

# COUNCILLOR TRAINING POLICY

## STATEMENT OF INTENT

Reference	SNTC/	Adopted by	Town Council
Prepared by	C Robson (Town Clerk)	Adopted date	13 December 2023
Monitored by	Town Clerk	Minute reference	TC114/22
Monitoring Review	Every four years	Review date	December 2027

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 St Neots Town Council is committed to ongoing training and development of its Members and employees for effectiveness and in carrying out their roles.
- 1.2 All Members are elected officials of the Council and represent the whole electorate. Councillors must actively take part in Council meetings and help make council decisions. Council meetings must run effectively, efficiently, and legally.
- 1.3 In order to achieve this, it is desirable for all Councillors to receive training so that they can fully understand what is expected of them and can demonstrate to the electorate that they carry out their duties to a high standard and to the best of their ability.
- 1.4 Training will:
  - Enhance the performance of both staff and Members
  - Widen skills and experience
  - Provide opportunities to network
  - Provide the skills to confront challenges
  - Encourage innovation
  - Raise the standards of the Town Council
  - Support the Council in meeting criteria of the Local Council Award Scheme
- 1.5 There are a number of training sessions that Councillors will be expected to attend within 3 months of taking office, due to their importance in guiding and protecting Councillors and the Council. Additionally councillors will be expected to complete refresher training courses in a timely manner as required during their term in office.

### 2. WHY DO WE NEED TRAINING

- 2.1 There are a number of reasons why training is important to the Council;
  - Gain a better understanding of council meeting procedures and decision making.
  - Gain a clear understanding of the role of a Council, Councillors and duties of the Council.

- Understand the Legal Duties & responsibilities of Town Councillors.
- Keep abreast of Change's in legislation.
- Avoid professional error/mistake.
- Ensure familiarity with new equipment, process and working methods.
- Reduce accidents and injuries.
- Improve communication.
- Improve & Re-fresh essential skills to take advantage of new & revised qualifications that may have launched.

### 3. TYPES OF TRAINING

3.1 St Neots Town Council will demonstrate a commitment to on-going training and development through use of blended training solutions depending on what is available and where possible accommodating needs of Councillors.

3.2 These solutions may include;

- In-house training events or briefings delivered by the officers, Councillors or external support.
- External courses offered by County Associations of Local Councils.
- E-learning solutions.
- Remote/virtual training sessions delivered via Teams or Zoom platforms.
- Conferences and Seminars.
- Information sharing meetings with other town councils, local authorities, partners, and stakeholders.

3.3 Sources of training include;

- Courses run by Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Clerks – County Training
- Partnership (CPALC-CTP).
- Courses run by Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).
- Presentations by Huntingdonshire District Council (HCD) & Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC).
- Presentations by Councillors who have specialist knowledge.
- Briefing packs from HDC & CCC.
- Training packs from Government Department & other organisations which the Council is a member of.
- Knowledge imparted by the Clerk or officers with specialist knowledge.
- The Good Councillors Guide.
- Manuals and training guides.
- Training offered by other professional bodies.

#### 4. COUNCILLOR TRAINING

4.1 The Council will put in place a number of training opportunities which Councillors will be expected to undertake.

##### 4.1.1 All Councillors Elected to the Council following Town Council Elections

Following town and parish council elections the following training will be expected to be completed by all Councillors within 3 months of taking office;

Councillor Training (newly elected cllrs)
The Experienced Councillor (re-elected cllrs)
Code of Conduct Training
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Data Protection – GDPR

4.1.2 Councillors serving on the Planning Committee will be expected to undertake planning Training.

##### 4.1.3 New Councillors Elected or Co-opted During a Council Term

Any Councillor newly elected or co-opted to the Town Council during the Council term will be expected to complete within 3 months of taking office the following training, for which the Council will maintain a suitable training budget.

Councillor Training
Code of Conduct Training
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Data Protection – GDPR
Plus any training which is relevant to committees as highlighted in section 4.1.5

##### 4.1.4 Chairpersons

All Members appointed as a Chair of Deputy Chair of a Council committee will be expected within 3 months of appointment to attend a chairpersonship training course within 6 months of their appointment (If they have not previously completed the training).

Members will be requested to complete the CAPALC Chairpersonship Training Course which lasts 2.5 hours.

A further Chair/Deputy Chair 2-hour training course focusing on Chairing and Facilitation Skills for Councillors is also available. The CAPALC Chairperson course must be undertaken before this training course is considered.

##### 4.1.5 Committee Members

There may be specific training courses, conferences/seminars, or briefings that become available in helping members of a committee in undertaking their work and achieving the objectives of that committee.

### **Planning Committee Training**

Any Member of the Planning Committee will be expected to attend within 3 months of joining the committee a planning training session from either HDC or CAPALC.

### **Finance and Governance Committee**

Members of the Finance and Governance Committee will be expected to attend within 3 months of joining the committee a remote 90 minute training course on '*Local Government Finance For Councillors*'.

### **Environment and Emergency Committee**

Any Member of the Environment and Emergency Committee will be given the opportunity to complete the CAPALC E-Nimble training on Environmental Awareness.

### **Promotion and Events Committee**

Any Member of the Promotion and Events Committee will be given the opportunity to attend a remote '*Community Advocacy & Engagement course*' – focusing on how to engage effectively with the local community.

## **5. ADDITIONAL TRAINING NEEDS**

- 5.1 Individual councillors may identify training needs and opportunities which would benefit themselves and the Council as a whole. Such needs should be identified to the Clerk who will endeavour to source appropriate training. Where this exceeds the Councillor training budget it will need to be considered by the Council.

## **6. RECORD KEEPING**

- 6.1 A training log of all training undertaken will be kept by the Clerk/Deputy Clerk. A list of training completed will be published on the Councillors section of the website and updated quarterly.
- 6.2 An individual training register will be set up for all Councillors to sign to confirm training has been made available to them and to record the training that has been completed.
- 6.3 Each Councillor will be provided with and asked to complete a skills audit form and identify any additional areas of training outside that detailed in the policy which they would like to be considered.