MAESYCWMMER COMMUNITY COUNCL TRAINING PLAN

The Local Government and Elections Act 2021 Section 67 requires Community Councils to establish and publish a plan about training provision for its members. The first training plan must be published by 5th November 2022.

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.

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.

This Training Plan was presented to the Council at the September 2022 Meeting to be reviewed, approved, and adopted. This plan covers the period up to the next Council Election.

Maesycwmmer Community Council is committed to provide training for both its members and staff to enable them to undertake their respective roles for the betterment of not only the Council and the Community it serves, but also the Councillors' personnel development.

MAESYCWMMER COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S TRAINING OBJECTIVES:

- To improve the understanding of its members, of their role as a local Councillor.

- To improve the understanding of its members of the powers available to the Council and how best to utilise resources for the betterment of the community it serves.

- To ensure an acceptable level of succession planning in order to ensure the Council can operate effectively following local elections and potential changes to the Council membership and staff.

- To ensure all newly elected Councillors undertake Introduction Training within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.

- To ensure all Councillors undertake training in the Code of Conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.

- To complete a skills audit following an ordinary election and/or a significant change to the structure of the Council to identify gaps in knowledge and consider training needs. To assist the Council there is a schedule of core competencies included below, see **Appendix One**. Also included below is a template for recording training assessments and training requirements, see **Appendix Two**.

- To encourage members to attend conferences and training events as appropriate. **Appendix Three** provides a schedule of One Voice Wales's courses together with a summary of content. **Appendix Four** provides a schedule of courses available from the Society of Local Council Clerks.

- To ensure Councillors are encouraged to read the following publications: 1) The Good Councillors Guide 2) Governance and Accountability – A Practitioners Guide on Election to Office.

- To ensure Councillors are familiar with current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The Clerk will maintain a training record including costs for all members and staff, this will be a living document, updated as and when training is required / undertaken.

Members are asked to inform the Clerk of any training needs that arise throughout the year. These will be considered by the Council on an ad hoc basis.

Members are asked to inform the Clerk of any training undertaken throughout the year for inclusion within the training record.

APPENDIX ONE - SCHEDULE OF COMPETENCIES - 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	Receives information and data from a variety of sources and is able to store, share and use it effectively and where possible electronically.

	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.	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	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

	agenda by introducing items, summarising debate, focussing on outcomes and limiting 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 management.	Demonstrates high level communication, interpersonal and social skills.

APPENDIX ONE CONTINUED - SCHEDULE OF COMPETENCIES - CLERKS

- 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

APPENDIX TWO - LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Name of Councillor……………………………………

An assessment should be made for each councillor to identify their current competency level using a scale of 1-4 where 4 is fully proficient. Priority is given to competency levels assessed as 1 or 2

Core competency	Assessed Competency Level (1-4)	Brief Description of Training Required (By reference to core competences) – Appendix 1
Role of Councillor		
Legal Basis for Delivery of Services		
Understanding the planning system		
Conduct		
Equality and Diversity		
Financial Governance and Accountability		
Attendance/Preparation for Meetings and Events		
Information Management		
Using ICT and social media		
Working with Clerk/Other Employees		
Health and Safety		
Continuing professional and personal development		
Financial Capability		
Sustainable Development		
Local Leadership		
Chairing Skills		
Civic Leadership		

APPENDIX THREE - One Voice Wales Courses

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 Councilor

- 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 Councilor and their commitment to the office of Councilor, the Register of Members Interests, the Code of Conduct and ethical behavior expected of a Councilor, 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.

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

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.

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
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.

APPENDIX FOUR – COURSES & QUALIFICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS

Webinars:

The SLCC offer over 100 sector specific webinars for your officers to attend from VAT to Health & Safety, Planning to Carbon Literacy https://www.slcc.co.uk/events/webinar/

Themed Summits - A one day dedicated event on topical matters https://www.slcc.co.uk/events/themed-summits/

Practitioners' Conference - A two day in person event covering a variety of workshop topics for small / medium sized councils. A chance to network with likeminded clerks and share similar experiences https://www.slcc.co.uk/event/practitioners-conference-2023/

Joint SLCC & OVW Conference - An annual event currently delivered virtually offering training and guidance on a variety of topics https://www.slcc.co.uk/event/ovw/

Management in Action - An interactive event featuring sessions around connecting people, developing strategy and preparing the sector for the future https://www.slcc.co.uk/event/mia

National Conference - Hear from a range of distinguished sector speakers providing training focused on the conference theme (changes annually) https://www.slcc.co.uk/event/national/

Qualifications:

SLCC offer a range of qualifications tailored to meet the needs of local council officers and others working with local councils in England and Wales. Study for a qualification and expand your skill set, broaden your career opportunities & progression and feel empowered.

ILCA https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/ilca/

FiLCA https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/filca/

ILCA to CiLCA https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/ilca-to-cilca/

CiLCA https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/cilca/

ILM (L5) Diploma in Leadership & Management https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/ilm-level-5-diploma-in-leadership-management/

LM (L5) Certificate in Coaching & Mentoring https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/ilm-level-5-certificate-in-coaching-mentoring/

ILM (L5) Diploma in Coaching & Mentoring https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/ilm-level-5-diploma-in-coaching-mentoring/

Community Governance https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/community-governance/