



## **National Training Programme for Community and Town Councils in Wales**

### **New Councillor Induction – Only available at Election time and Bespoke sessions**

This session covers the following topics:

- What town and community councils do
- How they serve their communities
- The changing world of councils
- What makes a good council
- Your role as a councillor
- Your commitment and the Code of Conduct
- Fulfilling your duties and responsibilities
- Being the voice of the community

#### **Module 1 - The Council**

- The Council as a Corporate Body
- The “Team” of Members and Staff
- The Council’s Role
- Working with Unitary Authorities
- Building Partnership Working

During the presentation we will cover the council as a corporate body, the ‘team’ of members and staff, the council’s role, working with unitary authorities, and building partnership working with a wider group of organisations. By the end of this presentation you should have a good understanding of the range of responsibilities of community and town councils as well as their changing role in serving local communities in Wales today.

#### **Module 2 - The Councillor**

- The Councillor and their Commitment
- Register of Interests
- Code of Conduct and Ethical Behaviour
- Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees
- Debating and Making Decisions
- Representing Your Electorate
- Building Bridges

During the presentation we will cover the councillor and their commitment to the office of councillor, the Register of Members Interests, the Code of Conduct and ethical behaviour expected of a councillor, the role of the Monitoring Officer and the Standards Committee, the rules of debating and making decisions, how you represent on your electorate, and the need to “build bridges” between yourself, the council and other interested parties.

### **Module 3 - The Council as an Employer**

- Contracts of Employment
- Role and Person Specification
- Recruitment and Retention
- Discipline, Grievance and Appeals
- Health and Safety
- Training and Development
- Sources of Advice

During the presentation we will explore the role of the council as an employer. We will cover contracts of employment and how these define the employment relationship, the role and person specification, you may know the role specification as the 'job description', recruitment and retention, what you should do if things are going wrong, health and safety, and perhaps the most important of all getting the best out of everyone to help serve your local community, through training and development. Employment law and best practice is a complicated area, so lastly, we will finish by looking at some sources of advice.

### **Module 4 – Understanding The Law**

- Statutory duties and powers
- Ultra Vires
- The Powers of Delegation
- Welsh Language Act
- The duty to promote Equal Opportunities
- Data Protection and FOI Act
- Sources of advice

During the presentation we will cover a range of legislation and legal duties that affect community and town councils. We will cover statutory duties and powers, the principle of 'ultra vires', the powers of delegation, the Welsh Language Act, the duty to promote equal opportunities and the main statutes and regulations in this area data protection and Freedom of Information act and finally, sources of advice.

### **Module 5 - The Council Meeting**

- Calling meetings
- Types of meetings
- Standing Orders
- Agendas
- Conducting the meeting
- Passing resolutions
- Recording proceedings

During the presentation we will cover the different aspects of council meetings. We will talk about calling meetings, the different types of meetings including Annual Statutory Meetings, Extraordinary Meetings and Ordinary Meetings, the importance of Standing Orders setting and using agendas, conducting the meeting, passing resolutions, and recording proceedings.

### **Module 6 - Local Government Finance**

- The Role of the Responsible Finance Officer

- Accounting and Strategy Guidance
- Financial Regulations and Risk Assessment
- Budgets and Precepts
- Internal and External Audit
- Insurance
- Income and Expenditure Powers
- Other Sources of Income

During the presentation we will review all the important areas in overseeing local government finance. We will cover the role of the Responsible Finance Officer, some of the general principles of accounting, the main financial regulations and, most importantly how to assess the risks involved, setting budgets and precepts, putting robust internal and external audits in place, the insurance requirements of the Council, the income and expenditure powers of the Council, and finally other sources of income.

This is a large agenda, and financial management can sometimes appear daunting, but the aim of the session is to provide you with an understanding of the financial framework of the Council, the core information you need to know and the sources of more detailed information that you should refer to when you need to.

### **Module 7 - Health & Safety**

To explore the legal obligations of Councils and to highlight the processes and procedures that need to be in place to ensure compliance.

### **Module 8 - Introduction to Community Engagement**

The aim of this introductory module is to explore what is meant by the term 'community engagement' and how councils and councillors can improve how they engage with the communities they serve. Using an interactive approach, the module explores why, how and where councillors currently engage with their communities. The session includes a short overview of key public policy in relation to community engagement and covers the key elements and terminology of community engagement. There is an opportunity for councillors to share and learn from their personal experiences and the session ends with a community engagement planning exercise.

### **Module 9 - Code of Conduct**

A highly interactive and informative module that enables participants to understand the Nolan principles of public life and develop a more in depth knowledge of the Code of Conduct and how it applies to local councillors.

The module specifically covers the following:

The Nolan Principles  
 What Councillors must do and must not do  
 Personal/Prejudicial interests  
 Predetermination & Predisposition  
 How the Code is Policed

The learning will be reinforced through practical exercises and a DVD of the Ombudsman explaining his role will be featured.

## **Module 10 - Chairing Skills**

To explore the role of the Chair and to consider the associated issues and highlight effective approaches to effective chairing of meetings.

## **Module 11 – No Longer included in the programme**

## **Module 12 – Creating a Community Plan**

To provide Councils with the knowledge and skills to create community plans and better understand strategy and forward budgeting.

## **Module 13 - Community Engagement Part II (Tools & Techniques)**

To provide an insight into the way in which Councils can build on community engagement approaches and provide real leadership to help their communities and towns grow and thrive.

## **Module 14 - Equality & Diversity**

Providing Councils with a better understanding of equality law and the Welsh Language Act and assisting Councils to promote equality and avoid unfair discrimination.

## **Module 15 - Information Management**

To provide Councils with a better understanding of the legislation relating to Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

## **Module 16 - Use of IT, Websites & Social Media**

To provide Councils with a greater knowledge of the benefits of reaching out to their communities through electronic communication.

## **Module 17 - Making Effective Grant Applications**

To enable Councils to better understand the type of grant schemes available and to put together effective applications to support capital projects.

## **Module 18 – Managing Your Staff**

To provide an insight into the ways in which Councils can arrange for the effective management of their staff.

## **Module 19 – Devolution of Services / Community Asset Transfer**

Devolution of services is currently an important topic in Wales and the challenges and opportunities it presents are / or will be of concern to most Community and Town Councils.

The training module provides a highly interactive experience for Councillors and Clerks and covers the following key areas:

- Models for asset transfers
- Understanding lease issues and freehold transfers
- Models for and approaches to Service Devolution
- Policy Drivers
- Opportunities, Pitfalls and Planned outcomes
- Due Diligence Arrangements
- Asset Management Responsibilities
- Important role of Councillors
- Community Engagement approaches

## **Module 20 – Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 / Sustainability**

This course will explain the principles of Sustainable development and relate these principles to the needs and aspirations of the communities you serve, identify relevant policies (e.g. Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015) and relate them to the powers and duties of local councils ensuring readiness to lead a process of Sustainable development planning and reporting.

## **Module 21 – Understanding Local Government Finance – Advanced**

This course is aimed at building on the knowledge gained from attendance at Module 6 – Local Government Finance. It will appeal especially to Chairs, those serving on Finance Committees and to any Councillor who wishes to learn more about the governance and accountability framework in which councils are required to operate.

This Module covers the following areas:

- Governance and Accountability
- Roles and Responsibilities
- The Annual Governance Statement
- The Statement of Accounts
- Internal Controls and their Review
- Compliance with the Law
- The Rights of Electors
- Risk Assessment
- Internal Audit
- Liabilities and Commitments
- Trust Funds
- Reserves and Provisions
- Investments

**Module 22 - Understanding Mediation – Not available remotely, unless on a bespoke basis.**