

# “I came into politics to make a difference”

**“I came into politics to make a difference, but found it complex and fraught with difficulty... now thanks to this course I am better armed to enable change... ‘deliver more for less’ and examine operational efficiencies which is especially important in these current times of austerity”**

These were some of the comments made by **Cllr David Clifford** of Rushmoor BC about the Postgraduate Certificate in Local Governance for Councillors. David, along with his fellow participants, was among the first to graduate from this programme at London South Bank University (LSBU). When David got elected as a Councillor he never imagined he would get an opportunity to re-engage with education let alone gain a Postgraduate Certificate in Local Governance and now go on to undertake a Masters degree in Public Administration. “I thought I was too old ...” he reflects “...did not have the time, and frankly was not clever enough, and anyway – what good would it be to me?” David went on to say “This experience has turned out to be one of the highlights of my political career, and definitely helped me to become a more effective and engaging advocate for my community”. When asked to pinpoint how this course has helped him in this David sighed “where on earth do I begin, the list is endless”.



## “Delivering more for less”

This year, to accommodate better the busy lifestyles of councillors, the course will be delivered in more manageable ‘bite sized’ chunks and with the option to study the individual units as accredited short courses. Designed for all elected Councillors, these short courses may be of particular interest to Councillors who wish to sharpen and improve core political and community leadership skills needed in today’s challenging environment and/or who, like David, wish to serve their local community better. The three short courses are:

- Community, Leadership, Representation & Change
- Governance, Policy and Regulation
- Local Service Delivery

In this new climate of austerity, the courses will better equip councillors to make critical decisions relating to operational efficiencies enabling them to ‘lead with less’ whilst still enhancing service delivery of their local community. David comments “An issue covered and discussed in depth on the course was ‘delivering more for less’ touching on topics including commissioning, change management, localism and use of the third sector which is especially relevant in this time of austerity. As a result I feel so much better equipped and informed when it comes to examining operational efficiencies and tailoring services to an ever demanding, more complex and better informed community.”

When asked to give his thoughts on units on the course he says “We examined a range of business, leadership, organisation and ‘managing change’ models. It was so enlightening to apply these models to my own authority and to analyse and review the outcomes and effects of action we take... I came into politics to make a difference, but found that making change was a process far more complex than I

imagined, and fraught with difficulty. I believe I am now so much better armed to enable change in my authority as a direct result of this course.” David went on to say “The second unit taught me much about the regulation framework, models and techniques used to work successfully in complex network and partnership environments within which government, at all levels, works in”.

This year, starting in October, we will be running courses at LSBU and at venues more local to you, subject to sufficient numbers. Completion of all three short courses will result in participants graduating from LSBU with a Postgraduate Certificate in Local Governance for Councillors. However, because each unit is academically accredited, these credits can be used toward other postgraduate awards.

The cost of each short course/unit is £866\*. A further reduced price of £533\* is available and exclusive to the first 12 successful applicants from the South East Region.



## “This has been a huge benefit to me...”

In summing up David said “The location of the University is superb, right in the heart of London. An environment that is rich in its diversity of culture, politics and an ideal geographic location to closely examine central and local government. My authority has been incredibly supportive and has been as enthusiastic about my assignments as I have, and I feel we have often learnt together. This has been a huge benefit to me as a Member and I am incredibly grateful for the University providing such an engaging, unique and relevant course, and I am so thankful my authority encouraged me to apply”.

For more information on the short courses and to obtain a full version of Cllr Clifford’s comments on the Certificate please contact:

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\* Price valid for academic year 2010/11