



Neath Town Council
Cyngor Tref Castell-nedd

Training Policy

Neath Town Council is committed to providing excellent public services and meeting high standards.

Learning is an essential part of the development of Neath Town Council as a professionally run organisation and good employer.

This Training Schedule highlights the need to ensure the Council has the right skills and abilities in place, or access to those skills, to be able to deliver its community objectives. It also aims to establish a protocol for effective communication of the Town Council's activities and pertinent information for its training purposes.

Staff Training

Staff are supported in undertaking the training and development they need to help them achieve and maintain high levels of performance, and are given encouragement and support to achieve their full personal potential.

Commitment to Training - Staff

Neath Town Council is committed to providing the following training and development requirements:

- ✓ Induction programme;
- ✓ Health & Safety awareness and training;
- ✓ Annual staff objective setting with an in-year appraisal of performance and identification of training needs (January);
- ✓ Paid release from work commitments in order to undertake essential training, when necessary;
- ✓ Training and certification in accordance with all legal and statutory requirements according to the role;
- ✓ Attendance at conferences and seminars appropriate to the needs of the job;
- ✓ Support with work related Continuous Professional Development. Each member of staff will have their own personal training plan, when appropriate, post appraisal.

Training is arranged around the requirements of the organisation, the community needs and needs of the individual for their role.

Forward planning takes place to help meet current and future needs and achieve the Council's community objectives set out in their Annual Report and to develop the abilities and potential of individuals.

A training budget is available in each financial year to allow required training to take place. Workloads will take into account the time requirements of training courses and required study time. A range of training providers will be used in addition to in-house training.

The Town Clerk/RFO to be supported with ongoing training via SLCC or One Voice Wales as and when appropriate. See Appendix 2 (competencies)

Training Budget – Staff

A budget of £1000 is set aside for staff to cover online Statutory and Mandatory training via induction, this includes staff development.

Evaluation and Review - Staff

Neath Town Council seeks to ensure continuous improvement and learn from experiences to improve what it does. This includes completion and review of training evaluation sheets and training records.

The Town Clerk will manage the performance of each individual staff member to achieve the Town Council's objectives. The Policy & Personnel Committee reviews and manages the overall performance of the Council as a corporate body, including an annual review of overall performance management.

Councillor Training

Councillors are provided with an induction programme via the Town Clerk, on appointment. At this induction training, additional online training via One Voice Wales is also suggested and recommended.

Commitment to Training - Councillors

Neath Town Council have made Code of Conduct Training **mandatory** and therefore all Councillors must undertake this training twice per 5 year term. This will be scheduled with the Mayor and Town Clerk.

Additional Chair training for Mayor/Deputy Mayor, Chairs and Vice Chairs of both the Estates and Finance Committee is also recommended to ensure that those who are new to the Chair position, gain guidance and support on the skills required for the role.

Training for Members is available for specific Committee eg Finance Committee – the course, 'An introduction to Council Finance' is strongly recommended. All Members will be made aware of training available to them and also specific training will be identified by the Town Clerk which may assist with new Members or Chairs.

Core competences for Councillors are included as an attachment to this Training Schedule – Appendix 1.

Training Budget - Councillor

Code of Conduct Training is available via NPTCBC Head of Legal and is free of charge. This is mandatory and must be completed twice in a term of office.

A budget for Online One Voice Wales Chair training for Mayor/Deputy Mayor, Chair and Vice Chair of Estates and Chair and Vice Chair of Finance is included. Chair training must be one of these.

A budget of an additional two core training sessions for each Member (in addition to the above where applicable) and delivered by One Voice Wales Online is included.

Suggested Councillor training via Clerk, NPTCBC Head of Legal Services and One Voice Wales Courses (Modules):-

Induction by Town Clerk on appointment after signing of the Acceptance of the Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests

Recommended within one year.:

The Council - Module 1

The Councillor - Module 2

The Council Meeting - Module 5

Code of Conduct – NPTCBC Head of Legal Services

Finance Committee/Auditors

Local Government Finance - Module 6

Advanced Local Government Finance - Module 21

Personnel Committee

The Council as an Employer - Module 3

Equality & Diversity - Module 14

Effective Staff Management - Module 18

Chairs/Vice-chairs of Committees:

Chairing Skills - Module 10

Additional units optional for all Councillors

Understanding the Law - Module 4

Information Management - Module 15

**SCHEDULE OF COMPETENCIES – APPENDIX 1
COUNCILLORS**

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
Understanding the Role of the Councillor	The extent and limits of a councillor’s individual responsibilities and the powers and responsibilities of the Council as a corporate body in law.	Undertakes the role effectively in the council, the community and with partners. Understands the difference between the role of an individual member and the Council as a whole and ensures that this understanding is reflected in their work.
Understanding of the legal basis upon which the Council delivers services to the community	Understanding of the services delivered and the associated governing law, policies, procedures, plans and strategies that are in place to guide the work of the Council.	Is able to describe the work of the Council to the public and contributes to the development of the Council’s work.
Understanding the planning system	Understanding of planning law, the development control process and the importance of the local development plan. It would also be helpful for councillors to understand the importance of place or community plans in this context.	Is able to assess planning applications in relation to material considerations, the relevance of technical advisory notes, the link with the local development plan and have an understanding of Section 106 and community infrastructure levy contributions from developers.
Conduct	Understanding of the ethical framework governing the work of councillors, specifically the code of conduct. Appreciation of the importance of accountability, integrity and transparency and openness.	Abides by the code of conduct at all times, always declares interests when appropriate, seeks advice from the Proper Officer when needed, treats others with respect at all times, demonstrates integrity, values others and never bullies any other councillor or employee, listens and stays calm in difficult situations.
Equality and Diversity	Personal skills in demonstrating respect for others regardless of sex, race, religion, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation. Understanding Equalities and Diversity law relating to the work of the Council and the role of the Councillor. Understanding of the need for and what constitutes respectful behaviour towards others.	Demonstrates equalities values in personal behaviour and council decisions. Applies appropriate equalities legislation and demonstrates equalities values in personal behaviour and council decisions. Treats everyone with respect at all times when acting as a councillor whether in the Council, community or political group.
Financial Governance and Accountability	An understanding of the internal and external audit process.	Engages effectively with the audit, inspection and regulatory process within the council, using this information to constructively challenge and support the financial management of the council.

Attendance at and preparation for meetings and other organised events	Understanding of the importance of regular attendance and engagement and the need to prepare effectively for meetings.	Attends meetings and events on a regular basis and gives priority to such attendance. Ensures that all papers included with council agendas are read before the meeting.
Information Management	Understanding and interpreting information and data. Ability to handle data in the format provided by the council. Understanding of the definition of confidentiality and how to handle confidential information - Understanding of the legal requirements of Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation.	Receives information and data from a variety of sources and is able to store, share and use it effectively and where possible electronically. Does not keep records about people without seeking their agreement. Responds promptly and appropriately to FOI requests. Does not distribute or share confidential or restricted information.
Using ICT and social media	Seeks to develop Skills in all 'Office' applications such as word processing, presentation and spreadsheets and conducts council business electronically. Understands the social media policy of the council.	Communicates with the Clerk and other members electronically and through social media where appropriate.
Working with the Clerk and other employees	Understanding the role of the Clerk and other employees generally and the 'rules' they need to abide by. Skills in acting as a corporate employer. Understanding of the appointments process and interviewing skills.	Maintains professional relationships with employees recognising appropriate boundaries and abiding by the Member Officer Protocol (if adopted). Acts as an effective member of an appointment panel, applying sound HR and equality and diversity principles to secure the best candidate.
Health and Safety	Understanding of Health and Safety legislation in the work of the Council. Understand how to assess risks and ensure personal safety and that of others.	Promotes and ensures the health and safety of everyone in the council. Ensures personal safety when working in the Council and when in groups or alone in the community.
Continuing professional and personal development	Ability to identify personal development needs and to participate in development activities.	Undertakes regular personal development reviews taking account of role descriptions and competency frameworks. Takes responsibility for developing personal skills and knowledge, attends learning and development activities seeking tangible outcomes.
Financial Capability	Understanding of the way councils and services are funded. Understanding and skills in budget setting. Personal financial capability.	Engages effectively in the budget setting process. Is prepared to take hard, evidence-based decisions. Demonstrates skills in numeracy when interpreting data and asking questions.
Sustainable Development	Understanding of issues that impact on future generations such as health and wellbeing, financial security and the environment.	Takes decisions based upon the needs of future generations as well as the current population.
Local Leadership	Knowledge of community groups and leaders. Understanding of community issues and	Understands the needs of the local community and secures action from the council on behalf of local people.

	concerns. Ability to seek the views of all relevant parties. Understands the role and functions of the principal council.	Communicates with the community, individuals and the council to ensure engagement and understanding of all parties.
Chairing	Understanding of meeting protocols and the rules of debate. Ability to manage the agenda, contributions and time. Chairs clearly and authoritatively, enforcing the rules and encouraging fair participation. Manages the agenda by introducing items, summarising debate, focussing on outcomes and limiting contributions which do not contribute to the outcomes.	Ensures that the public feel welcome, understand the meeting purpose and how they can contribute. Commitment to enabling all committee members to develop skills and participate effectively in meetings. Builds relationships with the Clerk to ensure that the work of the council/committee is relevant, well informed and provides the outcomes needed. Work programme development and management Understanding of the subjects within the scope of a committee and how these interact with council policies generally and the roles of other committees. Ability to develop a balanced work programme for the committee and clear terms of reference and outcomes for any subgroups. Works with the Clerk and committee members to develop the work plan taking account of the work of other committees. Ensures that the work programme takes account of national, regional and local plans, policies and the expressed needs of the community for services. Makes sure that the committee also takes account of inspections or reports from audit, inspection and regulation bodies.
Civic Leadership	In depth understanding of standing orders and rules of engagement. Effectively chairs meetings of the Full Council demonstrating meeting management and leadership skills. Representing the Council at civic functions Ability to manage the Council's reputation. Skills in public speaking. Skills in relationship management.	Demonstrates high level communication, interpersonal and social skills.

CLERKS COMPETENCIES (Deputies and Assistant Clerks) (These are taken from the CilCA portfolio guide)

- ✓ Understands the roles, responsibilities and duties of the council and of the individuals involved in the work of the council
- ✓ Is able to carry out research so that the council is well-informed for making decisions
- ✓ Can manage the implementing of decisions for which the council is responsible
- ✓ Can organise and maintain effective administrative systems, processes, policies and records
- ✓ Can employ a variety of written and oral communication skills including the use of information and communications technology
- ✓ Can advise the council on its duties and powers
- ✓ Can ensure that all statutory requirements are observed including employment law, Health and Safety, Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Equality
- ✓ Is able to establish appropriate and lawful procedures for managing the meetings of the council and its committees
- ✓ Can advise the council on statutory requirements and other procedures for maintaining public confidence in the council
- ✓ Can advise the council on financial planning and reporting including the preparation and review of budgets, the management of risks to public money and funding applications
- ✓ Is able to ensure compliance with proper financial practices including accounts, financial regulations, audit processes, VAT and procurement
- ✓ Can support the council in the planning, management, funding and review of projects, services, assets and facilities
- ✓ Can manage the employment, performance and development of council staff
- ✓ Can manage effective relationships with contractors and service users
- ✓ Can advise the council on its performance as a corporate body ensuring councillors have opportunities for training and development
- ✓ Can advise and support the council as it identifies and implements plans for the future of the community it represents
- ✓ Can manage and administer the council's participation in the planning system according to current planning law, policies and procedures
- ✓ Can demonstrate an awareness of all aspects of the community served by the council, recognising and respecting different interests and enabling cohesion
- ✓ Can help provide all members of the community with opportunities for influencing decisions that affect their lives
- ✓ Can facilitate the council's engagement with the community, managing public relations and ensuring that the council is transparent in all its actions
- ✓ Can manage effective partnership working
- ✓ Can advise and support the council as it facilitates community activity