

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
CCA	FREE for ChALC members	Breakthrough Communications	£30 member £45 non-member	CloudyIT	From £45
Trainer	Session Cost				

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

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



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

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

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 – Please BOOK all sessions with nikkiroberts@chalc.org.uk

SEPTEMBER 2026			OCTOBER 2026			NOVEMBER 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
22 nd	10.00-11.30am	Finance for Councillors						
DECEMBER 2026			JULY 2026					
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
								

OTHER EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

JULY 2026			AUGUST 2026			SEPTEMBER 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
1 st	10.00am – 12pm	Growing your local Identity				21 st	10.00am to 12pm	Taking the GRRR out of AGAR
2 nd	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Understanding the Planning System				21 st	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Growing your local Identity
27 th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Managing Projects for Town and Parish Councils				23 ^d	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Taking the GRRR out of AGAR
29 th	10.00am – 12pm	Understanding the Planning System						
OCTOBER 2026			NOVEMBER 2026			DECEMBER 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
			4 th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Taking the GRRR out of AGAR			
			9 th	10.00am – 12pm	Taking the GRRR out of AGAR			

LEWIS ANDERSON ENTERPRISES – TRAINING SESSIONS



Growing Your Local Identity: Telling Your Community's Story

Every parish or town has a story - but are you making the most of yours? This practical session helps councils identify what makes their place distinctive and how to present that story clearly to residents, partners and visitors.

The course explores how local heritage, community assets, visual identity and engagement techniques all contribute to your story. You'll spend time identifying the key elements of your story, learn how to use those to engage your community and start your action plan to support pride, participation and positive perception of their area. We'll be sharing lots of examples to inspire you!

Delivered by Jenny Procter - a sector Clerk, marketing and communications expert with three decades of experience across public and private sectors.

Includes:

- What is local identity?: An overview encompassing heritage, history and identity, and why it can bring out local pride of place.
- What is your story?: How to identify the people, places, landscape and values to build a strong local narrative for your community.
- Telling your Story: Delving into some examples of excellent story-telling, and the building of a focussed plan to match the tone, visuals and messaging of your story.
- Partnerships & Champions: Identifying local champions, and forging strong partnerships with businesses and community stakeholders to boost the reach of your project.
- Resourcing & Planning: Exploring many funding opportunities from grants to donations and sponsorship, as well as building a realistic plan to share your community's story.

Managing Projects for Town & Parish Councils

A practical, parish-focused course that takes you from idea to delivery with clear governance, a live Project Initiation Document (PID), realistic budgeting and funding preparation, proportionate procurement, and robust delivery control.

You'll learn how to engage residents, manage change so outcomes stick, and protect projects with simple risk and assurance tools - backed by ready-to-use templates. Ideal for clerks, councillors and working groups, especially as more and more is expected of our sector.

Delivered by Lewis Anderson PSLCC - an experienced Clerk, Councillor & Internal Auditor, and former county council Project Manager.

Includes:

- Set Up for Success: Establishing clear governance, roles, decision-gates and a project lifecycle
- Defining the Project: Turn ideas into a structured plan using a Project Initiation Document (PID), scope, outcomes and milestones.
- Resources & Approach: Build realistic budgets and whole-life costs, identify funding routes, and choose the right delivery/procurement approach.
- Delivery & Control: Manage timelines, contractors, quality, reporting and change control to keep projects on track and on budget.
- Engagement & Change: Map stakeholders, plan consultation and communications, and manage adoption so the change "sticks".
- Risk & Assurance: Create risk, issue and decision controls, maintain an audit-ready project file, and future-proof delivery.

"Objection!": Understanding the Planning System & Writing Effective Representations

A clear, practical introduction to the English planning system designed specifically for parish and town councils. This course builds confidence in understanding how planning works, avoiding governance pitfalls, reading and assessing applications, and drafting strong, policy-linked representations that influence decisions. You'll learn how national, local and neighbourhood planning frameworks fit together, what makes a material consideration, and how to structure effective comments that carry real weight with your planning authority. Whether you are new to planning or want to strengthen your council's approach, this course provides the essential legislative context, good-governance principles, practical assessment frameworks and ready-to-use templates used across the sector, along with an overview of upcoming changes to national policy and legislation.

Delivered by Lewis Anderson PSLCC - an experienced Clerk, Councillor, Internal Auditor with experience working in planning across the local government sector.

Includes:

- How the Planning System Works: An overview of roles, powers and the policy hierarchy under key legislation.
- Material Considerations & Reading Applications: Understand what is legally material, what is not, and how to read plans, statements and surveys confidently.
- Writing Effective, Policy-Linked Comments: Turn local concerns into structured, evidence-based submissions that carry more weight with planning officers, with templates and worked examples.
- Bias, Predetermination & Good Governance: Stay on the right side of the law with guidance on managing interests, social media, predisposition & predetermination, and running planning meetings properly.
- Upcoming Policy & Legislative Changes: A practical look ahead at reforms including NPPF updates, biodiversity net gain, design codes, digital planning and Local Plan changes and what they mean for your council.

Taking the “GRRR” out of AGAR!: In-Year Preparation to Get Ahead of Year End

Summary Description

This focused session helps Clerks, RFOs and Councillors prepare for year-end with confidence. It explores common issues raised by internal and external auditors, highlights key steps for year-end accuracy, and provides clarity on essential requirements to avoid common pitfalls.

The course includes updates to the AGAR and Practitioners’ Guide for 2026/27. It supports councils in strengthening compliance, improving financial processes, and surviving audit and AGAR submission.

What You’ll Learn

1. Reflecting on Past Challenges: Common Audit Pitfalls - A comprehensive overview of recurring common pitfalls for councils identified in internal and external audit findings including from the last financial year. 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, Digital AGAR and More - Stay ahead of regulatory changes with a review of Assertion 10 compliance including email governance, IT policies, accessibility, and compliance, understand the changes coming for the digitisation of the AGAR submission, and more!

The session is led by Lewis Anderson PSLCC – an experienced Clerk, RFO and Internal Auditor



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](#)