

LLANTWIT FARDRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
CYNGOR CYMUNED LLANILLTUD FAERDREF



COUNCIL MEETING

28TH NOVEMBER, 2022

REPORT OF THE CLERK

**PUBLICATION OF TRAINING PLANS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 67 OF
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS (WALES) ACT, 2021**

1. THE TRAINING PLAN PROCESS

1.1 At the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on the 14th November, 2022, Members gave consideration to the comprehensive report of the Clerk outlining the process to be followed in respect of Section 67 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, 2021.

1.2 Earlier on in the meeting at Agenda Item 3(b), Members received the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Committee and at Minute No.11(2) it was recommended:-

“that that the Training Plan as shown at Appendix 7 to the report be published on the Council’s website by the end of November, 2022 to accord with Section 67 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, 2021, which in the main relates to staff”.

1.3 As indicated in the report that was presented to the Staffing Committee 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.

- 1.4 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 General Power of Competence (GPoC) may find it essential that Councillors are familiar with preparing a business case or setting up a business.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 The first step in the process of developing the training plan is to undertake a training needs analysis of Councillors and staff. To make certain that this process is meaningful and effective, it will be necessary to have regard to the competencies required for each role.
- 1.7 As indicated earlier, the plan must be approved by the full Council prior to publication and appended to this report is the Training Plan that was agreed for recommendation by the Staffing Committee.
- 1.8 As can be seen from the attached Appendix it includes recommended training for the Council's staff and the respective Chairs, in addition to the Code of Conduct and Financial Management training that should be undertaken by all Councillors.
- 1.9 Whilst, the Clerk has not, as yet carried out the annual appraisals of staff, she has met with each Officer, on an individual basis and it has been acknowledged that:-
 - The newly appointed Assistant Clerk would benefit from undertaking the ILCA (Introduction to Local Council Administration). The aim of this course is to provide an introduction to the work of a local Council, its Councillors and the Clerk. The online programme can be studied in her own time. The course must be completed within 12 months and is facilitated by SLCC at a cost of £120+VAT. It is therefore suggested that the Assistant Clerk undertakes this qualification following a satisfactory completion of her three months probationary period which commenced on the 12th September, 2022.
 - The Responsible Finance Officer would benefit from undertaking the FILCA (Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration). The aim of this course is to provide an introduction to the work of the RFO. The course is in five modules based on the annual round of financial activities. The course must be completed within 12 months and is facilitated by SLCC at a cost of £120+VAT.

- The Manual Operatives have various certificates associated with their role all of which expire at different dates. For example, the Abrasive Wheels Certificates (awareness of the dangers associated with abrasive wheels (grinders/disc cutters)) expires after three years and therefore needs to be undertaken this year. It is an on-line course of approximately two hours duration and costs £12+VAT per user. The remaining courses to be undertaken are set out at Appendix 7.
 - As agreed at the Council meeting held on the 3rd October, 2022, the Clerk is to undertake training in Safeguarding.
- 1.10 In the next few weeks, the Clerk will meet with each Councillor on an individual basis to go through their training needs and the Training Plan will be revised accordingly.
- 1.11 Training costs must be met by the Council, although bursary schemes for Councillors and the Clerks may be available from the Welsh Government to subsidise these costs.
- 1.12 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.
- 1.13 Care should be taken in not identifying a particular individual when publishing its training plan and therefore individuals should not be named. However, the Council needs to be mindful that it would prove very difficult when publishing its plan not to identify the designation of the post-holder, for example, the Clerk or a Chair of a Committee.

2. REVIEW OF THE TRAINING PLAN

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 It was agreed by the Staffing Committee by Minute No.11(10) that the Training Plan is to be reviewed on an annual basis by the Committee at its first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Council in May. However, as indicated in paragraph 1.10 above, the Training Plan will be revised following the training needs identified for each Councillor and a new plan will be published.

3. **BUDGET**

- 3.1 During the budget setting process for the 2022/23 financial year - £2,000 was set aside for staff training and £800 was set aside for Member training. £1,715 remains within the staff training budget and £286 remains within the Member training budget. Following the appraisals of both Members and Staff there may be a need to vire money to the training budget.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That as recommended by the Staffing Committee at its meeting held on the 14th November, 2022 (Minute No.11(2) refers)) to agree to the publication of the attached Training Plan together with the estimated training budget costs for the next five years, by the end of November, 2022 to accord with Section 67 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, 2021, which in the main relates to staff;
- 4.2 that in accordance with Section 67(5) of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, 2021, a revised plan be published following the training needs analysis of each Councillor and the Appraisals of staff.
- 4.3 That in accordance with Section 67(3) of the Act, the Training Plan be revised, should there be a by-election or a new co-opted Councillor or any staff changes;
- 4.4 to note that as indicated in paragraph 3.1 of the report, there may be a need to vire money to the training budget during this financial year.