

ChALC Virtual Training Schedule 2025

For the calendar of dates and details of individual session outlines please scroll down this document

Programme Details:

To support councils' development needs, ChALC aims to provide a rolling programme of our core training offer throughout the year. Set out on the pages below is the schedule calendar for 2025 listing the session name, dates, times and length of session. Course details can be found below the calendar.

The session length is only an indication of the time as delegates are encouraged to ask questions and engage so sometimes a session may overrun (and sometimes it may be a little shorter).

Please note that from time to time we will ask external trainers to provide ad hoc sessions for ChALC on more specific subjects to enhance the learning offer. **These will be listed, and the schedule updated, as they become available.** The schedule also includes some national training offers.

Providers and relevant course dates are colour coded as follows: -

| Trainer | Session Cost | Trainer | Session Cost | Trainer | Session Cost |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| ChALC | £25 member £40 non-member | Parkinson Partnership | £35 member £50 non-member | ChALC Briefings | Members - FREE £15 non-member |
| Trainer | Session Cost | Trainer | Session Cost | Trainer | Session Cost |
| David Kaiserman | £35 member £50 non-member | Breakthrough Communications | £30 member £45 non-member | | |

N.B. All sessions listed will be VIRTUAL unless specified. Please check course availability and make a booking by contacting sharonangus-crawshaw@chalc.org.uk or nikkiroberts@chalc.org.uk

Cancellation Policy - if you find yourself unable to attend any session please contact Nikkiroberts@chalc.org.uk or sharonangus-crawshaw@chalc.org.uk immediately. Bookings cancelled with less than 48 hours notice or 'no shows' will be charged at the full price advertised. Extenuating circumstances will be considered but must be advised as soon as possible.

CHALC TRAINING CALENDAR 2025

| JANUARY | | | FEBRUARY | | | MARCH | | |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session |
| 16 th | 10.00am – 12.00pm | Induction for councillors and clerks | 11 th | 6.30pm – 8.30pm | Roles and Responsibilities | 4 th | 6.30pm - 8.30pm | Meetings and Procedures |
| 21 st | 6.30pm – 8.30pm | Induction for councillors and clerks | 13 th | 1.00pm - 3.00pm | Roles and Responsibilities | 6 th | 10.00am - 12.00pm | Meetings and Procedures |
| APRIL | | | MAY | | | JUNE (TBC) | | |
| Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session |
| 15 th | 6.30pm - 8.30pm | Chairmanship | 6 th | 6.30pm - 8.30pm | CEC Code of Conduct | | | |
| 17 th | 1.00pm - 3.00pm | Chairmanship | 20 th | 6.30pm – 8.30pm | CW&C Code of Conduct | | | |
| JULY | | | AUGUST (TBC) | | | SEPTEMBER | | |
| Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session |
| 22 nd | 6.30pm - 8.30pm | Induction for councillors and clerks | | | | 16 th | 6.30pm – 8.30pm | Roles and Responsibilities |
| 24 th | 1.00pm – 3.00pm | Induction for councillors and clerks | | | | 18 th | 10.00am – 12.00pm | Roles and Responsibilities |
| OCTOBER | | | NOVEMBER | | | DECEMBER | | |
| Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session |
| 7 th | 6.30pm – 8.30pm | Meetings and Procedures | 4 th | 6.30pm – 8.30pm | CEC Code of Conduct | 9 th | 6.30pm – 8.30pm | Chairmanship |
| 9 th | 1.00pm – 3.00pm | Meetings and Procedures | 18 th | 6.30pm – 8.30pm | CW&C Code of Conduct | 11 th | 10.00am - 12.00pm | Chairmanship |

Last updated 19/06/2025

| JUNE | | | JULY | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---|-----------------------|-------------------|---|------|------|---------|
| Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session | Date | Time | Session |
| 3 rd | 10.00am – 11.30am | Finance for Councillors | 15 th | 10.00am – 11.30am | Introduction to VAT | | | |
| 5 th | 10.00am – 11.30am | Introduction to VAT | 17 th | 10.00am – 11.30am | New Clerks Finance (Plus a second course FREE after you attend) | | | |
| 12 th | 10.00am – 11.30am | Procurement Act 2023 | 22 nd July | 10.00am – 11.30am | Budgeting | | | |
| 17 th | 10.00am – 11.30am | New Clerks Finance (plus a second course FREE after you attend) | 23 rd | 10.00am – 11.30am | Internal Controls | | | |
| 19 th | 10.00am – 11.30am | VAT Partial Exemption | | | | | | |
| 24 th | 10.00am – 11.30am | VAT for registered councils | | | | | | |
| Please book any Parkinson Partnership sessions with nikkiroberts@chalc.org.uk | | | | | | | | |
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We are partnered with Breakthrough Communications and a range of online courses, delivered via Zoom, are available which councillors, clerks and other council staff can **book directly with the provider**. ChALC will then invoice for sessions attended.

Overall training themes include:-

- **Local Council Communications and Community Engagement**
- **Social Media and Digital Communications**
- **Council Interpersonal Skills and Communication Skills**
- **Council Data Protection and Freedom of Information**

For full information about individual courses, including dates and how to book, please click on this link

<https://www.breakthroughcomms.co.uk/calc-training-events>

Book directly with Breakthrough Communications

N.B. Please ensure you complete all details via the online booking form and identify the correct county association, Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC), from the drop-down menu.

DAVID KAISERMAN: A short briefing on planning for Parish and Town Councils

Monday 22nd September at 7.00pm

2 hours 30 minutes

Via Zoom

This short briefing course has been well received in many different parts of the country. It focuses on helping Parish and Town Councillors get the best out of the opportunity they have to respond to planning applications, but it also takes time to explain the wider legal and democratic context within which the planning system operates.

This is what you will learn on the course:

- **When is planning permission needed?** *Understand what requires permission and what doesn't*
- **Who makes the decision?** *Officers? elected members? Inspectors?*
- **Who gets to be consulted or notified when applications are made?** *And how important are the responses?*
- **The role of policy** *The importance of the Development Plan (the Local Plan and any neighbourhood plans), and the relevance of national policy - we'll take a broad look at changes to the system that are in the pipeline*
- **Other "material considerations"** *What is and what is not relevant to the decision in planning terms*
- **The choices for the Planning Authority** - *approve? refuse? defer? And the consequences of each*
- **The appeals system:** *how it works - the importance of evidence*

David always encourages active engagement during the session, providing answers to questions (wherever possible) as he goes along. Councillors know that planning has many "grey areas" – you will have fewer of them by the end of the course. Guaranteed! **Book through ChALC**

ChALC Course Details

Induction for Councillors and Clerks

This course is aimed at new councillors and clerks or those who want to refresh their knowledge or understanding. It covers: -

- Roles and responsibilities
- Statutory requirements of meetings
- Decision making and delegation
- Powers and duties
- Role of the Council in the planning system
- Budget and Precept procedures

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles, duties and responsibilities:

- Clerk
- Chairman
- Councillors
- and the Council (as a body)
- The Council as an employer
- Handling Grievances and Disciplinary Matters

Meetings and Procedures for Local Councils

- The purpose of agendas & minutes
- The importance of a detailed agenda
- Best practice in creating agendas & minutes
- How to create first class agendas & minutes
- How to handle confidential business
- Freedom of Information implications
- Retention of records & archiving

Chairmanship for Local Councils

- The role of the Chair
- The preparation needed before a meeting
- Agenda preparation and management
- Rules of procedure
- Public participation & speakers
- Dealing with difficult people
- Code of Conduct

Cheshire East Code of Conduct

This session will cover the introduction of the new Cheshire East Code of Conduct and the implications for Town and Parish Councils.

- Underpinning legislation
- Local Council obligations
- The Nolan Principles
- Registering and declaring interests
- 'Sensitive' information
- Interest – various forms
- Predetermination and Bias
- Dispensations
- Complaints

Cheshire West and Chester Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct changed on the 1st April 2022. This session will cover the revised Cheshire West and Chester Code of Conduct and the implications for Town and Parish Councils.

- Underpinning legislation
- Local Council obligations
- The Nolan Principles
- Registering and declaring interests
- 'Sensitive' information
- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)
- Other interests
- Dispensations
- Complaints procedure



The Parkinson Partnership specialises in work for the parish, town and community council sector in England and Wales. We deliver **finance-related advice and training** via Zoom through 36 county associations of local councils in England, answering around 500 queries and delivering over 2,000 online training places each year.

Budgeting

Aimed at officers of parish & town Councils, who are involved in preparing and monitoring their council's budgets.

Topics include: -

- Setting a budget and precept
- Contingencies and reserves
- How the council tax base affects the budget
- Inflation
- Budget monitoring

Finance for Councillors

This session is for councillors only and is designed to give them a greater understanding of their duties with regard to the council's finances.

Topics include:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Setting a budget and precept
- Financial control
- The Annual Governance and Accountability Return
- Internal and external audit
- How VAT applies to local councils

Internal Controls

This session gives councillors and clerks an understanding of the need for internal controls and how they work, with practical examples and case studies.

- Topics include:
- Roles and responsibilities
- Financial risks
- Purpose of internal controls
- Case studies
- Examples of controls
- Review of internal controls

The Role of Internal Audit

For councillors and officers that want to understand the role of the internal auditor and how to appoint one. (Please note, this is NOT a training session for people who want to undertake internal audits)

This session explains the role of the internal auditor in providing assurance to the council that it has sound financial controls.

Topics include:

- Legislation and guidance
- Roles and responsibilities
- Risk management
- Internal controls
- How the council appoints an internal auditor
- Scope of internal audit
- Reviewing internal control
- Internal audit reports

Introduction to VAT

For clerks, finance staff and councillors. It explains how VAT rules affect local councils, focussing on those that are not VAT registered, but reclaim VAT on Form VAT126.

Essential for any council contemplating major building projects.

Topics include:

- how VAT law applies to local councils
- where to find the law and guidance
- business and non-business activities
- understanding whether sales are taxable or exempt from VAT
- when a council must register for VAT
- when VAT can be reclaimed
- Partial exemption
- Reclaiming VAT when using grants and donations

New Clerks Finance

This introductory session is for inexperienced clerks in their first year and is designed to give them an overview of a council's year, along with a basic understanding of the RFO's role.

If you have 9 month's experience or more, this session is unlikely to cover anything you don't already know. Please leave this session for very new clerks and book yourself onto the more detailed sessions on Budgeting, Internal Control, The Role of internal audit, Procurement, Year-end and VAT instead.

Bookings by experience clerks may be removed without notice.

Topics include:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Setting a budget and precept
- Internal control
- The Annual Governance & Accountability Return
Internal and external audit

Procurement Act 2023

For anyone involved in procuring goods and services, preparing tenders or entering into contracts on behalf of local councils.

This session introduces the new rules of the Procurement Act 2023, which comes into force on 28 October 2024 and replaces the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

Topics include:

- Procurement thresholds
- Basic terminology and steps involved in procurement
- Estimates, quotes and tenders
- Specifications
- Quality and value for money
- Advertising, including Contracts Finder

VAT for registered councils

For clerks, finance staff and councillors from councils that are VAT registered, who wish to develop their knowledge (VAT registered councils have a 9-digit registration number, submit quarterly VAT returns online and charge VAT on taxable sales).

This session explains when and how VAT registered local councils charge VAT, when they can reclaim it and when they can't. Essential for any council contemplating major building projects. Topics include:

- how VAT law applies to local councils
- where to find the law and guidance
- business and non-business activities
- understanding whether sales are taxable or exempt from VAT
- when to charge VAT
- VAT rates
- when VAT can be reclaimed
- VAT returns
- Partial exemption
- Non-business activities
- Reclaiming VAT when using grants and donations

VAT – Partial exemption

For clerks, finance staff and councillor of councils that lease or hire out land and buildings such as village halls, community centres, meeting rooms, sport facilities or markets, who need to understand when their council is at risk of not being able to reclaim VAT. Essential for any council contemplating major building projects, or incurring significant expenditure on running these facilities.

This session is for those who already understand the rules of VAT. N.B. It is unlikely to be of benefit for councils spending less than 50,000 a year or for anyone who doesn't understand the difference between business and non-business activities or between taxable and exempt supplies.

Topics include:

- Law and guidance
- Non-business, taxable and exempt uses of land
- Apportionment of costs
- Partial exemption calculations
- Occasional breaches
- Option to tax
- Capital Goods Scheme adjustments