

ASHOVER PARISH COUNCIL

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1 Introduction

1.1 This document forms the Council's Training and Development Policy. It sets out:

- The Council's commitment to training
- The identification of training needs
- Financial assistance
- Short courses/workshops
- Evaluation of training
- Links with other policies
- Reporting on progress

1.2 The objectives of this strategy are to:

- Encourage Councillors and staff to undertake appropriate training
- Allocate training in a fair manner
- Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value

2 Commitment to Training

2.1 Ashover Parish Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors and employee(s) to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services for the people of the parish.

2.2 According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2007), training can be defined as:

"A planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy current and future needs of the organisation."

2.3 Ashover Parish Council recognises that its most important resource is its Councillors and officer(s) and is committed to encouraging both Councillors and officer(s) to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

2.4 Providing training yields a number of benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that Ashover Parish Council provides;
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives;
- Improves the skill base of the employee(s), producing confident, highly qualified staff working as part of an effective and efficient team; and
- Demonstrates that the employee(s) is/are valued.

- 2.6 Training and development will be achieved by including a realistic financial allocation for training and development in the annual budget, as well as taking advantage of any relevant partnership or in-house provision available.
- 2.7 The process of development is as follows:
1. Training needs should be identified by considering the overall objectives of the Council, as well as individual requirements.
 2. Planning and organising training to meet those specific needs.
 3. Designing and delivering the training.
 4. Evaluating the effectiveness of training.

3 The Identification of Training Needs

- 3.1 Employee(s) will be asked to identify their development needs during regular meetings with councillors. There are number of additional ways that the training needs of both Councillors and staff may be recognised:
- Completion of annual appraisal for Parish Clerk
 - Questionnaires
 - During interview
 - Following confirmation of appointment.
 - Formal and informal discussion
 - Legislative requirements i.e. First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling.
 - Changes in legislation
 - Changes in systems
 - Agendas
 - New or revised qualifications become available
 - Accidents
 - Professional error
 - Introduction of new equipment
 - New working methods and practices
 - Complaints to the Council
 - A request from a member of staff
 - Devolved services / delivery of new services
 - The Parish Cllr Internal Auditor will be identified and provided as follows
 - Guidance to be issued by NALC
 - Practitioners Guide to Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales
 - New Councillors will be expected to undertake training:
 - Carried out by DALC
 - Code of Conduct
 - Planning
 - General Power of Competence

- 3.2 Employee(s) who wish to be nominated for a training course should discuss this in the first instance during talks with councillors; where it will be determined whether the training is relevant to the Council's needs and/or service delivery.

4 Corporate Training

- 4.1 Corporate training is necessary to ensure that employee(s) are aware of their legal responsibilities or corporate standards e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equal Opportunities. Employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where suitable training is identified.

5 Financial Assistance

- 5.1 It is important to note that all sponsored training must be appropriate to the needs of the Council, be relevant to the individual's role and is subject to the availability of financial resources.

Each request will be considered on an individual basis and the benefits to the individual and the organisation will be identified.

In order to best ensure cost effectiveness, Councillors and employee(s) will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required course, unless an alternative is authorised by full council in the interest of operational effectiveness or Best Value.

- 5.2 Other considerations include the following:
- Implication of employee release for training course(s) on the operational capability of the council
 - The most economic and effective means of training
 - Provision and availability of training budget.

- 5.3 For approved courses employees can expect the following to be sponsored:

- The course fee
- Examination fees
- Associated membership fees
- One payment to re-take a failed examination

- 5.4 Councillors and officer(s) attending assisted courses are required to inform the Clerk or Councillors immediately of any absences, giving reasons.

- 5.5 Failure to sit an examination may result in the Council withdrawing future course funding and/or requesting the refunding of financial assistance. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

- 5.6 Any employee undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave Ashover Parish Council employment within two years of completion of the qualification they will be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training.

If the employee takes up employment with another Local Authority an exemption to this clause may be granted.

6 Short Courses/Workshops/Residential Weekends

- 6.1 Where attendance is required at a short course, a full day of paid leave will be granted.

- 6.2 Councillors and staff attending approved short courses/workshops/residential weekends can expect the following to be paid:

- The course fee (usually invoiced following the event)
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Council's current policy
- Subsistence in accordance with the Council's current policy

7 Evaluation of Training

- 7.1 Records of all training undertaken by employee(s) will be kept.

- 7.2 As part of Ashover Parish Council's continuing commitment to training and development, employee(s) are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training they undertake highlighting in particular the key implications of new legislation, guidance and/or best practice for the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of the authority.

- 7.3 Well chaired Council meetings

Professional responses to planning applications
Policies and reports of a high nature
Projects well managed
Council finances well managed
Professional conduct of both Clerk and Councillors
Maintaining quality Status
Maintaining the ability to use the General Power of Competence.

8 **Linking with other Council Policies**

How will this link to the Council's other policies?

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of Councillor and officer development;
- A 'Statement of Intent' on training for both Councillors and staff is a requirement for the Re-accreditation of Quality Council Status;
- Risk Management Policy – a commitment to Training and Development greatly assists in achieving good governance and an effective system of Risk Management;
- Health and Safety Policy – ongoing training and development is key to ensuring a positive approach to Health and Safety is embedded throughout the authority;
- Undertaking training is a clear indication of Continuing Professional Development.

9 **Reporting on Progress** – The Clerk will report annually to the full council detailing attendance at training over the year.

10 **Conclusion**

10.1 The adoption of a training policy should achieve many benefits for the Council. It will assist in demonstrating that the Council is committed to continuing professional development and enhancing the skills of both Councillors and staff.

11 **Freedom of Information**

11.1 In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this Document will be posted on the Council's Website www.ashover-pc.gov.co.uk and copies of this document will be available for inspection on request.

11.2 **Resources**

County/Regional Training Partnership (C/RTP)
NALC website: www.nalc.gov.uk
Society of Local Council Clerks www.slcc.gov.uk

Qualifications

12.3 Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)
Working With your Council (WWC)
University of Gloucestershire's Certificate in Local Policy

Reviewed: May 2017
Reviewed: May 2018
Reviewed: May 2021
Reviewed: May 2024
Next Review: May 2027