

The Importance of Quality Training

Effective local governance relies on knowledgeable, confident, and capable people. Parish and Town Councils are at the heart of their communities, making decisions that shape local services, facilities, and wellbeing. To carry out this important work effectively, **training and continuous professional development** are essential for all those involved—**Clerks, Council Staff & Councillors**.



Building Confidence and Competence

Training empowers Councillors and Clerks to perform their roles with confidence. Understanding the **legal framework, governance procedures, and financial responsibilities** ensures that decisions are made correctly and transparently. With proper training, Councils can avoid costly mistakes, strengthen their reputation, and deliver better outcomes for residents.



Supporting the Clerk – The Council’s Key Professional

The Clerk is often described as the “engine” of the Council. As the Proper Officer, they are responsible for administration, financial management, staff supervision, and implementing Council decisions. Training helps Clerks keep their knowledge up to date, adapt to legislative changes, and maintain high professional standards. Achieving qualifications such as the **CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration)** demonstrates competence and commitment, raising the Council’s overall standard of governance.



Developing Effective Councillors

Councillors are elected to represent their community, but the role can be complex and demanding. Training helps Councillors understand their **roles and responsibilities**, the boundaries between governance and administration, and the processes that ensure accountability. It also supports them in developing leadership, communication, and decision-making skills—essential for working effectively as a team and serving the public.

Strengthening the Whole Council

Training benefits more than individuals—it strengthens the Council as a whole. A well-trained team operates more efficiently, communicates more effectively, and works collaboratively towards shared goals. This leads to **better strategic planning, improved community engagement**, and stronger local democracy.



Accessible and Flexible Learning Opportunities

The **Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC)** offer a wide range of training opportunities for Councillors, Chairmen, Clerks, and support staff. Courses are available during the day, evenings, or weekends, and can be delivered in person or virtually. This flexibility ensures that all Councils—regardless of size—can access the support they need.



Investing in the Future

*Training should not be seen as an expense but as an **investment** in the effectiveness and credibility of the Council. Ongoing learning fosters professionalism, continuity, and resilience—qualities that help Councils meet challenges and deliver lasting benefits for their communities.*

*A robust training and development programme ensures that everyone involved in local governance has the **skills, knowledge, and confidence** to make a real difference. In short, training is not just important—it is fundamental to the success and growth of every Parish and Town Council.*

