ChALC Virtual Training Schedule 2026
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. We also have some national partners who provide training sessions. Set out on the pages below are the schedule calendars for 2026 for ChALC and our partners listing the session name, dates, times and length of session. Full details can be found in later pages.

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.

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	Lewis Anderson Enterprises	£40 member £50 non-member
Trainer	Session Cost	Trainer	Session Cost	Trainer	Session Cost
Ian Cruise-Taylor, SPCA	£25/£35 member £40/50 non-member	Breakthrough Communications	£30 member £45 non-member	CloudyIT	From £45
Trainer	Session Cost				
Lee Searles, Pellegram Ltd	£35 member £50 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

JANUARY 2026			FEBRUARY 2026			MARCH 2026		
Date	**Time**	**Session**	**Date**	**Time**	**Session**	**Date**	**Time**	**Session**
			10th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Induction for councillors and clerks	10th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Roles and Responsibilities
			12th	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Induction for councillors and clerks	12th	10.00am – 12pm	Roles and Responsibilities
APRIL 2026			**MAY 2026**			**JUNE 2026**		
Date	**Time**	**Session**	**Date**	**Time**	**Session**	**Date**	**Time**	**Session**
21st	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Meetings and Procedures	5th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Chairmanship	9th	6.30pm-8.00pm	CEC Code of Conduct
23rd	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Meetings and Procedures	7th	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Chairmanship	18th	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Warrington Code of Conduct
						23rd	6.30pm – 8.00pm	CW&C Code of Conduct

JULY 2026			AUGUST 2026			SEPTEMBER 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
7th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Induction for councillors and clerks				8th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Roles and Responsibilities
16th	10.00am – 12pm	Induction for councillors and clerks				10th	1.00pm - 3.00pm	Roles and Responsibilities

OCTOBER 2026			NOVEMBER 2026			DECEMBER 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
20th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Meetings and Procedures	17th	6.30pm – 8.00pm	CEC Code of Conduct	15th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Chairmanship
22nd	10.00am – 12pm	Meetings and Procedures	19th	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Warrington Code of Conduct	17th	10.00am	Chairmanship
			24th	6.30pm - 8.00pm	CW&C Code of Conduct			

Why not try one of these ChALC webinars?

Introduction to Project Planning for Local Councils - **This short overview is intended for those who think they would like to develop a project but don't quite know how or where to start. Cost £5**

Local Council Award Scheme - **Watch this 15-minute session to talk you through the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS); what it is, what is involved, and why your council should consider doing it. FREE**

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 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

This session will cover the 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

Warrington Code of Conduct

This session will cover the Warrington Code of Conduct and the implications for Town and Parish Councils.

- ➧ General Principles of the code
- ➧ When the code applies
- ➧ Application of the Code
- ➧ The ethical standards
- ➧ Registering and declaring interests
- ➧ Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)
- ➧ Other registerable interests
- ➧ Dispensations

PARKINSON PARTNERSHIP

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

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 experienced 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

Year-end & Audit – (Councils over £25,000)

For officers who want to understand how to prepare their council's Annual Governance & Accountability Return on a receipts and payments basis and comply with the requirements of the audit process.

Topics include: -
- Closing the accounts;
- Assets and borrowing;
- Internal audit;
- Reviewing internal control;
- The Annual Return;
- Electors rights;
- Publication requirements

Year-end & transparency (councils under £25,000)

For officers and councillors that want to understand how to comply with the requirements of the transparency code for and the Freedom of Information Act.
This session introduces the concepts of transparency and the publication of information, showing how it links to and overlaps audit requirements.
Topics include:
- Transparency for councils under £25,000
- Audit exemption for councils under £25,000
- Publication schemes
- The public's rights
- The Annual Return

Income and expenditure accounting (for larger councils)

For officers who want to understand how to prepare their council's Annual Governance & Accountability Return on an income and expenditure basis (mandatory for councils regularly spending over £200,000) and comply with the requirements of the audit process.

Topics include:
- Closing the accounts
- Debtors and creditors
- Assets and borrowing
- Internal audit
- Reviewing internal control
- The Annual Return
- Electors rights
- Publication requirements

PARKINSON PARTNERSHIP TRAINING – BOOK with nikkiroberts@chalc.org.uk

JANUARY 2026			FEBRUARY 2026			MARCH 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
22nd	10.00am – 11.30am	VAT Partial Exemption	10th	10.00am – 11.30am	Finance for Councillors	3rd	10.00am – 11.30am	New Clerks Finance
27th	10.00am – 11.30am	New Clerks Finance	12th	10.00am – 11.00am	Year End & Audit (Councils over £25k)	4th	10.00am – 11.30am	Internal Controls
28th	10.00am – 11.30am	Internal Controls	18th	10.00am – 11.30am	Role of Internal Audit	10th	10.00am – 11.30am	Year End & Audit (Councils over £25k)
29th	10.00am – 11.30am	Procurement Act 2023	24th	10.00am – 11.30am	Procurement Act 2023s	12th	10.00am – 11.30am	Year end and Transparency (Councils under £25k)
29th	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Finance for Councillors	26th	10.00am – 11.30am	Introduction to VAT (Free)	17th	10.00am – 11.30am	Year end and Transparency (Councils under £25k)
						19th	10.00am – 11.30am	Income and Expenditure Accounts (for larger councils)
						24th	10.00am – 11.30am	Introduction to VAT (Free)
						26th	10.00am – 11.30am	Year End & Audit (Councils over £25k)

APRIL 2026			MAY 2026			JUNE 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
14th	10.00am – 11.30am	VAT Partial Exemption						
23rd	10.00am – 11.30am	Procurement Act 2023						

Please book any Parkinson Partnership sessions with nikkiroberts@chalc.org.uk

PARKINSON PARTNERSHIP

OTHER EXTERNAL PROVIDER TRAINING SESSIONS

JANUARY 2026			FEBRUARY 2026			MARCH 2026		
Date	**Time**	**Session**	**Date**	**Time**	**Session**	**Date**	**Time**	**Session**
26th	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Cllrs and Clerks Introduction to AI	9th	10.00am-12.00pm	Business Planning – N.B. face-to-face session, Canalside Conference Centre	25th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Business Planning
			18th	10.00am – 12 noon	Taking the GRR out of AGAR	5th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Planning Session 1 – Influencing Planning Policies
			23rd	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Taking the GRR out of AGAR	12th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Planning Session 2 – Influencing Planning Application Proposals
			25th	10.00am – 12 noon	Cllrs and Clerks Introduction to AI	19th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Planning Session 3 – Important Planning Concepts

Lewis Anderson Enterprises

Lewis Anderson PSLCC has worked in the local council and VCSE sector for over a decade, holding roles as Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), Internal Auditor, and Councillor. He currently serves as Vice President of the Staffordshire County Association, Head of Standards & Improvements for the Internal Audit Forum, and CoChair of NALC's Young Councillors' Network. Lewis is also Head of GovFinance at Cloudy IT, and Director of Lewis Anderson Enterprises Ltd, a company delivering training to councils and sector partners. An early adopter of Artificial Intelligence in local government, Lewis collaborates with sector partners to promote its use across all tiers and roles, driving innovation and efficiency in council operations.

A Clerk & Councillor's Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Discover how Artificial Intelligence can empower your council!

The Case for AI: Identifying the Problem

- Understand what AI is (in plain English) and identifying where it can make the largest impact in councils

Tools of the Trade: Free & Paid AI Options

- Explore the functions, costs and usefulness of many popular free and paid services with demonstration & feedback

Prompt Craft: How to Talk to AI

- Learn how to write tailored prompts and get the most out of AI services

AI Governance, Risk & Ethics

- Understand the risks and develop an understanding of processes to mitigate them

AI for Inclusion and Accessibility

- Explore AI's role in breaking down barriers to inclusivity

AI in Action: Council use cases

- Learn how other councils are already using AI and map out your councils use case

Change Management: Making AI stick

- Build a confident and resilient AI culture to support the changing local council sector

Taking the "GRRR" Out of AGAR: Finance Year-End Prep for Town & Parish Councils

Join us for an insightful session designed to help Parish and Town Councils tackle year-end financial challenges with confidence and clarity.

This session is aimed at Clerks, Responsible Financial Officers (RFOs), Councillors involved in finance, and anyone wanting to learn more. There will be time for questions throughout the session.

1. Reflecting on Past Challenges: Common Audit Pitfalls - A comprehensive overview of recurring common pitfalls for councils identified in internal and external audit findings. Attendees will gain practical strategies to address common gaps, learn from case studies, and ensure compliance with sector best practice.

2. Preparing for Year-End: Key Actions for Compliance - A review of actions all councils should take ahead of March 31st to ensure that they are audit ready from an Internal Auditor's perspective. This session covers responding to common over-looked governance areas, and ensuring robust internal controls are in place to remain compliant throughout the year.

3. What's New in the Annual Return: Assertion 10 and More - Stay ahead of regulatory changes with an in-depth look at the new Assertion 10, covering digital and data compliance requirements. Topics include email governance, IT policies, accessibility, and compliance. Learn how to meet the latest expectations for digital governance and data protection.

Lee Searles MRTPI, Andrea Pellegram Ltd

Online training over three sessions from Lee Searles MRTPI. Lee Searles is a senior planning professional and Director at Andrea Pellegram Limited, known for more than three decades of experience in planning policy, environmental consultancy, and support for town and parish councils. His work spans major planning applications, neighbourhood planning, and strategic policy development across the UK.

Introduction to Town Planning for Parish and Town Councils

Session 1: Influencing Planning Policies

An introduction to the planning policy framework, including:

- New system architecture – Spatial Development Strategies, Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, new local plans process, new towns
- The new NPPF proposals
- Implications for approaches to delivery of housing, infrastructure and commercial development
- Nature Recovery and Biodiversity Net Gain
- The role of Neighbourhood Plans
- How towns and parishes can influence planning policies

Session 2: Influencing Planning Application Proposals

What local councils can do:

- The best time to influence developers
- Fulfilling your role as a consultee
- Ensuring Probity and transparency
- Running your planning committee
- Pre-application discussions with developers
- Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Session 3: Important Planning Concepts

Strategies for engaging residents and stakeholders:

- Planning Conditions
- Planning Obligations
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Viability
- Up to date housing land supply policies
- Permitted Development
- Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery
- Material planning considerations

Ian Cruise-Taylor, SPCA

Ian worked in local government, mainly in children's and young people's services, for over 50 years at county and unitary councils from North Somerset to the Black Country and Shropshire.
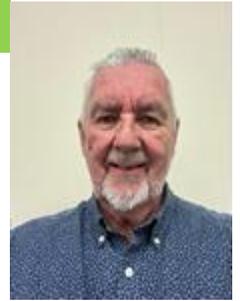
He became a parish clerk in 2018 and has worked in town and parish councils in Shropshire and Telford, including as a locum, ranging from the small (56 houses and 110 residents!) to a busy town.

Ian qualified as a trainer for CiLCA in 2022 and has been the Training Officer for Staffordshire since then, providing courses to councillors and clerks on a wide range of topics from new starters to chairmanship and business development

Business Planning Session

All councils look at their budget every year to set the precept, for many this involves reviewing the year and preparing to do the same again. For some it involves thinking ahead to see what will need funding, such as play equipment upgrades or other substantial repairs and developments.

For others the task is to look ahead to the next 3-5 years envisaging what services and support their residents would benefit from and to look at what is happening outside the boundaries of the parish or town that will have an impact, good or not so good, and work out how to respond.

This interactive session invites participants to recognise that as a corporate body they need to think like a business and do some future thinking. Considering what to take into account when planning for the future, how to engage with residents, local businesses and other organisations, working together to improve the health and wellbeing of their community by constructing a clear business plan.

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.

CloudyIT is a specialist provider of digital services and training for local councils. The **Digital Learning Series** from CloudyIT--your trusted training partner--is designed to help council teams make the most of Microsoft 365. Whether you're building digital confidence or exploring advanced tools, every session is practical, relevant, and tailored to the way councils work.

All sessions are delivered live and include 'Jump In' sessions - short, 1 hour focused sessions that explore individual tools and features--ideal for discovering what's possible and Extended sessions, 90-minute deep dives to help you build skills and confidence in the tools you use every day.

All sessions are led by **Susan** - helping councils pinpoint training needs and match them with the right learning resources. Susan brings deep, hands-on expertise across:

- **Microsoft 365**: SharePoint Online, Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint

- **Collaboration Tools**: Teams, OneNote, Loop, Forms, Bookings, Lists, Stream, To Do, Planner

Her approach is practical, supportive, and council-focused—designed to reduce confusion, solve common issues, and help you get full value from your digital tools. Whether it's a training need, a user error, or a quick fix, Susan's here to help you figure it out—and guide you to your next step.

Choose your session. Reserve your place. Learn with confidence.

Sessions run every other month. **From £45 per attendee.** Open to all member councils. **Browse sessions and book now: Visit the Professional Development Hub**