



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 and 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

8. Who can be a mentor?

A mentor will be an established town council member, potentially from the Personnel Committee. However, 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, 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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