

ADLINGTON



TOWN COUNCIL

Council Meeting: Monday 17 August 2026

Subject: New Councillor Support Policy

Author: Town Clerk

1. Purpose of the Report

To seek Council's approval for the introduction of a structured support policy for newly appointed or co-opted Councillors, comprising access to external training, a Clerk-managed induction checklist, and an informal buddy scheme.

2. Recommendation

Council is asked to:

- **Approve** the New Councillor Support Policy as set out in this report; and
- **Authorise** the Clerk to implement the induction checklist and coordinate the informal buddy scheme with effect from the next councillor intake (including co-option).

3. Background

New Councillors currently receive limited structured support upon joining the Council. A consistent and documented approach would assist new members in understanding their responsibilities, reduce reliance on ad hoc guidance, and strengthen overall governance. The proposed policy introduces three complementary strands of support designed to improve induction, confidence, and capability.

This policy applies to all newly appointed or co-opted councillors with effect from the date of adoption.

4. Proposal

4.1 External Training (NALC / LALC)

New councillors would be directed to induction training provided by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC). Courses typically cover council roles and powers, standing orders, the Code of Conduct, and financial responsibilities. The Clerk would advise on available dates and arrange bookings. Training will be delivered in an accessible manner, with reasonable adjustments provided where required.

4.2 Reference Material – *The Good Councillor's Guide*

New councillors would be signposted to NALC's *The Good Councillor's Guide* as core introductory reading, to complement formal training. Link:

www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/the-good-councillors-guide.html

4.3 Clerk-Managed Induction Checklist

The Clerk would maintain and work through a standardised induction checklist with each new councillor during their first weeks. This would include:

- Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- Register of Interests
- Access to council email, website and document systems
- Key governance documents (Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations)
- Meeting and committee schedule
- Overview of current priorities and projects

The Clerk would remain the primary point of contact for procedural and administrative queries. Completed induction checklists will be retained as part of the Council's governance records.

4.4 Informal Buddy Scheme

Each new councillor would be offered an informal pairing with an experienced Councillor to provide peer support, context on council history, and general reassurance. The arrangement would be voluntary, non-hierarchical, and would conclude once the new Councillor feels settled.

5. Financial and Resource Implications

NALC and LALC training courses may carry a fee, which would be met from the existing training budget. The induction checklist and buddy scheme have no direct financial cost, aside from Clerk and Councillor time.

6. Monitoring and Review

Progress against the induction checklist will be monitored by the Clerk and reported annually as part of the Council's governance review.

7. Next Steps

Subject to approval:

- The Clerk will finalise the induction checklist document.
- The Communications Group will identify volunteer buddy Councillors ahead of the next intake.
- The policy will be reviewed after twelve months of operation.