

Widdrington Station & Stobswood Parish Council

Training and Development Policy

FEBRUARY 2026

This policy sets out Widdrington Station & Stobswood Parish Council's commitment to the training and development of its employees and councillors. It forms part of the Council's Employee Handbook and governance framework and reflects guidance issued by the **National Association of Local Councils (NALC)** and the **Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)**.

The policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective, proportionate, and compliant with current best practice.

1. Policy Statement

The Council recognises that effective training and development are essential to good governance, sound financial management, and the delivery of high-quality services to the community.

Well-informed and appropriately trained staff and councillors support transparency, accountability, and lawful decision-making. The Council is therefore committed to supporting continuous learning and development to enable individuals to fulfil their roles confidently and competently.

2. Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure councillors understand their role, responsibilities, and legal duties;
 - Enable employees to perform their roles effectively and professionally;
 - Support compliance with statutory and sector-specific requirements;
 - Promote best practice in local council administration;
 - Encourage personal development and continuous improvement.
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3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees of the Council;
- All elected and co-opted councillors.

Training may include formal courses, workshops, conferences, seminars, online learning, mentoring, networking events, and briefings.

4. Identification of Training Needs

Training and development needs will be identified through a combination of:

- Induction processes for new staff and councillors;
- Appraisals and performance reviews (for employees);
- Informal and formal discussions;
- Changes in legislation, guidance, or best practice;
- The strategic objectives and priorities of the Council.

The Council will ensure that training is proportionate to role and responsibilities.

5. Training for Councillors

The Council recognises the importance of training councillors to support effective governance.

Councillors will be encouraged to undertake appropriate training, including:

- Induction training following election or co-option;
- Training on roles, responsibilities, and the Code of Conduct;
- Financial, governance, and decision-making training;
- Updates on relevant legislation and sector guidance.

Reasonable expenses incurred in attending approved training will be reimbursed in accordance with the Council's Expenses Policy.

6. Training for Employees

The Council is committed to supporting the ongoing development of its employees.

The Clerk is responsible for identifying training and development needs for staff and for ensuring appropriate opportunities are available.

Training provided to the Clerk will meet or exceed the **minimum Continuous Professional Development (CPD) requirements of the Society of Local Council Clerks**.

Where appropriate, the Council will support professional qualifications and development relevant to an employee's role.

7. Training Planning and Budgeting

The Council will make adequate provision within its annual budget to support training and development for staff and councillors.

The Clerk will prepare a draft **Training and Development Schedule** for staff and councillors, setting out proposed activities and estimated costs. This schedule will be submitted to the Finance & Staffing Committee for consideration and recommendation to Council.

8. Networking and Shared Learning

The Council recognises the value of networking and shared learning with other local councils and relevant bodies.

Where appropriate, the Council will support participation in training events, forums, and networks organised by other councils, county associations, or professional bodies.

9. Evaluation of Training

To ensure value for money and effectiveness, staff and councillors attending training may be asked to complete an evaluation or provide feedback.

Feedback will be used to:

- Assess the effectiveness and relevance of training;
 - Inform future training decisions;
 - Share learning and good practice within the Council where appropriate.
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10. Training Records

The Council will maintain a training record for all staff and councillors.

Records will include:

- Dates of training;
- Title and content of the activity;
- Training provider;
- Any qualifications or certificates obtained.

Training records will be used to support workforce planning, appraisals, and governance assurance.

11. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Council to ensure it remains aligned with legislative requirements, NALC/SLCC guidance, and the operational needs of the Council.

Any amendments will be approved by the Council and communicated accordingly.