chair, and the signing of the Code of Conduct and declaration of interest before the first meeting.

Modules to be completed within the year.

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

Re-elected Councillor members (recommended every term in the post)

Code of Conduct

Rolling refresher programme in accordance with the membership of the Committee

Committees

Recommended that members of these committees attend the training noted below within 3 months to being elected to the committee except if the members have qualifications, training, or previous experience of the subject.

Finance and Resources Committee

Local Government Finance (Module 6)

Understanding Local Government Finance – Enhanced Level (Module 21)

The Council as an Employer (Module 3)

Managing your Staff (Module 18)

Equality and Diversity (Module 14)

Leisure Committee

Health and Safety (Module 7)

Cemetery Committee

Any relevant course provided by ICCM or SLCC

Food and Well-being Committee

Certificate Course in Food Hygiene (Level 2)

Chair / Vice-chair

Chairing skills of the Chais / Vice-chairs (Module 10)

Optional training for every Councillor

Understanding the Law (Module 4)

Managing Information (Module 15)

Introduction to Community Engagement (Module 8)

Equality and Diversity (Module 14)

Use of IT, Websites, and Social Media (Module 16)

Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer

a) Induction sessions which explains the fundamentals of the Clerk, such as attending a training course for 'New Clerks' or similar – within 3 months' to their employment date. Please note that the current clerk is a mentor for new clerks across Gwynedd and Anglesey.

b) Provide an Information Package to Councillors. The package will include copies of 'The Good Councillor's Guide,' Standing Orders' Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, and a list of the Council's policies, as well as any other information considered relevant – this is supposed to be relevant. Provide within seven days to their employment date.

c) Gain a Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) within thirty months of the appointment. This is an employment requirement.

d) Any other training which is relevant to deliver their duties skilfully such as the Data Protection Act, Legal Powers, Finance and understanding of the planning system, which are identified via training needs and regular reviews – within three (3) months of identifying the need.

e) Attend relevant training courses, conferences and/or local meetings of external bodies such as the Society of Local Councils Clerks (SLCC) and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

The Council will pay the costs of all training approved beforehand or meetings attended, including travelling expenses and parking. The Council will pay for subscriptions approved beforehand to publications by the relevant advisory services, including purchasing the approved handbook, Local Council Administration by Charles Arnold-Baker.

2. Identified training needs

The training requirements for Councillors are continuous. Usually, they will be identified by Councillors, the Chair and / or Clerk with opportunities to attend courses explored by the Clerk and drawn to the attention of the full Council.

The Council will review every year the training needs of Councillors and Clerk in a formal meeting of the Community Council.

The training needs of the Clerk will be identified initially via the recruitment process for new Clerks, including the application form and interview, and thereafter, via formal and informal discussions and annual staff appraisals.

The Clerk is expected to have the latest information regarding developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training and support required.

3. Training resources

The council will pay for training costs. However, bursary schemes for councillors are available by the Welsh Government to subsidise these costs.

An allocation will be made in the budget every year according to need, to enable the necessary training and development.

For more information regarding what each module involves, please contact the clerk.