Ilston Community Council Training Plan

Background

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (Section 67) created an obligation on Community Councils in Wales to produce a training plan for their Community Councillors. The training plan will be classed as a public record and as such shall be published on the Ilston Community Council (ICC) website.

Purpose

The purpose of the training plan for the ICC is to reflect on and address whether the council collectively has the skills and knowledge to perform effectively the duties and responsibilities for the community it serves. The training plan shall help to identify any knowledge or development gaps within the Council and to subsequently arrange appropriate training to ensure that all Community Councillors are best equipped to fulfil their roles during the tenure of their term.

Aim

It is recognized that not all Councillors can be trained in all areas of Council business, but the aim is to ensure that training is proportionate, appropriate and relevant to the needs of the ICC members.

Councillors have a responsibility in their role to identify their own training gaps and requirements in order to conduct Council business to the very best of their ability (The Code of Conduct for Local Authorities in Wales, Ombudsman Wales, 2016. Section 1.7). Councillors are also expected to consider their knowledge and skills related to their areas of specific interest against the Schedule of Competencies for Community Councillors (One Voice Wales, September 2022. Appendix one).

Approach

The ICC training subcommittee decided that to ensure that a focused approach to training will be undertaken by its Councillors, the key areas of regular Community Council business should be identified. A total of nine areas of key Council business were identified and for each area a "Lead" and in several key areas a "Deputy" Councillor with specific interest and responsibilities for that key area will be appointed. The leads and deputies will be asked to consider the available training opportunities in relation to addressing any training needs for their area of interest. (National Training Programme for Community and Town Councils in Wales. One Voice Wales, September 2022. Appendix 2)

This approach to training was considered by the ICC training subcommittee to be the most effective way to meet the ICCs training requirements and provided the best value for money within the ICC training budget.

The nine key areas of Ilston Community Council business were identified as:

1. Council Chair/Vice Chair
2. Planning
3. Environmental

4. Training
5. Highways
6. Finance
7. Communications & Community Engagement
8. Community Council Forum
9. OVW Community Council Representation & OVW Swansea area Committee Representation

Training Lead

The role of the training lead was established to ensure that the ICC will be compliant with all legislative requirements on Councillor training, and to ensure that training will be linked to the competencies of Councillors in their key area of responsibilities. The training lead shall raise awareness of all relevant courses to Councillors as they become available and highlight any development opportunities. Councillors will be asked to seek the support of the training lead and the Clerk to identify and arrange the most appropriate training courses available to address the knowledge and skills gaps.

In addition to the training lead role a training subcommittee consisting of three Councillors has been formed, its purpose is to support the training lead in considering the overall Council approach to training and to ensure that all legislative requirements are met. Any decisions made by the training subcommittee will be presented for approval and adoption by the ICC.

Training Budget

The training budget shall remain the responsibility of the Clerk and Chair and booking of all courses will done be via the Clerk. The annual training budget is currently set at £500 p.a (2022) and it is anticipated that this will be sufficient to cover the annual training needs averaged over the tenure of the term of office. It is expected that in the first year of office of a new term the training spend will be at its highest spend as Councillors fulfill the requirements of the training plan.

Clerk of the Council

As the Clerk of the Council is a council employee their training needs fall under the Continuous Professional Development obligation of the Clerks Contract of Employment. The training subcommittee therefore made the decision that the Clerks training needs will not be part of the ICC Training Plan but will be agreed separately between the Clerk and the Chair.

Councillor Training

Councillor training will be a standing agenda item for the ICC monthly meetings. Following attendance at training courses feedback in writing of summarised key learning points are requested of Councillors. These brief course summaries should be submitted to the Clerk for distribution to all Council members, this is considered by the training subcommittee to be the most effective approach to the dissemination of new knowledge for the benefit of all.

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Councillors will also be asked to submit to the Clerk the "Certificate of Attendance" certificate following completion of training, the certificates will provide the ICC with a body of evidence supporting the training record entries.

There are no mandated training courses currently for Community Councillors in Wales. However, the ICC requests and hopes that all serving Councillors throughout their term of office conform to the following training plan:

Name of Course	Module number	Course Provider	Ideal completion date	Applicability
Code of Conduct	Module 9	One Voice Wales	Within first year of term	All Community Councillors
New Councillor Induction	Not allocated	One Voice Wales	Within first nine months of term	All new Community Councillors
Local Government Finance	Module 6	One Voice Wales	Within tenure of term	All Community Councillors
Equality and Diversity	Module 14	One Voice Wales	Within first year of term	All Community Councillors
Chairing Skills	Module 10	One Voice Wales	Within first year of term	Chairperson and Vice Chairperson
Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 / Sustainability	Module 20	One Voice Wales	Within first two years of term	Environment "Lead" and "Deputy"
Use of IT, Websites & social media	Module 16	One Voice Wales	Within first year of term	Communications and Community engagement "Lead"
Introduction to Community Engagement	Module 8	One Voice Wales	Within first three years of term	Communications and Community engagement "Lead"
Community Councillors Planning training		Planning Aid Wales	Within first two years of term	Planning "Lead" and "Deputy"

To evidence training compliance and competencies within the ICC a new "Record" of all training courses attended by Councillors shall be created and maintained for the five-year term of office commencing May 2022.

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Ilston Community Council Training Record.

The ICC training record is a component of the training plan and will be classed as a public record and published on the Ilston Community Council website. The training record was developed by the training subcommittee and its approval was sought by the ICC.

The training record will be a "live" document which shall be updated by the training lead following any training courses attended by Councillors. The training record is hosted on an Excel spreadsheet containing data related to all completed training by all Councillors during the current five year term of office

The training record will record the following data**:**

1. The title of the training course
2. The host / provider of the course
3. The cost of the course
4. Hours attended
5. Mode of delivery i.e. in person or online
6. Date completed
7. Name of attendee

Under section 67(4) of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 there is a duty on Councils to review their training plan from time to time. Training will be reviewed by the training lead as part of an ongoing process for the ICC, any amendments to the above approach will be made by the training subcommittee when deemed necessary and in addition a formal review date of one year following adoption of the training plan by the Council will be set.

Under section 67(3) of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 the training plan and training record will also undergo a formal review within the first three months of the commencement of a new term of office.

This training plan will apply for the Community Council term of office from June 2022-2027.

The training plan was approved and adopted by the ICC on: 26/10/2022

The annual training plan formal review will be undertaken by: 26/10/2023

(Councillor Helen James, Training Lead 2022-2027).

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APPENDIX ONE

SCHEDULE OF COMPETENCIES (One Voice Wales, 2022)

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	Receives information and data from a variety of sources and is able to store, share and use it effectively and where possible

	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.	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 concerns. Ability to seek the views of all relevant parties. Understands the role and functions of the principal council.	Understands the needs of the local community and secures action from the council on behalf of local people. 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	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

	contributions which do not contribute to 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 manage	Demonstrates high level communication, interpersonal and social skills.

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Appendix Two

ONE VOICE WALES COURSES (2022)

NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCILS IN WALES

New Councillor Induction – For all Newly elected /co-opted Community and Town Councillors
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 brief 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 - Community Emergency Planning What does emergency planning mean to you? This course will give an overview of emergency planning and how it relates to communities. It will inform on the role of the main responding agencies and give an insight into what a community can do before, during and after an incident. It will give you the opportunity to deal with a scenario real councils could face. So…

• What is a resilient community? • What should a community emergency plan look like? • How would you interact with the responding agencies? • This course will give the who, why, what and when of emergency planning!
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 22 - Understanding Mediation To provide an understanding of the relevance and effectiveness of mediation and conciliation approaches in the handling of low-level Code of Conduct complaints and in relation to employment matters.
Module 23 Successfully taking on a Community Asset Transfer To provide an understanding of the most effective ways of ensuring a successful community asset transfer