

Responses from “Survey of Members: Council Policy on Mandatory Training”

The aim of this survey is to provide Council with information from elected members, SLT and lay members on member training. In particular, the survey sought feedback on what training should be mandatory and to what extent, and what sanctions should be applied to address instances of non-compliance with any mandatory training required by Council of its members.

Responses:

Question 1 asked respondents to indicate whether they are a councillor, lay member or officer. The results show 30 responses were received in total.

1. Please indicate whether you are:



Question 2 asked respondents to state whether they think the training topics shown in the first (Training) column should be mandatory for all councillors, mandatory for certain councillors, or not mandatory for anyone. The table below shows the outcome of this question.

The options that received the most votes are highlighted in green.

Training:	Mandatory for All	Mandatory for Certain Members	Not Mandatory
Chairing of Meetings	26.9%	61.5%	11.5%
Climate Change / Ecological Emergency	64.3%	14.3%	21.4%
Code of Conduct	89.3%	3.6%	7.1%
Corporate Governance	39.3%	46.4%	14.3%
Corporate Parenting	51.9%	22.2%	25.9%
Data Protection	72.4%	13.8%	13.8%
Equality / Diversity	75.9%	13.8%	10.3%
Gypsy and Traveller	46.4%	35.7%	17.9%
Health and Safety	51.9%	33.3%	14.8%

Training	Mandatory for All	Mandatory for Certain Members	Not Mandatory
Local Government Finance and Budget Setting	50%	35.7%	14.3%
Licensing (Committee)	11.1%	70.4%	18.5%
Mental Health and Wellbeing	59.3%	22.2%	18.5%
Performance Data	13.8%	55.2%	31%
Planning Committee	22.2%	70.4%	7.4%
Questioning Skills	31%	34.5%	34.5%
Safeguarding	66.7%	22.2%	11.1%
Schools and Education	37%	33.3%	29.6%
Scrutiny (introduction)	42.3%	38.5%	19.2%
Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	50%	25%	25%
Welsh Language Standards	46.4%	35.7%	17.9%

Question 3 asked respondents if they had any comments relating to their answers in question 2. The responses are listed below:

- We should all have a mandatory standard of training equally so all of them makes sense as all of them criss-cross everything that we do or become involved in or observe. If we don't all have at least a basic level of training, how can we possibly contribute?
- Should be optional, due to existing overall workload.
- There are some topics I would not feel qualified to scrutinise as out of my field of knowledge.
- Concerned that there are different of what 'Corporate Governance' means. If seen as just necessary legal and finance processes then it may not be seen as something for all members, whereas since the true meaning is much wider than it should be mandatory for all members.
- The key thing here is determining who should require mandatory training. I think it is mostly obvious - Scrutiny members require scrutiny training, at least one member of each group should have training in some subjects etc (this makes pt8 tricky though).
- I have suggested many are mandatory for all. Perhaps, if the training is mandatory for just certain Cllr's - e.g. planning, the training could be made available for any Cllr's who wish to attend.
- A one off [*in relation to questioning skills*].

Question 4 focused on how often mandatory training should be undertaken.

4. For the topics you noted as mandatory in question 2, please indicate how often the training should be undertaken.



Question 5 asked if they had any comments or suggestions relating to their answers to question 4 and the timescales for completing the mandatory courses. The responses are listed below:

- Once per council term
- Really, we should then be asked how frequent for each one we've ticked as mandatory as the frequency is different for each. Maybe tag some of them as much as possible onto County Council meetings as we're all there for those anyway?
- Once a term or any change in legislation
- Biannually due to workload
- Some should be annually some less often.
- completed once a term or as and when new legislation is introduced.
- Some could be annual; others more often; others as a one-off
- Don't think this question is designed well - the frequency depends on the particular topic. Code of Conduct, for example, should be annual, but others could be less frequent. There needs to be a balance struck with available time for training from members and also be officers (or others) delivering training.
- Training should be per term (5 years)
- This will depend on the subject area - safeguarding for example should be annually whereas questioning skills could be once a term.
- I would suggest that the frequency of training could vary with some areas such as data/GDPR protection, safeguarding etc needing a biannual refresher and other aspects such as Finance and budget setting etc on a 1 in a term basis.
- Within the year
- None

Question 6 asked if there are any topics not listed above on which respondents would like training to be provided? The responses are listed below:

- Councillors need a Council led process of legal redress against malicious accusations or slander by the public.
- Housing & Homelessness: annual
- The Constitution - how the different groups, committees and key officers' function and relate together. This need not be annual but should be mandatory for all members (including lay) upon induction.
- Use of social media and other communication platforms mandatory

Question 7 queried whether the Council should have measures in place to promote compliance with mandatory training requirements:

7. Should the training topics designated by Council as mandatory be accompanied by measures to promote compliance with Council's policy?



If the Council decided to have measures to promote compliance with its mandatory training policy respondents were asked in **question 8** for their views on the suitability of 4 potential measures.

The options that received the most votes are highlighted in green:

	Yes, I support this measure	No, this measure is not appropriate	I am unsure / No response
Provision of training records to the group leaders	82.1%	10.7%	7.1%
Public reporting of mandatory training records to an appropriate committee	53.6%	32.1%	14.3%

Publishing details of non-compliance with mandatory training requirements	44.4%	33.3%	22.2%
Groups reviewing & encouraging the completion of mandatory training / consideration of training in the allocation of roles	66.7%	14.8%	18.5%

Finally, respondents were invited to leave any further comments that had not been covered in their responses. The following comments were received:

- Councillors have a heavy workload already without mandatory training
- Mandatory means mandatory
- Agree with mandatory training and need for measures to promote compliance, but consideration needs to be given to means of training - attendance at formal group training sessions may not always be necessary, but online training which requires some questions to be answered may be a more appropriate in some cases.