Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Speldhurst Parish Council recognises that training and development for staff, councillors and volunteers is a major investment in its ability to deliver effective services and will seek to create a culture of continuing development.

1.2 The council will comply with the principles of the National Training Strategy for Town and Parish Councils and will subscribe to the Kent Association of Local Councils and Society of Local Council Clerks to ensure staff, councillors and volunteers may attend their training.

2. Policy Commitments

2.1 The council commits to ensuring staff, councillors and volunteers are trained to the highest standard and are kept up to date with new legislation.

2.2 To support this commitment, funds will be allocated in the annual budget to enable staff and councillors to attend appropriate training and conferences relevant to their office.

3. Training Plan

3.1 The Governance Committee will be responsible for determining, meeting, and monitoring the training needs of staff, councillors and volunteers, and managing the allocated budget.

3.2 Records of all training of staff, councillors and volunteers will be kept by the Clerk.

3.3 A training schedule will be drawn up by the Clerk for approval by the Governance Committee for staff to ensure all training is relevant, fit for purpose and is carried out in a cost-effective manner. This schedule will be informed by training needs of staff identified through the staff appraisal system. Particular consideration will be given to carrying out training locally possibly in liaison with other local councils.

3.4 All new councillors will receive an induction pack prepared by the Clerk and invited to attend an induction meeting with the clerk and chair of council, where basic information relating to the council's organisation and responsibilities will be provided.

4. **Professional Qualifications**

4.1 All staff members will be encouraged to pursue professional qualifications, such as the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) or equivalent. It will be a requirement of the Clerk role for the job holders to hold the qualification or commit to achieving it within eighteen months of appointment.

4.2 The council will meet the financial cost of registering for and submitting the CiLCA portfolio. If a candidate is unsuccessful, the candidate will be responsible for the cost of any re-submission. The council will pay the annual registration costs whilst the member of staff is employed by the council.

4.3 Additional higher-level qualifications or specific qualifications relevant to the role will be discussed as part of the annual appraisal. The council may agree to meet the cost, or part thereof, of a qualification which will be of mutual benefit to both the council and staff member.

5. **Staff Personal Development**

5.1 The council recognises that training and development for staff often provides continuous professional development for the staff member, while enhancing specific skills. Training courses for personal development are motivational for staff members and consistently leads to improved performance in their current role. Equally, the council acknowledges that such personal development will occasionally lead staff members to seek alternative employment to maximise their new or improved skills.

5.2 Where there is clear benefit to the council, payment for any personal development training will be made by the council, and the staff member will be expected to use their new or improved skills in their existing role within the council.

5.3 Where the cost of the personal development training course exceeds £500, the staff member will repay to the council the full cost of the training if they leave the employment of the council within 12 months of completion of the training, and 50% of the cost of the training if they leave the employment of the council after 12 months, but within 24 months of the completion of the training. Agreement to this condition will be recorded in the staff member's file.

5.4 The provisions within part 5 of this policy do not apply to any training course deemed compulsory for the staff member to carry out their existing role, for example due to a change of regulations or insistence on particular qualifications.