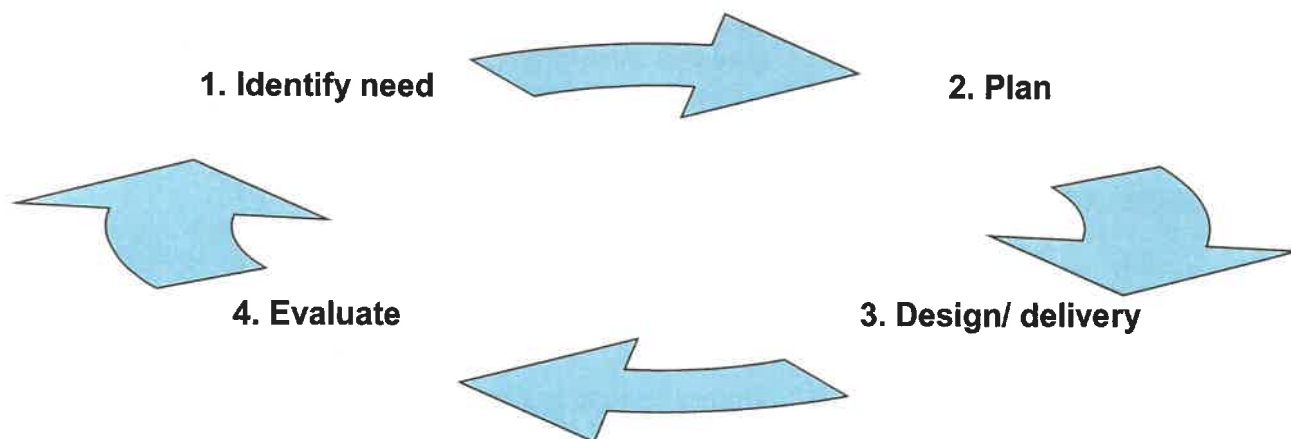


SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL

TRAINING STATEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY



1. Statement

The Council is committed to the principle of encouraging members of staff and councillors to attend training. All sponsored training must

- relate directly to the needs of the Council,
- be relevant to an individual's duties
- subject to availability of financial resources.

2. Training Objectives

- To provide suitably trained, qualified and motivated councillors and staff for the Council.
- To provide facilities for training and retraining to meet the changing needs of the Council.
- To provide councillors and staff with a greater understanding of the purpose and working of the Council; and their part in it.
- To foster the development of councillor and staff relations, job satisfaction and nurture a positive attitude towards personal development.

3. Identification of Training Needs

All councillors and staff should have regard to the following when considering training needs:

- Workload implication of training.
- The capabilities of the applicant to benefit from the training.
- If the application is for continued academic sponsorship, consideration should be given to the councillors/employees past attainments.
- The most economic and effective means of training.
- The provision and availability of a training budget.
- Priority of each individual councillor/employee's need with regard to budget.

4. Training Plan

The Council is committed to ensuring a Training Plan is developed, tailored to the needs of the member of staff as identified in agreement with their respective Line Manager.

The Training Plan will include attendance of Training Events, Conferences and in house/on the job training, structured and organised to suit.

The Town Clerk and staff members will be expected to attend all relevant training days whenever possible.

Councillors will be expected to attend relevant training days as their personal circumstances allow.

The Town Clerk has specific responsibility to develop and implement the necessary procedure in order to deliver, advise on, provide support for, and monitor the effectiveness of this policy, which will be reviewed periodically by the Personnel Committee.

New Councillors will have an induction meeting with the Town Clerk and will be provided with an information pack containing essential information including Council Policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. This pack will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it contains up-to-date and relevant information.

5. Design and Delivery Training

Training will take account of courses offered by various training providers including the Society of Local Council Clerks (Norfolk Branch & Nationally) and Norfolk/National Association of Local Councils.

6. Training Evaluation

Staff Performance Management Appraisals shall provide the basic mechanism for identifying the training needs of all employees. Staff Performance Management Appraisals are conducted by the Line Managers i.e. Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and the Works Manager.

Training requirements for Councillors will usually be identified by the Mayor and the Town Clerk and opportunities to attend courses will be investigated by the Clerk and brought to the attention of the Personnel Committee or the Full Council.

Councillors shall also identify and debate their training needs at their annual meeting in May each year and at their annual budget meeting in January.

In addition to staff Performance Management Appraisals and council meetings the Council may use questionnaires, personal interview, formal and/or informal discussions

7. Training Schemes

Training courses to be financed from the Town Council training budget:

It is expected that councillors and staff undertaking qualification training will attend the nearest location or distance learning offering the required course at the appropriate level.

8. Financial Assistance Scheme

(a) Budget - The annual training Budget is to be approved by the Council at their Budget meeting in December/January and split between an Essential Staff Training Budget and a Conference Training Budget for staff and a Councillor Training budget for all Councillors including attendance at Conferences.

- a. The agreed Essential Staff Training budget is managed at the discretion of the Town Clerk.
- b. The Staff Conference Training Budget shall be managed at the discretion of the Personnel Committee
- c. The Councillor Training Budget is managed at the discretion of the full Council.

(b) Expenses - Where training is approved, the Council will pay and/or assist with expenses incurred which may cover such items as tuition and examination fees.

(c) Travelling costs - to be paid at the discretion of the Town Clerk.

- (d) Hours of Work - A member of staff attending training events, conferences outside of the normal working pattern, will accrue Time off in Lieu (TOIL). At the discretion of the Town Clerk this additional time can be paid as additional time at their contracted hourly rate.
- (e) Clawback - where training facilities are granted to enable a member of staff to acquire a recognised qualification, it is a condition precedent to the granting of such facilities that the employee shall be required to undertake to remain in the service of the Town Council for a period of **two** years from the date on which the qualification is obtained. (not from the date of start the training)
If an employee (or councillor other than by election or ending of a term of office) leaves within this two-year period all costs are reclaimed in full, except in the most exceptional circumstances
- Clawback - where a member of staff or councillor, without good reason, fails to sit for an examination within a reasonable period or fails to show satisfactory progress in his/her studies or discontinues the course, the Council will immediately withdraw the training facility granted and will require all costs refunded in full, in accordance with the undertaking signed by the employee.
- (f) Further Training - the continuance of facilities under the Scheme, whether for a second or succeeding stage of study or for a second attempt at an examination, shall be granted only if the Council is satisfied either:
- that the member of staff has passed the appropriate examination
 - has otherwise made satisfactory progress in his/her studies
 - merits assistance to enable him/her to sit the examination again.
- (g) Non-Attendance - staff and/or Councillors attending training (assisted courses, events or conferences) are required to inform the Town Clerk immediately of any absences, giving reasons.
Failure to do so (or late notification other than sickness, bereavement or other legitimate reason) may result in action being taken under the Disciplinary Procedure for Staff, under the Code of Conduct for Councillors and result in reimbursement of any costs incurred by the Council, that cannot be recovered.
- (h) Training Registration - individual councillors or employees are responsible for their registration for the appropriate course and examination via the Town Hall office, but not before approval has been obtained. The Council will not meet a financial commitment where prior approval has not been granted.
- (j) Annual Subscriptions - the Council will, in addition to the Training budget, pay the annual subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) to enable staff and councillors to take advantage of training courses and conferences arranged by those associations ~~either with or independently from the Norfolk Training Partnership.~~

Each member of our team (councillors or employees) is highly valued and every effort is made to develop potential for the benefit of the individual and the authority.

This is also reflected in the Council's policy on staff which states:

"The Council recognises that its employees are its most important asset and will ensure good practice in the employment, management and development of employees. It will aim to operate practices which promote it as a good employer, and which provide job satisfaction for its employees".

