

September 2022

1. INTRODUCTION.

- 1.1 Community councils and their staff should seek to equip themselves to be as effective and efficient as possible when exercising functions. Councils should regularly review whether there are opportunities to improve their administration and governance so that they are better able to perform their responsibilities and serve their communities. Having identified development gaps, the next step is to develop a plan to address these gaps. Section 67 of the 2021 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act requires community councils to make and publish a plan about the training provision for its members and staff. The first training plan must be ready and published by 5 November 2022, six months after the duty comes into force. This is considered to be an appropriate period of time for councils to assess needs, agree its training budget and adopt a plan.
- 1.2 The training plan should reflect on, and address, whether the council collectively has the skills and knowledge it needs to deliver its plans most effectively. Planning for the provision of training can be carried out in a proportionate way, taking into account factors such as the activities undertaken by the council, the current expertise of councillors and clerks and the nature and significance of any training needs identified. Overall, the intention is that the preparation of a training plan would support councillors to have the relevant training to carry out their role - as well as professional clerks and other employees.
- 1.3 In order to determine the training priorities for the community council, it is necessary to assess the essential skills needed by the council and whether the council feels there is sufficient coverage and depth across the council. The full list of essential skills will depend on the activities within the council. For instance, a council intending to exercise the GPoC may find it essential that councillors are familiar with preparing a business case or setting up a business.
- 1.4 There are areas which all councils should ensure that they have sufficient skills and understanding. These are: • Basic induction for councillors; • The Code of Conduct for members of local authorities in Wales; and • Financial management and governance. In addition to these areas, the council will want to consider if there are new challenges and opportunities it may wish to explore, such as those offered by the GPoC. In which case, it may decide there are new skills for councillors and clerks to attain.

- 1.5 The first step in the process of developing the training plan is to undertake a training needs analysis of councillors, the Clerk/RFO and Deputy and/or Assistant Clerk, as well as other officers and staff such as caretakers, cleaners, grounds staff, catering staff and those managing facilities such as leisure facilities, cemeteries or street markets. To make certain that this process is meaningful and effective, it will be necessary to have regard to the competencies required for each role.
- 1.6 The next step is to determine what steps it will take to address relevant skills gaps and prioritise accordingly. The training plan should reflect the training needs of the council and its plan for addressing those needs. The plan must be approved by the full council prior to publication. The plan should provide, as a minimum, information about the type of training; Numbers participating; the timeframe over which the training is expected to be completed; and the overall cost of the training.
- 1.7 The plan will need to include details of the courses that will be considered for each of the roles. It is anticipated that the training needs of the Council will mostly be met by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks. However, for certain training needs specifically those with a high technical component or courses needed to address training needs that relate specifically to roles such as caretakers and grounds staff it may be necessary to source courses from local providers such as colleges of further education or local training companies that may specialise in what might be described as technical training or specific elements relating to health and safety. In the case of training in planning related matters the first port of call should be Planning Aid Wales who have a successful track record of providing training to community councils.
- 1.8 Training costs must be met by councils themselves, although bursary schemes for councillors and clerks may be available from the Welsh Government to subsidise these costs. Councils should not need reminding that part of the costs of running an effective council includes ensuring that the members and staff have sufficient capability to carry out their functions effectively. It is vital therefore that Councils should take account of the training costs when setting their budgets.
- 1.9 Smaller councils, in particular, may wish to share their training plans with neighbouring councils to identify any common training requirements that could be negotiated on a larger group basis and potentially reduce the training costs for all. One Voice Wales for instance can offer to provide any of its training modules on what is described as 'a bespoke package where councillors from

a number of councils can attend with the cost being shared between each of the councils.

- 1.10 The Council's published training plan should not seek to name individuals without their consent. Where this is impossible, e.g., there is one member of staff, the training plan should focus on what the training priorities are rather than who they are for.
- 1.11 It is common for a single clerk to act in this capacity for more than one community council. Other staff may also work across multiple community councils. It is recommended that community councils take a pragmatic approach to meeting the training needs. For instance, councils could agree collectively what training such staff are to receive and how the costs may be shared between the councils. This could be recorded in the training plans of all councils affected with care being taken to prevent the information identifying a particular individual.
- 1.12 Under section 67(4) of the 2021 Act there is a duty on councils to review their training plan from time to time. As a minimum this would be at least at every ordinary election of community councillors. Under section 67(3) of the 2021 Act, once the first plan is published, subsequent plans must be prepared within three months of an ordinary election of community councillors. In practice, the plan is likely to require revising more frequently, for example, following a council by-election or a new co-opted councillor joining; staff changes; or taking on new responsibilities such as new services or assets. Where a council revises or replaces its training plan, under section 67(5) of the 2021 Act, the council must publish the revised or new plan.
- 1.13 The publication of the council's training plan should be consistent with the wider approach to publication required by the 2021 Act and be published electronically.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS.

- 2.1 Initially an analysis needs to be undertaken of the core competencies required of councillors and employees. To assist Councils undertake this analysis there is a schedule of core competencies associated with some of the roles common to most councils described in **Appendix One**. These roles relate to that of Councillor, Clerk/RFO, Deputy and Assistant. **Appendix Two** provides details of those core competencies that would apply to other roles such as Caretaker of a Community Centre and Grounds staff which are employed in many community councils.

- 2.2 The next step, having determined the competencies that are required for each of the roles, is to determine what training and development is required, the estimated cost involved and programming of the training over the period of the training plan. It should be acknowledged that training and development is not just about sending individuals on training courses or webinars, but it may include membership of professional bodies, provision of relevant information and internally organised team development events.
- 2.3 For those employees who are annually appraised there is an opportunity here to consider how training and development needs identified as part of the process can be linked to the requirements specified in the training plan. Likewise, any new initiatives planned by the Council might require consideration of new and emerging training and development needs. For example, a Council that decides to organise an event for the community for the first time might identify that health and safety training is needed together with guidance on risk assessment preparation.
- 2.4 The next step is to assess the training requirements for each role within the Council. It will be important to prioritise the implementation of the training plan and programme the investment over the next five years.

3. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER IN A TRAINING PLAN

- 3.1 Having made the relevant assessment and determined the training and development needs of roles within the Council it is now necessary to pull this information together to prepare the training plan that will require approval by the Council and following that publication on the Council's website.
- 3.2 It is important to note that the plan will need to be reviewed at set intervals and used as a 'living' document to support the enhancement of the knowledge and skills of Councillors and their employees.

TRAINING PLAN

Name of Council.....Caldicot Town Council.....

TRAINING PLAN

Date approved by Council..... October 2022

Date of First Planned Review.....,May 2023

This training plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 67 of the 2021 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act

This training plan has been prepared based on the guidance issued by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Councils. Councillor roles and employee roles have been assessed by reference to a set of core competencies for each role. This assessment has enabled the Council to prioritise its resources to enable all roles within the council to be supported by a well thought approach to its training and development needs. The commitment contained in this training plan will assist the council to enhance its approach to the delivery of high-quality services to its community. The plan will be reviewed at least on an annual basis to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and accounts for the changing needs of councillors and employees as well as any turnover of councillors or employees.

Role	Training to be arranged in 2022/23	Training to be arranged in 2023/24	Training to be arranged in 2024/25	Training to be arranged in 2025/26	Training to be arranged in 2026/27
Councillors	Code of Conduct				
Clerk	General Power of Competence				
Deputy Clerk	CiLCA				
Mayor/Deputy	Attendance to OVW events/meetings				
Office staff	Attendance to SLCC events/conferences				

Include below any specific comments about how the training will be arranged or how other development needs will be addressed through other methods e.g., attendance at conferences of events

Comments:	
2022/23	In appointment of new staff at the end of 2021/22 and into 2022/23, the Clerk/RFO is CiLCA qualified. The Deputy Clerk is currently undertaking training to achieve CiLCA. The Administrative Officer complete ILCA (2021/2022). New Council was elected in May 2022 and all Councillors have attended Code of Conduct training. Councillors will be continually updated with training and course information (provided by One Voice Wales). In 2022/2023, Caldicot Town Council resolved eligibility and then to adopt the general power of competence(GPC), this must be reviewed at each Annual Meeting.
2023/24	
2024/25	
2025/26	
2026/27	

ESTIMATED COSTS OF THE TRAINING IN EACH COUNCIL YEAR (To be included in the annual budget for each of the next five years):

Financial Year	Amount to be included in the budget at 2022 Prices (£)	Comments
2022/23	4,000	Elected members and staff total
2023/24	4,000	Elected members and staff total
2024/25		
2025/26		
2026/27		