

Nether Wallop Parish Council

Training Policy

Aim – Nether Wallop Parish Council recognises that training will help to ensure that the Council’s duties are professionally carried out and that best practices are followed and that the Clerk and Councillors are kept up to date with changes to Legislation. The Council would like to obtain the General Power of Competence (as per the Localism Act 2011) and one of the requirements of this is that the Clerk is suitably qualified. It is therefore important to support the Clerk in gaining the required level of knowledge in order to assist the Council in delivering services to the community.

Actions - Councillors and staff are required to take a pro-active and positive approach to training in order that they can be confident in their respective roles and kept up to date with changing regulations and legislation.

Mission - The Council fully supports and actively encourages training of all key persons involved in the business of the Parish Council. Some training will be offered upon acceptance of a position, other training will be considered upon request or offered when is thought appropriate. It is recognised that new members will not necessarily understand the powers available for the Council to use and the restrictions and guidelines it must adhere to. The Clerk will provide guidance, support and reference materials as soon as is feasible.

Budget - Each year a budget, suggested by the Clerk and reviewed by Councillors, will be set for Training and Development. This will provide for initial and ongoing training and resources. The Council will pay the annual subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) so that staff and Councillors may take access the Legal Advice departments of each.

Scope - Training is expected to comprise of Local Government Sector Conferences and Seminars, Day Courses, Online Learning courses and Webinars, Legal texts and Reference Books. Subjects may include Legislation, specific roles or skills but these must be required in order to support or carry out Council business or projects.

Employees - The Clerk will be supported in gaining the CiLCA qualification and provided with courses and publications relevant to obtaining skills relating to Meetings Protocol, Financial Record keeping, Employment Law and Health and Safety and other duties as specified in their contract and/or job description. Other Staff will be given training in support of their responsibilities upon identification that the need exists. All staff will be subject to annual appraisals where training requirements will be reviewed.

Volunteers - Members of the public not employed by the Council but performing a voluntary role to assist the Council will also be eligible for Health and Safety training related to their chosen activity. Training is not expected to exceed the level required to safely carry out their role.

Councillors – The Clerk will provide Councillors with “New Councillor Packs” which will contain at a minimum:

1. A hard copy of “NALC The Good Councillors Guide” and “NALC Being a Good Employer”
2. A soft copy of the Council’s Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and Policy and Procedures Lists.
3. List of Powers that are available for the Council to use.
4. A copy of the current budget and explanation of the Precept and how increases in Precept affect the Council Tax of a Band D property.
5. List of all contracts that the Council is currently tied into.
6. Maps of the Parish showing Council owned or managed land and facilities.
7. Consent forms requesting Councillors permission to accept agendas via email.
8. The Clerk’s job description
9. A list of material considerations that can be used as objections to Planning applications.

All new Councillors are expected to attend relevant HALC courses: The Knowledge (Part1) and Core Skills (Part2). Additionally the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are encouraged to attend the “Charing Skills” course.

Monitoring and review - The Clerk will keep a record of the training courses attended by Staff, Councillors and Volunteers. Opportunities to attend courses will be investigated by the Clerk and distributed to everyone. The Clerk and Chairman will review this policy each year after the Parish Assembly noting the projects carried out the previous year and those planned or discussed for the coming two years. Skills and knowledge needed by Staff, Councillors or Volunteers for these projects will be listed and appropriate training courses sought. Councillors and Staff will be encouraged to expand their knowledge and/or repeat training on relevant subjects they are or will be responsible for. The Clerk’s training and development will be ascertained by the HR Committee during the annual review and periodically throughout the year in informal catch up sessions.

Evaluation - All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the Council and/or Clerk to gauge its relevance, content and appropriateness. Any additional training needs will be highlighted as a result and the Clerk will grade the training on the basis of “Nice to have”, “Needed” or “Not Necessary” and will indicate which roles it is suitable for.