

West Ilsley Parish Council

Training and Development Policy

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1. Introduction

West Ilsley Parish Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors and employees to ensure the Council can meet its aim and objectives. The Council will ensure that Councillors and employees will be provided with the means to develop and enhance their skills and abilities to deliver high quality services, along with management skills to manage and plan those services and be kept informed of all new legislation. The Council values the time given by its members to their community and needs to maximise the rewards from that time by ensuring that its members understand and enjoy their role in the community.

Funds are allocated to a training and development budget each year to enable Councillors and employees to attend training and conferences relevant to their office. Prospective Councillors and applicants for the post of Clerk will be made aware of the content of this policy and the expectations placed upon them contained within it.

2. Identification of Training and Development Needs

Training and development needs may be identified due to:

- Legislative requirements.
- Changes in legislation.
- Changes in systems.
- New or revised qualifications become available.
- New working methods and practices.
- Complaints to the Council.
- A request from a member of staff.
- Devolved services/ delivery of new services.

Councillors

Annually, the Council will formally review the training needs of Councillors at a meeting of the Parish Council. Opportunities to attend courses will be investigated by the Clerk and brought to the attention of the Full Council. The following training is provided by HALC on behalf of BALC, however similar training may be sought through other training providers.

The following training is required for new Councillors:

- Knowledge and Core Skills.

Training on specific committee areas should be attended as required, for example:

- An Introduction to Planning for Local Councillors – all.
- Local Plans and Planning Policy - all.
- Managing Staff in Local Councils – Staffing Committee.

Further training can be attended for specific roles such as:

- Chairman/Vice-Chairman - Chairing Skills.
- Internal Controller - Local Council Finance for Councillors.

These suggestions are not exclusive, and Councillors should seek any training they believe is relevant to their roles within the Council.

Clerk

Annually, the Staffing Committee will review the training needs of the Clerk through the annual appraisal process. Informal discussions should take place throughout the year as the need arises.

Training needs for a new Clerk will be identified through the recruitment process, including application form and interview, formal and informal discussions and annual Staff Appraisals.

The Clerk is expected to keep up-to-date with developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training required.

The Clerk is expected to undertake and complete CiLCA training within two years of starting employment if the qualification is not already held.

3. Financial Implications

Each year as part of the annual budget setting process, the Council will include a training budget for employees and Councillors. When calculating this, any training needs identified as part of the annual appraisal process and Councillors training needs review will be taken in to consideration.

All sponsored training must be appropriate to the needs of the Council and is subject to the availability of financial resources.

For approved courses the Council will cover the course fee, examination fees, associated membership fees and one payment to re-take a failed examination.

Recouping Costs

It is standard practice of the Council that where the Council is covering the costs of an employee's training course or qualification (this being a course or qualification, rather than one day course or workshop) a written agreement will be made that if the employee leaves the Council's employ within a set period of time during or having completed the course, the employee will be expected to reimburse the Council as per the agreement.

Travel Expenses

Employees or Councillors attending training may submit an expense claim to cover travel costs to and from the venue. Where practical and possible, if there is more than one attendee from the Council, car-pooling or shared travel arrangements should be made.

4. Study Leave

Employees who are given approval to undertake external qualifications will be granted the following:

- Study time to attend day-release courses.
- Time to sit examinations.
- Study time of one day per examination (to be discussed and agreed upon by their line manager in advance).
- Provision of study time must be agreed upon with the line manager prior to the course being undertaken.

5. Record Keeping and Evaluation

All attendees are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training and development they undertake. This information will be used to assess and improve the training process.

Each employee and Councillor has a Training Log which is held securely by the Clerk. This log will be updated with any training undertaken on receipt of the Training Report Form. A digital copy of any attendance or qualification certificates should also be given to the Clerk to be held with these records. These records will be kept in accordance with the Council's Document Retention policy.