

Over the last eight months, I participated in a programme of coaching provided by Helen Longstaff of Central Coaching. The purpose of the coaching was to support my professional development and enhance my effectiveness in managing the responsibilities of the Parish Clerk role.

Areas Covered

The coaching sessions focused on:

- Leadership and management skills.
- Personal development and self-awareness.
- Relationship management.
- Managing challenging situations and maintaining resilience.
- DISC Personality Type – report and analysis.

Key Learning

The coaching provided an opportunity to reflect on current working practices and management approaches. Key learning points included:

- Greater awareness of personal leadership style and how this works with different colleagues and other stakeholders.
- Improved techniques for communication and managing expectations (mine and other peoples).
- Increased confidence in addressing difficult issues.
- Healthier approaches to workload and expectations.

Actions Implemented

As a result of the coaching, I have:

- Reviewed and refined working practices for myself and others.
- Applied new communication techniques.
- Introduced clearer prioritisation of tasks and objectives.
- Taken a more structured approach to managing challenging situations.
- Understanding triggers for my behaviours and how, and when, to mitigate them.

Benefits to the Council

The coaching has contributed to improved confidence, effectiveness and resilience in carrying out the Clerk role. The learning gained supports more effective communication, decision making and service delivery for the benefit of the Council and the community.

Conclusion

The coaching programme has been a valuable and appreciated development opportunity and has provided practical tools and techniques that will support me in the role. The experience has contributed positively to both personal development and the ongoing work of the Council.

Opportunities for further work with Helen and Central Coaching for myself and other members of the team will be presented to the HR Panel for consideration going forward.

It wasn't the most comfortable experience but one that I wish to thank Council for giving me the opportunity to undertake. This role is more stressful and demanding than it may seem – coaching has provided me with tools to address some of the issues and will hopefully pay dividends going forwards.