

## NEW COUNCILLOR MENTORING POLICY

Mentoring of new councillors by peers is an important part of the councillor training process.

### Councillor Mentoring

#### 1. Introduction

Being an effective councillor requires a certain level of knowledge and skills along with a positive approach. Mentoring enables people to achieve their potential based on a relationship between two people and provides a real-life learning experience which can be used to support and develop fellow councillors.

#### 2. What is mentoring?

- A one-to-one relationship, usually over a set period of time, in which an established person (mentor) provides consistent support, guidance and practical help for a new councillor and who may not have had experience in this role previously (mentee)
- The mentor is someone who acts as a trusted confidante to the mentee over a period of time, in which they share their personal knowledge and experiences promoting a self-discovery approach
- A way of enabling the mentee to gain the skills, knowledge and confidence to perform their duties at a higher level, giving them access to impartial, non-judgemental guidance and support
- A voluntary relationship, which the mentee or mentor can by agreement end at any time, whether due to a natural ending or the relationship no longer being viable

#### 3. What should the mentor do?

- Provide insight and perspective of what it is like to be a councillor
- Help by sharing their own experiences of successes and failures
- Give friendly, unbiased support, encouragement and guidance
- Provide honest and constructive feedback to the mentee
- Be a sounding board for ideas, listening and advice where appropriate
- Focus on the mentee's needs in their role as a councillor

#### 4. The mentor is not expected to ...

- Sort out the mentee's problems
- Be a best friend
- Dispense discipline
- Providing a training/coaching service
- Make decisions for the mentee

#### 5. What should a mentee do?

- Find out what is required of them
- Learn how things are done
- Develop an understanding of how the council works
- Learn how to be effective
- Be open and willing to learn
- Help develop new skills

## 6. Processes and progress

- Get to know each other and agree what your main focus and objectives will be
- Make time for mentoring and agree a plan together that is realistic
- Agree realistic expectations, confidentiality, responsibility and communication
- Review how the mentoring has progressed
- Maintain regular contact after mentoring period is over

## 7. Support and evaluation

The Town Clerk will provide support to mentors and mentees as required until the mentee is confident in their role as a town councillor, and will seek training for mentors when available.

## 8. Who can be a mentor?

A mentor will be an established town council member. Should the Town Clerk feel that another member might be more appropriate as a mentor to a new councillor, where they may be better matched, then with the agreement of that member, they shall be designated as new councillor mentor for that new member.

## 9. Policy review

This New Councillor Mentoring Policy will be reviewed annually, or when there are changes to relevant legislation.

## 10. Alternative formats

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