



ChALC Report: Training Feedback May 2023

Background

In April 2022 ChALC began to send out a SurveyMonkey link to participants of online training sessions to capture their feedback and comments. The link is included when sending out Certificates of Attendance to participants, shortly after each session has completed, in anticipation that people will be more willing to respond.

Two earlier reports to update on the progress of this approach were submitted in July and October 2022.

This report details and summarises the total responses received in the 12-month period.

The SurveyMonkey weblink has now been refreshed with the aim that new responses can be accurately monitored and comparisons made with the previous year.

Number of responses received

A total of 45 responses were received. Typical time spent in completing the survey was just over 5 minutes. Feedback covered a range of training sessions delivered by ChALC and other external providers. Whilst the greatest response is for ChALC sessions it is useful to read comments relating to others, so we can ensure that those trainers are also meeting the expectations of participants and upholding our standards.

- ChALC (27 responses)
- Andrea Pellegram (11 responses)
- David Kaiserman (3 responses)
- Parish Online (3 responses)
- Personnel Solutions and Advice (1 response)

Effectiveness of Training and Facilitator

A certain number of multiple-choice questions within the survey allowed the participant to quickly identify how well the training and the facilitator's approach met their needs. Overall the satisfaction levels were high and we therefore have no concerns. Responses are given below against the relevant question number in the survey.

Q.4 To what extent have you benefitted from this training? (45 answered)

Considerably – 86%

Unsure – 11%

Not at all – 3%

Q.5 How strongly would you recommend this training to others? (45 answered)

Would definitely recommend – 93%

Unsure if I would recommend – 5%

Would not recommend – 2%

Q.7 Was this training content relevant to your needs? (45 answered)

Yes – 96%

Unsure – 2%

No – 2%

Q.8 Did the training cover an adequate amount of material and/or topics? (45 answered)

Yes, a great deal – 91%

A moderate amount – 7%

No, none at all – 2%

**Q.11 How well did the training session meet the stated learning outcomes?
(45 answered)**

A great deal – 91%

A moderate amount – 7%

None at all – 2%

Q.12 To what extent did you gain useful and relevant learning? (45 answered)

I learned a lot – 87%

I learned a bit – 11%

I didn't learn anything – 2%

Q.13 How effective was the facilitators presentation style, including use of appropriate learning methods? (45 answered)

Extremely effective – 82%

Somewhat effective – 18%

Not at all effective – 0%

Q.14 Did the facilitator communicate learning points in an organised way? (45 answered)

Yes – 100%

Unsure – 0%
No – 0%

Q.15 Did the facilitator encourage participation, questions and comments?
(45 answered)

😊 – 93%
😐 - 7%
☹️ - 0%

Q.16 Did the facilitator respond appropriately to questions and comments?
(44 answered)

😊 – 91%
😐 - 9%
☹️ - 0%

Q.17 How was the pace of delivery and timekeeping of facilitator? (45 answered)

😊 – 89%
😐 - 11%
☹️ - 0%

Qualitative Questions

The survey also gives participants the opportunity to explain in more depth the value of the training and to comment on various aspects. These questions and number answered are below, with some examples of the answers given.

Q.6 In what way will this training improve your role? (43 answered)

- I now know where to find the information needed and what I need to read and learn to prepare for the role of parish councillor (ChALC – Introduction to Becoming a Councillor)
- Refreshed specific areas of Council chairmanship; particularly important for me as I have lots of experience of chairing business meetings and some aspects of this is different. (ChALC – Chairmanship)
- As I am new to the role, it was very informative and useful to have a full understanding of the roles on the council, and the expectations of councillor's role and behaviours. (ChALC – Induction for Clerks and Councillors)

- I have gained a lot more background knowledge and I am therefore more able to perform my role as a Parish Councillor more efficiently. (ChALC – Induction for Clerks and Councillors)
- Has given me an insight into an alternative product to use to manage the PC's assets, etc. (Parish Online)
- It consolidates some of the things I have been doing for some time but means I can change other things in line with the training advice (ChALC – Meetings and Procedures)
- This training session is more on legislation, than basic training & is very help full in regards, how you should frame your council response to a planning application, on the local plan or NHP which you may be producing or up dating. (Andrea Pellegram – Important Planning Concepts)
- Insight into why, when, how planning applications work/don't work and how you can challenge them (David Kaiserman – Short introduction to Planning)

Q.9 Should any aspect(s) of the training be omitted in future? (40 answered – and many were a simple one-word answer 'No')

- A lot was done in this one course - perhaps too much to take in in one go (ChALC – Roles and Responsibilities)
- Think it was ideal and better than what I had attended 2 or 3 years ago (ChALC – Chairmanship)
- Perhaps less technical overview of the capability as this seemed quite in depth and not necessarily required to understand the service capabilities (Parish Online)
- No but to save time a preamble prior to the meeting could reduce time & form questions in people's minds before the session (Andrea Pellegram – Important Planning Concepts)
- No, I think everything was necessary including the extras that were offered in response to people's queries (ChALC – Meetings and Procedures)
- I think all required as attendees have differing levels of responsibility and requirements (David Kaiserman – Short introduction to Planning)
- There should be separate training for larger and smaller councils in respect of planning as the needs and the approach are very different (Andrea Pellegram – Role of Councils in Town Planning)

Q.10 What aspects of the training did you find most useful or enjoyable? (43 answered)

- The whole session was an excellent overview of how a council should conduct its business, and the roles and responsibilities of the clerk, the Chairman and the Councillors (ChALC – Induction for Clerks and Councillors)
- Demonstrations of ability to map assets and specific areas in our parish both for record and contract purposes (Parish Online)
- Ability to ask questions and hear from other attendees (ChALC – Chairmanship)
- As a new Councillor I was interested in the communication chain between Parish and County Councils (ChALC – Induction for Clerks and Councillors)

- The presenter was very engaging and knowledgeable. (Parish Online)
- I actually enjoy hearing of others' accounts and experiences. (ChALC – Meetings and Procedures)
- Andrea's realistic advice about what motivates developers and LPA case officer's, and how best to deal with them. (Andrea Pellegram – Role of Councils in Town Planning)
- The examples and explanations given by the trainer. (ChALC – Induction for Clerks and Councillors)

Future Training

Respondents were also given the opportunity to suggest topics and frequency of sessions. Some examples are given below, and for most there are training sessions available but useful to see what could be added to existing sessions.

Q.18 What additional topics would you like to do in future training sessions, and how frequently should we offer them? (34 answered)

- Is there anything on Financial Regs / role of RFO please?
- Audit - what needs to go on the website and what do you do if you can't meet the deadlines. Should be offered annually before the audit starts - say, March/April.
- Agenda and minute writing
- Planning issues at Parish Council level
- Neighbourhood Development planning for small/village Parish Council
- Updates on Planning Law and requirements, biannually
- Byelaws - how to make and how to enforce. This would be useful for councils with open spaces in particular
- It would always be useful to run a refresher course and make this available to every council member who feels inclined to attend (participant had attended Induction for Clerks and Councillors)

How should future training sessions be offered?

Virtual sessions have been offered since 2020 so this question is useful to assess if they are still a preferred option. Responses to Q.19 demonstrate there is significant support to retain a virtual offering.

Online – via Zoom or Teams 82%

Face to face – in a hall or other venue 11%

Hybrid – mixture of both 7%

Further Comments about the training session

Respondents were invited to make further comments and of the 37 replies some examples – both positive and not-so-positive – are below. However, it should be noted that in the case of the not-so-positive comments that overall, the respondent had felt they had benefitted from the session: -

- Thanks to Jackie Weaver, who prepared and delivered the session extremely well, and facilitated and welcomed questions and observations from participants involved (ChALC – Induction for clerks and Cllrs)
- I thoroughly enjoyed the training session and learned a great deal. The 2 1/2 hours went very quickly! (David Kaiserman – Introduction to Planning)
- Keep up this standard and you will find that you will have more competent Parish Council members (ChALC – Induction for clerks and Cllrs)
- Very well presented and excellent content (ChALC – Meetings and Procedures)
- Yes, perhaps the lecturer should be tougher in asking some delegates to eradicate background noise. On occasions it was distracting and disrespectful to all other participants. (ChALC – Induction for clerks and Cllrs)
- The presenter gave too much time to one particular trainee who had specific and unique questions in every session. I think she should have asked for private discussion on these. Mostly irrelevant to 90%+ of the course trainees (ChALC – Induction for clerks and Cllrs)
- The facilitator was very good at putting over the relevant points through out the session & kept your interest but it seemed a cramped session & then cut short at the end sadly (Andrea Pellegram – Important Planning Concepts)
- The training content really did not take into account the role of the smaller councils, it was very much based on larger councils like CEC, Warrington, Chester etc. Smaller parish councils very rarely deal with the larger developers, which this training was really aimed at. 90% plus is householders wanting to add, rebuild, change their property and the training did not really cover this at all. (Parish Online)

Conclusion

It is noticeable that the ChALC training scores a consistently high level of feedback and there are no concerns or issues. Relevant feedback is also shared with our providers, who also score highly. We will ensure that we continue to act on the relevant comments to ensure that training is mindful of the key points raised and adapted if necessary.