



OFFICER  
DEVELOPMENT  
FRAMEWORK



Aimed at new clerks

# INTRODUCTION FROM DANNY MOODY, NORTHANTS CALC CEO

Welcome to the parish council sector. I hope that you find your new role enjoyable and rewarding. I tell people that there is never a dull day in the world of parish councils, which always raises a bit of a smile, but it's true! The Clerk's job is very varied and always interesting.

Type your text

Northants CALC is the membership organisation for parish and town councils and your council has always been in membership. We supply information and guidance, legal support, training, representation and a free-at-the-point-of-use enquiry service. We're here to help you!

Northants CALC is here to help you, so please do let us know how we can be of assistance as you settle in to your new role.

Let me know if there's anything I can do to be of assistance. Whatever you need, just shout.

Best regards,

Danny.

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Danny Moody

Chief Executive

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils



# ABOUT MY COUNCIL

Completing the following table is a useful exercise to help you to get to know your council.

Try starting by filling in the information you do know.

<b>No. of Electors</b> <i>This is the no. of people on the electoral register in your parish, it gives an idea how many people are in your community. Every clerk should have a copy. You can ask democratic services for an up-to-date copy.</i>		
<b>Current Budget</b> <i>This is how much money you have to spend in the current financial year. Councils tend to set their budgets round December/January time, try looking in minutes during this timeframe.</i>		£
<b>Current Precept</b> <i>The precept forms part of the council's income and comes from your Unitary Council. Councils set their precept after the budget so you should find this figure on minutes setting the budget or shortly afterwards.</i>		£
<b>Band D Rate</b> <i>Band D is the amount for the average council taxpayer. You can find this by emailing Sophie Harding <a href="mailto:sharding@northantscalc.com">sharding@northantscalc.com</a></i>		£
<b>No. of Seats on your Council</b> <i>This is the no. of councillors that make a full complement to the council, not how many you currently have; you may have vacancies.</i>		
<b>When are your meetings?</b> <i>E.g. every first Monday of the Month or bimonthly on second Tuesday of the month excluding August and December.</i>		
<b>Unitary Council</b> <i>This will be the Unitary Council that covers your parish. You will work with various departments such as Highways, Democratic Services.</i>	<b>Northamptonshire Council</b>	<b>Unitary Ward(s)</b> <i>Wards and electoral divisions are electoral districts at sub-national level, represented by one or more councillors. You can find this out on your Unitary Council's website or <a href="https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/">https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/</a></i>
<b>Name of Unitary Ward Councillors</b> <i>These councillors represent your parish at a Unitary Council level.</i>		<b>Name of Local MP(s)</b> <i>This is the person elected to represent your area at Parliament Level.</i>
<b>Police Area</b> <i>This information can be found here: <a href="https://bit.ly/3lmecXE">https://bit.ly/3lmecXE</a></i>		<b>Name of Police Liaison Representative (PLR)</b> <i>This is the person allocated to liaise information from the police to the council, this can be the clerk, a councillor or a member of the public. <a href="https://www.northantscalc.com/police-liaison-representative">https://www.northantscalc.com/police-liaison-representative</a></i>
<b>Name of Chair/Mayor</b> <i>This person is elected annually at your annual meeting (May) and you'll probably work closely with them.</i>		<b>Name of Vice Chair/Deputy Mayor</b> <i>If applicable.</i>

<b>Committees</b> <i>List all and any Committees the council has.</i>	<b>Working Parties</b> <i>List all and any Working Parties the council has.</i>
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<b>Which Transparency Code is Applicable to your Council?</b> <i>Select as appropriate</i>
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<b>Does the Parish Council own any of the following: <i>Tick as appropriate</i></b>
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<b>Burial Grounds</b>		<b>Village Hall / Community Centre</b>	
<b>Allotments</b>		<b>Community Library</b>	
<b>Playground</b>		<b>Streetlights</b>	

Any other Assets The above isn't an exhaustive list, if your council owns more assets than the examples above list them here:

<b>Northants CALC Services</b> Is the council signed up to any of the following:
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<b>Membership</b>		<b>Internal Audit Service</b>	
<b>Data Protection Officer Service</b>			

**Any other notes**



## TRAINING

The following is a list of vital training needed for new clerks. Ideally, you would cover the courses in the order listed, however course availability and priority will depend on what time of year you started in the role. See below for more details regarding the individual courses.

<https://www.northantscalc.com/officer-development-framework-essential>

### NEW CLERKS (SPRING OR AUTUMN)

This course is a must for newly-appointed clerks, it provides a broad understanding of the role and responsibilities of a town or parish clerk.

### NEW CLERKS FINANCE

This session is for new clerks and is designed to give them an overview of a council's financial year, along with a basic understanding of the Responsible Financial Officer's (RFO) role.

### YEAR END

This session introduces the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and the stages of the audit process. There are three courses available depending on your annual turnover:

Income & Expenditure Accounts  
Receipts & Payments Accounts (over £25,000)  
Councils under £25,000

### PLANNING NUTS AND BOLTS

This course is an introductory training session covering the basic principles of planning including policy, applications, appeals and enforcement.

### RESPONDING TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS

This session looks at the practical elements of responding to planning applications – what should and shouldn't be included in your responses.

### DATA PROTECTION PART 1

This introductory session walks councils through the theory and core principles of GDPR and related data protection legislation.



<https://www.northantscalc.com/e-learning.html>

## E-LEARNING

Each course is designed to take approximately 35-50 minutes to complete with a quiz at the end to test your knowledge. There is a pass rate of 80% required to achieve your certificate.

### DATA PROTECTION (GDPR)

We want to think our data is secure and well-managed. However, with frequent reports of hacking attacks on large organisations and misused personal information, how can we be sure our data is safe? This e-learning module includes a range of learning activities to help you develop your understanding of data protection.

### INFORMATION SECURITY AWARENESS

Organisations that fall prey to cyber criminals due to information security failures suffer the consequences of reduced productivity, damaged customer relationships, tarnished reputations, and significant financial penalties.

This e-learning course includes a range of learning activities to help you develop your understanding of information security.

## COUNCIL SPECIFIC TOPICS

The following are courses you may need if you are a burial authority or elections are almost upon us.

### CEMETERY MANAGEMENT

This course is a must for councils that are burial authorities. It deals with common problems, issues and mistakes, and the costs that can be realised by burial authorities. This course will tell you how to avoid these costs and create potential new income streams.

### PLANNING FOR ELECTIONS (2025, 2029, 2034)

This workshop is designed to prepare clerks and councillors for the election process, explain the rules and answer questions about the election process.

## READING

### STANDING ORDERS

Standing Orders are the written rules of a local council. They are used to confirm a council's internal organisational, administrative and procurement procedures and procedural matters for meetings. Start your reading with the bits in bold, those are the bits the council must do. You don't need to understand them straight away, as you gain experience they will start to make more sense.

### FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The financial regulations are an essential tool for local councils of all sizes. They set out the framework within which the council ensures responsible and sustainable management of the council's finances. Every council must have financial regulations[1]. Again, you don't need to understand them straight away, as you gain experience they will start to make more sense.

[1] Local Government Act 1972, s.135, Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015, reg.4



# ESSENTIAL

The training calendar illustrates when courses are typically scheduled throughout the year and will help you to prioritise the order of training.

**MARCH  
& SEPT**

**NEW CLERKS  
SPRING & AUTUMN**

**JAN &  
FEB**

**YEAR END AUDIT**

**APR -  
MARCH**

**NEW CLERKS FINANCE  
PLANNING NUTS AND BOLTS  
RESPONDING TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS  
DATA PROTECTION PART ONE**

**ALL  
YEAR**

**GDPR E-LEARNING  
INFORMATION SECURITY AWARENESS E-LEARNING  
CEMEMTERY MANAGEMENT  
PLANNING FOR ELECTIONS**



## LEARNING LOG

Training	Notes
New Clerks	
New Clerks Finance	
Year End	
Planning Nuts and Bolts	
Responding to Planning Applications	
Data Protection Part 1	





# ESSENTIAL

## LEARNING LOG

<b>E-Learning</b>	<b>Notes</b>
GDPR	
Information Security Awareness	
<b>Essential Reading</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Standing Orders	
Financial Regulations	
<b>Council Specific Topics</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Cemetery Management	
Planning for Elections (2025, 2029, 2034)	



## TRAINING

Below are courses we recommend you prioritise following completion of those in the Essential stage. Again, the training calendar below illustrates when courses are typically scheduled throughout the year and will help you to prioritise the order of training.

<https://www.northantscalc.com/officer-development-framework-skilled>

### BUDGETING FOR CLERKS

This session is aimed at officers of parish and town councils, who are involved in preparing and monitoring budgets.

### AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Agendas and minutes are vital in council business. The agenda forms the summons to the meeting as well as listing the items of business to be transacted. The minutes are a legal document recording the councils decisions.

### VAT

There are three courses on offer covering VAT depending on you VAT status:  
VAT for VAT Registered Councils:  
VAT for Unregistered Councils (VAT126):  
VAT - Partial Exemption:

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ESSENTIALS FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

This course looks at what requirements and obligations local councils have when it comes to Freedom of Information and related legislation.

### YEAR END

You may have already done this training but it's sometimes tricky to remember what to do when you only do it once a year:

Income and Expenditure Accounts  
Receipts and Payments Accounts (over £25,000)  
Councils under £25,000

### SOCIAL MEDIA FOR COUNCILS PART 1

This comprehensive course looks at how to build a social media strategy that seeks to promote your services and key council priorities.

### COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY PART 1

This course walks through best practice for creating an effective communications strategy that fits with the needs and aspirations of your council.



## E-LEARNING

Each course is designed to take approximately 35-50 minutes to complete with a quiz at the end to test your knowledge. There is a pass rate of 80% required to achieve your certificate.

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

This e-learning module gives you a greater understanding of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and explains how this legislation functions.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

This course includes a range of learning activities to help you develop your understanding of health and safety.

## COUNCIL SPECIFIC TOPICS

The following are courses you may need if you are a burial authority or elections are almost upon us.

### MANAGEMENT OF MEMORIALS - INSPECTION WORKSHOP

This is a practical course covering what's required when testing memorials to ensure they remain safe.

### PLANNING FOR ELECTIONS (2025, 2029, 2034)

This workshop is designed to prepare clerks and councillors for the election process, explain the rules and answer questions about the election process.

## READING

### STANDING ORDERS

Now would be a good time to revisit reading your Standing Orders. Some of those bits in bold will start to make sense and you may be able to refer to sections that you need.

### FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Now would be a good time to revisit reading your Financial Regulations. Some of it will start to make sense and you may be able to refer to sections that you need.



# SKILLED

The training calendar illustrates when courses are typically scheduled throughout the year and will help you to prioritise the order of training.

**APR -  
SEPT**

**AGENDAS AND MINUTES  
VAT  
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
SOCIAL MEDIA FOR COUNCILS PART ONE  
COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY PART ONE**

**JAN &  
FEB**

**YEAR END AUDIT**

**OCT -  
DEC**

**BUDGETING FOR CLERKS**

**ALL  
YEAR**

**FOI E-LEARNING  
HEALTH AND SAFETY E-LEARNING  
MANAGEMENT OF MEMORIALS  
PLANNING FOR ELECTIONS**



## LEARNING LOG

Training	Notes
Budgeting for Clerks	
Agendas and Minutes	
VAT	
Freedom of Information Essentials for Local Councils	
Year End	
Social Media for Councils Part 1	
Communicating with you Community Part 1	



# SKILLED

## LEARNING LOG

E-Learning	Notes
Freedom of Information	
Health and Safety	
Essential Reading	Notes
Standing Orders	
Financial Regulations	
Council Specific Topics	Notes
Management of Memorials - Inspection Workshop	
Planning for Elections (2025, 2029, 2034)	



# MASTER

## TRAINING

Once you've completed stage Essential and Skilled, we recommend that you move onto the courses below. These are scheduled throughout the year and can be attended in no particular order.

Whilst this is the final stage of the Officer Development Framework this is not the end of your learning journey.

<https://www.northantscalc.com/officer-development-framework-master>

### PROCUREMENT

This session is an introduction to the basics of procurement for local councils – inviting quotes, producing specifications and tender documentation, achieving competition and value for money, managing contracts.

### COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY AND SECTION 106

A session for Parish/Town Councillors covering the existing Section 106 agreements regime and providing an introduction to the Community Infrastructure Levy.

### AN INTRO TO EMPLOYMENT LAW

This course covers the basics of employment law from recruitment, holiday, sickness, addressing grievance and disciplinaries and appraisals.

### SOCIAL MEDIA FOR COUNCILS PART 2

This practical session looks at how to get started and what strategies and techniques are working well for councils like yours.

### COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY PART 2

This session will help you consider practical and effective ways for your council to systematically and proactively find out what really matters to people living within your parish, through a range of print and digital tools.



# MASTER

<https://www.northantscalc.com/e-learning.html>

## E-LEARNING

Each course is designed to take approximately 35-50 minutes to complete with a quiz at the end to test your knowledge. There is a pass rate of 80% required to achieve your certificate.

### EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

As individuals, we have the responsibility to treat others fairly, just as we'd expect to be treated fairly ourselves. This e-learning course includes a range of learning activities to help you develop your understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.

### TEAM LEADERSHIP

This e-learning module aims to give you a deeper understanding of leadership and offers practical advice to help you on your way to becoming a great team leader.

## COUNCIL SPECIFIC TOPICS

The following are courses you may need if you are a burial authority or elections are almost upon us.

### MANAGEMENT OF MEMORIALS - INSPECTION WORKSHOP

This practical course covers what's required when testing memorials to ensure they remain safe.

### PLANNING FOR ELECTIONS (2025, 2029, 2034)

This workshop is designed to prepare clerks and councillors for the election process, explain the rules and answer questions about the election process.

## READING

### STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Let's revisit reading your Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Most should now make sense and you may be able to refer to sections that you need without needing to look them up.





# MASTER

The training calendar illustrates when courses are typically scheduled throughout the year and will help you to prioritise the order of training.

**ALL  
YEAR**

**PROCUREMENT  
COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY AND  
SECTION 106  
AN INTRO TO EMPLOYMENT LAW**

**ALL  
YEAR**

**SOCIAL MEDIA FOR COUNCILS PART TWO  
COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR  
COMMUNITY PART TWO**

**ALL  
YEAR**

**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY E-LEARNING  
TEAM LEADERSHIP E-LEARNING**

**ALL  
YEAR**

**CEMEMTERY MANAGEMENT  
MANAGEMENT OF MEMORIALS  
PLANNING FOR ELECTIONS**



# MASTER

## LEARNING LOG

Training	Notes
Procurement	
Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106	
An Intro. to Employment Law	
Social Media for Councils Part 2	



# MASTER

## LEARNING LOG

<b>E-Learning</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Equality and Diversity	
Team Leadership	
<b>Essential Reading</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Standing Orders	
Financial Regulations	
<b>Council Specific Topics</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Management of Memorials - Inspection Workshop	
Planning for Elections (2025, 2029, 2034)	

# QUALIFICATIONS

## Certificate in Local Council Administration



The Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) is the sector specific qualification. You don't need to complete all the stages of the Officer Development Framework to complete CiLCA. If you'd like to discuss whether you're ready to complete CiLCA contact Marie Reilly at: [MReilly@northantscalc.com](mailto:MReilly@northantscalc.com) or 01327 831482.

### Course Description

CiLCA is a Level 3 accredited and recognised qualification for the Local Council Sector, designed to test basic levels of competence for the role of parish clerk. CiLCA has been designed to cover all aspects of the clerk's role and learners are required to compile a portfolio of evidence to show they fully understand their job.

### Who benefits from CiLCA?

The Council, the Clerk, and your community.

CiLCA is vital criteria for a council wishing to achieve the Local Council Award Scheme status and for the council to claim General Power of Competence.

A CiLCA qualified clerk is an efficient and effective clerk, which can lead to a boost in confidence and competence.

### Am I ready to register?

You are required to complete the CiLCA Training Needs Analysis. Please complete CiLCA Training Needs Analysis link <https://bit.ly/3Jtz6Os>. We will then contact you to discuss.

### More information

More information about CiLCA can be found here: <https://www.northantscalc.com/cilca.html>

## Community Governance

An advanced qualification awarded by a university ranked Gold under the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

Community Governance offers a range of advanced qualifications which are all distance learning with residential study days. The qualification looks at the way in which people and organisations work together and independently, making decisions for the benefit of a local community. Study for a qualification awarded by De Montfort University (DMU):

- Certificate of Higher Education (Level 4)
- Foundation Degree (Level 5)
- Honours Degree (Level 6)

More information can be found here: <https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/community-governance/>

# COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

Develop your career, support your  
council and strengthen your community

# USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACTS

Northants CALC - <https://www.northantscalc.com/>

Society for Local Council Clerks - <https://www.slcc.co.uk/>

National Association of Local Councils - <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/>

West Northamptonshire Council - <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/>

North Northamptonshire Council - <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/>

Northamptonshire Police - <https://www.northants.police.uk/>

OS Maps - <https://explore.osmaps.com/>

HM Land Registry - <https://eservices.landregistry.gov.uk/>

# USEFUL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS

Documents and Policies

<https://www.northantscalc.com/wiki/category/9/>

Policy Tracker <https://www.northantscalc.com/wiki/page/32/>

Member Benefits and Services Booklet <https://northantscalc.com/what-we-do-member-benefits>

Roles and Responsibilities <https://northantscalc.com/local-councils>

Budgeting Briefing Note <https://northantscalc.com/wiki/page/43/>

Casual Vacancies and Co-Options Briefing Note

<https://northantscalc.com/wiki/page/64/>

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Stage	Course	Date Completed
<b>Essential</b>	New Clerks	
	New Clerks Finance	
	Year End	
	Planning Nuts And Bolts	
	Responding To Planning Applications	
	Data Protection Part 1	
	GDPR E-Learning	
	Information Security Awareness E-Learning	
<b>Skilled</b>	Agendas And Minutes	
	VAT	
	Freedom Of Information	
	Social Media For Councils Part 1	
	Communicating With Your Community Part 1	
	Budgeting For Clerks	
	Year End	
	Freedom Of Information E-Learning	
	Health And Safety E-Learning	
<b>Master</b>	Procurement	
	Community Infrastructure/S106	
	An Intro To Employment Law	
	Social Media For Councils Part 2	
	Communicating With Your Community Part 2	
	Equality And Diversity E-Learning	
	Team Leadership E-Learning	
<b>Council Specific Topics</b>	Cemetery Management	
	Management Of Memorials – Inspection Workshop	
	Planning For Elections (2025, 2029, 2034)	