

STAFFING COMMITTEE

DATE: 16 October 2019

REPORT OF: TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE QUALIFICATION

PART I

OPTIONS

The Staffing Committee is asked to determine the request.

1. BACKGROUND

Following success in achieving the Level 3 Certificate in Local Council Administration, the Town Clerk is now wishing to take his understanding to the next level in studying for the Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) which is Level 4 on the national qualifications' framework.

Dawlish Town Council has historically been a mindful employer in relation to staff training. Previously it has supported the following staff to achieve:

CiLCA

Town Clerk
Town Clerk
Town Clerk
Finance Officer

Community Governance – Level 4 – Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)

Projects Officer

Locally, the Parish Clerk to Broadhempston, Coffinswell and Stokeinteignhead Parish Councils enrolled in the 2019 programme with the support of the three Parish Councils.

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2. CERTIFICATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Community Governance is an advanced qualification for local council officers who work with local communities. At Level 4 in the national framework, it builds on CiLCA and leads to a Certificate of Higher Education in Community Governance. This award is recognised in law as a qualification for Clerks. It is tailored specifically to the needs of local council officers and is therefore highly relevant to the work they do.

It is a two-year, part-time distance learning programme provided by De Montfort University, Leicester in conjunction with the Society of Local Council Clerks. Applications to join the 2020 programme must be submitted by 15 December 2019.

Attendees are required to attend three, 24-hour residential study days during the study year. All other learning is undertaken at home. The academic year runs from 1 February to 31 October.

The course content is as follows:

Year 1

- Community Governance - Focus on community leadership, community engagement and democratic processes. Consider the structures, functions and values of community governance, and the practices of stakeholders and policies affecting local communities;
- Local Council Finance - Learn about the financial management of councils in England and Wales according to statutory proper practices. Consider the management of risks to public money and the statutory requirements for transparency;
- Community-led Planning - Explore different techniques for community-led planning with emphasis on statutory neighbourhood plans and non-statutory plans. We suggest a range of tools for consultation, participation and collecting evidence.

OR

- The Planning System - Learn how the planning system in England and Wales impacts on local communities. Identify how the system works and examine power and influence in the system

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Year 2

- Local Council Law & Procedures - Study the law, procedures, powers and duties for the management of town, community and parish councils in England and Wales. Find out how other councils operate.
- Community Engagement - Learn a range of principles and techniques for encouraging participation, recognising diversity, gathering community views and working in partnership.

OR

- Community Profile - You study a local community in depth. The features of a specific community of place are investigated and the characteristics of the locality (place) and community (people) are described.
- Managing People - Consider formal aspects of managing people such as employment law, recruitment and human resource policies. Explore ways of developing staff or councillors and reflect on the impact of personalities and the management of conflict.

OR

- Managing Projects - Learn about project management for people working in local communities. You consider a practical project management lifecycle and tools for managing and evaluating the process.

3 COSTS

The cost of the two-year course is £5880 paid in instalments over the two years.

The fee covers:

- Accommodation at three, 24-hour residential schools
- Course materials
- Teaching from highly experienced and qualified tutors
- An online learning environment
- Tutorials by mutual agreement
- Administration and record keeping
- Student support services
- A fee to the university

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Many council employees have the support from their councils. An initial deposit of £294 is deducted from the invoice. Payments are due on 31 March and 31 July.

4 BENEFITS TO DAWLISH TOWN COUNCIL

In addition to fulfilling the Council's role as an investor in its employees, study would be focused on the community of Dawlish and the organisation of Dawlish Town Council. The study would enable personal and professional growth, including raising the bar and increasing the confidence of the Clerk, Councillors and the public in the Council's work and sphere of influence. It would enable the Council to be better prepared for future challenges and opportunities.

5 OPTIONS

Members are asked to consider this training request.

If minded to approve, it is recommended that the Staffing Committee

- (a) establish a Training Agreement (see appendix A) with the Town Clerk on the basis that if the Clerk were to leave the employment of the Council within two years of employment the Council has the right to recover such part of the financial assistance granted on a pro-rata basis, decreasing every month over the 2 year period; and
- (b) Allow the three residential days to be taken in work time, consistent with general training days.

Andrew McKenzie
Town Clerk