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**SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**

**TRAINING PROGRAMME**

**for**

**ELECTED MEMBERS**

 **2025**

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**Background**

**Legislation**

Under section 142(5A) of the 2001 Local Government Act, as inserted by section 53(1)(d) of the 2014 Act, the provision of allowances for expenses for training is separated from the allowances for expenses for conferences. The guidelines regarding attendance at training and conferences is set out in Circular LG 05-2022 “Allowances and Expenses of Elected Members of Local Authorities”.

Under the regulations South Dublin County Council is required to adopt a Training and Development Programme for the Elected Members.

**Scope of the programme**

This Programme should reflect the following

1. the key policy issues and challenges facing the members and the local authority
generally;
2. the stage of the local government term; the training and development needs may
be different at the beginning and end of a local government term;
3. the profile and experience of the members, including the events already attended
by councillors generally, and
4. the likely resources that will be available to meet training needs under section
142(5A) of the 2001 Act for the development of members.

**Courses for which expenses for attendance may be paid**

Events / Seminars organised by LAMA, AILG and national representative bodies such as the IPI (Irish Planning Institute) are considered as training events under the regulations.

Programmes of education and training which relate to functions for which local authorities have responsibilities and which are validated by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), the body established by the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*. This is to ensure that the training is externally accredited or validated and includes courses and training programmes provided by a wide range of educational bodies.

Training may be approved by the Minister from time to time. Training provided by the Institute of Public Administration in relation to local government is automatically approved by the Minister.

Members may attend up to a maximum of 2 events per annum provided by the Local Authority Members Association (LAMA).

**Budget**

A training budget is provided in the annual estimates to cover necessary relevant training. There is an training allowance of €40,000 for Councillors in the 2025 Budget. Conferences must be approved by Protocol in advance and there is a budget of €700 per Councillor for conferences (includes travel and subsistence). All Conference reports must be returned to the Mayor and Corporate Services section. The report must indicate the nature of the conference and contain a summary of the proceedings. Circular LG 03/2020 recommends that Councillors should endeavour to attend conferences and training in the Eastern Midlands Region, members are only permitted to attend two outside of that area during the year.

For educational programmes at Level 6 and above in the National Qualification Framework, the local authority should pay a proportion only of the course fees where these are more than €500 per annum and should in no case pay a contribution in excess of €1,500 per annum.

Payment should be made annually in arrears following satisfactory evidence that all
examinations have been passed, and the elected member is eligible to progress to the next stage of the course, where the course is not yet completed. The payment of a contribution only of such course fees reflects the expectation that qualifications at
Level 6 and above will be of benefit to the elected member outside his or her role as
an elected member.

**Aim of the Training Programme**

The aim of the Training & Development Programme is to:-

* Adopt a more structured approach to supporting the development needs of councillors so that they can discharge their duties as effectively as possible.
* Inform decisions by the elected council on the training events at which councillors should be supported.
* Address any knowledge gaps identified by individual Councillors.

**Types of Training available**

Training may be divided into 3 types:-

* In-house, either individual or group
* Outsourced, either individual or group
* Seminar/Training, provided by LAMA or AILG

Induction courses are provided to new Councillors through staff in Corporate Services.

Outsourced training is provided by various agencies, several of whom specialise in ‘Local Authority’ training, such as the Institute of Public Administration (IPA).

**Potential Training and Development Programme**

1. **Series of lectures (In-house)** – can be provided in-house on request, on the functions of each Department, with special emphasis on the reserved functions pertaining to each and any attendant legalities or legal implications.

1. **IT Training** - based on individual needs and experience; this can be either in-house (Council systems) or outsourced, either individual or group.
2. **Series of lectures (Outside provider)** – (subject to demand) provided by the IPA or other provider, in the Council Chamber, with particular emphasis on legislation that affects/governs Local Authorities and their functions/responsibilities.
3. **Individual Courses** - Funding of individual courses as requested by a Councillor, subject to approval by Corporate Services, must be Level 6 or above in the National Qualification Framework.
4. **IPA Learning & Development Programme** - (see IPA website for details of available courses) - subject to approval by Corporate Services.
5. **Irish Language Training**

**Funding of the Training & Development Programme**

 Funding for the Training Programme is provided for in the Revenue Budget adopted by the County Council each year. In an election year, training allowances are allocated on a pro rata basis up to and then after the election date. In addition to individual or SDCC member’s group training, the training budget covers:

1. **LAMA -** Annual seminars and conferences of Local Authority Members Association (LAMA) - attendance will be limited to 2 events per annum organised by LAMA. Attendance is at Members’ discretion.
2. **AILG -** Seminars and conferences provided by the AILG, attendance and payment of expenses in accordance with DoHP&LG directives, Circular LG 03/2020. Attendance is at Members’ discretion.
3. **Educational programmes** at Level 6 and above in the National Qualification Framework, i.e. Higher Certificate, Ordinary Degree or higher the local authority should pay a proportion only of the course fees where these are more than €500 per annum and should in no case pay a contribution in excess of €1,500 per annum. The payment of a contribution only of such course fees reflects the expectation that qualifications at Level 6 and above will be of benefit to the elected member outside his or her role as an elected member.
4. **Individual Courses**: Refunds to Members will be in retrospect so costs will be known in advance to enable the budget to be provided.
5. **IPA Learning & Development Programme/Other Training Providers:** Refunds to Members will be in retrospect on application to Corporate Services so costs should be advised in advance to enable budget to be provided
6. **Women’s Caucus**

The Women’s Caucus may identify specific training requirements for Caucus members.

1. **Series of lectures (In-house)** : The in-house training will be cost free to Members
2. **IT Training :** On Council systems, delivered by staff member, will be cost free to Members
3. **IT Training :** On an individual/group will be funded from Training Budget.
4. **Series of Lectures (Outside Provider)** – will be funded from Training Budget
5. **Irish Language Training – will be funded from Training Budget**

Information for all courses is available from Meetings Administration

Email: meetingsadmin@SDUBLINCOCO.ie

Following consultation with the Elected Members the following training was facilitated in 2024:-

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course Title** | **Provider** | **Date** |
| Training / Conferences during the course of 2024 | AILG / LAMA | Throughout 2024 |
| Briefings throughout the year on new initiatives / legislation / Policy | In-house | Throughout 2024 |
| AIR - Irish Regions Building Capacity to address the challenges of a changing Ireland. | Association of Irish Regions | February 7th & 8th 2024 |
| Canva – Women’s Caucus | E. Lynch, AILG | 4th April 2024 |
| Briefing sessions from the Chief Executive and Directors of Services  | In-house | 24th June 2024  |
| Induction Programme for New Council – Corporate Services * Structure, meetings etc. Human Rights and Equality, Dignity at Work
* Ethics Register, Code of conduct for Councillors and Staff, Complaints Process
* CMAS, MembersNet
* Finances / Facilities (Printing)
* Standing Orders
* Facilities (Printing)
* IT Support/ Security
* Data Protection
 | In-house | 27th June 2024  |
| ICSH - National Social Housing Conference 2024 | Irish Council for Social Housing | 16th & 17th October 2024 |
| Domestic Violence & Abuse Awareness Training | Saoirse Domestic Violence Services | 21st & 22nd October 2024 |

**Suggested Courses for 2025**

Following consultation with the Elected Members the following training is proposed for 2025.

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| **Course Title** | **Provider** | **Date** |
| Ethics & Standards | In-house  | TBC |
| Training / Conferences during the course of 2025 | AILG / LAMA | Ongoing throughout 2025 |
| Briefings throughout the year on new initiatives / legislation / Policy |  | Ongoing |
| Irish Language Training |  | TBC |
| Social Media Training Programme – Women’s Caucus | ODV Digital | TBC |
| Disability Awareness Training |  | TBC |
| Domestic Violence awareness training |  | TBC |
| Cyber Security |  | TBC |
| Artificial Intelligence |  | TBC |
| Inclusivity and Diversity |  | TBC |

Courses may be added to the programme throughout 2025 as required.