

KESGRAVE TOWN COUNCIL

New Councillor Induction Policy



The purpose of this document is to outline the support available for prospective and new Councillors and to explain Council's main objectives and responsibilities.

Prior to standing for election or co-option candidates are given the opportunity to attend Council, committee and sub-committee meetings and discuss their workings with the Clerk and Councillors.

The Clerk will arrange to meet with all new Councillors prior to their first full Council meeting to explain the following;

- The purpose of Council;
- The responsibilities of Council;
- The responsibilities of Councillors/Council (corporate body);
- The committee and sub-committee structure;
- How meetings are conducted; and
- Discuss the importance of attending new Councillor training and arrange for some training modules to be booked.

Council in conjunction with the Clerk will appoint an existing Councillor to act as a mentor for the new Councillor. The role of the mentor is to:

- be available to answer queries on agenda items prior to meetings;
- provide background information on any key items being discussed;
- sit next to the new Councillor during meetings so as to provide any support required; and
- review the meetings with the new Councillor at their conclusion to ensure that conduct of the meeting, the debates and decisions/resolutions have been understood.

The mentor will be nominated for a period of 3 meeting cycles. At the end of the period the mentor and the new Councillor will discuss whether any additional mentoring is required.

Chairs of Committees – The chairs of each committee will arrange to meet with the new Councillor as part of the mentoring process to explain the role of their respective committees and key matters for the said committees. Meetings with all chairs should be undertaken within the first 3 months from the new Councillor taking office.

At the end of the initial mentoring period the Clerk and the Chair of the Council will agree what further training the new Councillor should be offered and, if needed, arrange another meeting with the new Councillor to discuss any additional training needs.

The Aims and Objectives of Council are:

- to democratically represent the residents of Kesgrave and to allow every voice of the community to be heard;
- to provide the best possible services, amenities and activities to meet the needs of all residents and use our best endeavours to manage these within the most economical budget available;
- To use best practice in all areas of our activities;
- To forge partnerships with all other community stakeholders to ensure that the wellbeing of our residents is enhanced.

After a new Councillor has been elected or co-opted the following actions must be carried out:

- sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form before their first full Council meeting; and
- complete the East Suffolk Council register of members interests within 28 days.

The Clerk will provide them with a contact list and the schedule of meetings plus the following documents where the aim is for new Councillors to achieve a working level of knowledge as soon as practicable (this will be influenced by the responsibilities of the Committee to which they are assigned):

- Code of Conduct
- Financial Regulations
- Good Councillor's Guide (published by the National Association of Councils)
- Standing Orders
- Terms of Reference

The following documents are also important but the aim is for new Councillors to achieve a more basic level of awareness in due course (also influenced by the responsibilities of the Committee to which they are assigned). These documents are available on Council's website or on the Council Share Drive and in general are reviewed and updated on a regular basis:

- Community Engagement Strategy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Data Protection Policy (CCTV)
- Data Protection Policy (General)
- Document and Electronic Data Retention Policy
- Email, Internet etc Policy and Procedure
- Environmental Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Expenses Policy & Procedure
- Fast Food Vendor Policy
- General Privacy Notice
- Grant Approval Policy and Procedure
- Investment Policy and Strategy
- Land Acquisition Policy
- Memorials Policy
- Neighbourhood Plan
- Planning Manual
- Policy on Resignation and Vacation of Office etc
- Privacy Policy
- Public Participation in Council Meetings Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Training and Development Policy
- Transparency Code

Councillors should remember that their mentor, the Clerk and Chair of the Council are available at most times for information and support if needed.

Council's main areas of responsibility are:

- first tier of local government at grass-roots level;
- to signpost local residents for any District Council, County Council or Policing matter. For services provided by others, (as above), Council endeavours to ensure that these are dealt with effectively and in accordance with the wishes of the community;
- to organise and support community events that enhance our community e.g. Remembrance Service, Firework Night, Christmas Lights Switch on, Evening of Reflection and senior citizens outing.
- to manage and maintain public space owned by Council in various locations including the Lawn Cemetery, Garden of Remembrance, Legion Green where the town's memorial is located, Cedarwood Green, Cedarwood Walk, Oak Meadow;
- to act as statutory consultee for East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council on any planning applications in or affecting Kesgrave;

- to maintain the Council offices provided for Officers to administer Council's services and activities, for members of the public to call in and speak to staff and for Council and public meetings;
- to maintain the Millennium Jubilee Hall and promote its use within the community with the objective of ensuring income from hiring is sufficient to cover running costs over a three year period.;
- to maintain street furniture and street lighting that is in Council's ownership;
- to maintain noticeboards, directional signage, seats, bins, dog bins, cycle stands, the town sign, the Lynch-gate and cemetery, sculpture and commemorative sign that are owned by Council;
- to maintain Rupert Fison Square, the car park and planters;
- to run the Kesgrave Market once a month on a Saturday;
- to organise Council's Youth provision;
- to maintain and supervise fitness and play/sports equipment that is owned by Council in various locations; and
- to maintain the Wildlife Pond located near to Cedarwood School.

Last reviewed: 26 June 2023

Next review due: 26 June 2025