

HAWKWELL PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Hawkwell Parish Council is committed to providing training and development for both its employees and Councillors to enable them to undertake their respective roles and keep up-to-date with latest legislation.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Hawkwell Parish Council is committed to ensuring that it discharges its duties and responsibilities for the local community in an efficient and professional manner. To that end Council's intention is that Councillors and employees are suitably equipped to carry out their roles as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- 2.2 Training is defined as 'a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation.'
- 2.3 Council will procure or provide such training and development opportunities as it deems necessary and relevant. Councillor and employee development should be recognised as an integral part of Council's ethos.
- 2.4 The training budget is set annually and the year-to-date figures are reported through the regular financial reports. Priority will be given to new Councillors if there are budget constraints.
- 2.5 Council will consider an allocation in the annual budget for a subscription payment to the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) to enable Councillors and employees to take advantage of their training resources.
- 2.6 Council will reimburse travel expenses associated when attending training courses. Expenses incurred other than normal travel expenses must be approved in advance of the course where appropriate.
- 2.7 Should a new Councillor leave within a year of joining Council they may be asked to pay back 50% of any training costs incurred.
- 2.8 A copy of the Training Policy will be given to all employees and Councillors.

3. Staff Training

- 3.1 The employees of the Council are seen as being fundamental in all areas of its service delivery. It is essential that they are all fully trained to carry out their duties and attend training relevant to their position.
- 3.2 Training and development needs and requests are formally discussed during the annual staff appraisal process.

- 3.3 To ensure that Council achieves a highly motivated and skilled workforce providing a high standard of service to the public, all employees will be encouraged to notify their Line Manager of any area of work in which they feel they require training and can bring this up at any time.
- 3.4 Where training needs are identified, either at the staff appraisal or another time, the relevant courses and support will be sought and taken forward.
- 3.5 Council allocates a budget specifically for employee training.
- 3.6 The Council Clerk should be suitably qualified; preferably the CiLCA qualification or be willing to commence the qualification within a year of appointment. Council will cover the financial costs of the course.
- 3.7 Office staff should be offered the chance to undertake the CiLCA qualification for their own professional development and also for Council's benefit (succession planning).

4. Councillor Training

- 4.1 All Councillors are given the opportunity to attend relevant training courses offered by various service providers. The Clerk will distribute training notices either by way of an Agenda or separately by email.
- 4.2 It is expected that Councillors will attend training sessions though it cannot be compulsory. It is preferable that Councillors taking on the role of Chairman of the Council or its Committees have undertaken appropriate training.
- 4.3 As the policies of Council are set by the Council as a corporate body, it is essential that all Councillors are afforded appropriate training.
- 4.4 Council allocates a budget specifically for Councillor training.
- 4.5 Councillor training is usually provided by outside service providers; the main organisations offering relevant training are the EALC, National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and Rochford District Council (RDC).
- 4.6 All Councillors are provided with a copy of Council's main governance documents; Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Council Policies, Code of Conduct, etc when they take up office. Councillors should avail themselves of these documents and ask the Clerk if they have any questions. The Clerk will also give new Councillors other pertinent documents to read to aid their understanding of the role.
- 4.7 New Councillors are encouraged to undertake Code of Conduct training at the earliest available opportunity.
- 4.8 Councillors serving on the Personnel Committee (and the Disputes & Grievance Panel) should attend relevant HR training every two years unless they are already suitably qualified.

- 4.9 When a course is booked but a Councillor cannot attend they must let the Clerk know as soon as possible so that the place can be offered to another Councillor. It should be noted that costs are incurred when training is booked but not taken up.

5. Volunteers undertaking Parish Council activities

- 5.1 Volunteers will be given a briefing on relevant health and safety matters relating to the scope of their role prior to commencing activities.
- 5.2 An assessment of their skill, knowledge and capacity to complete the activity will be undertaken, including Risk Assessments as required.
- 5.3 A briefing on the safe use of any equipment provided by the Council will be given as required.
- 5.4 Training for volunteers will not be beyond that which is necessary for their role.

6. Evaluation and Review of Training

- 6.1 In order to evaluate training, employees and Councillors are required to evaluate how successful and appropriate the training has been.
- 6.2 Training will be reviewed in the light of legislative changes or any relevant quality systems, new qualifications, new equipment, complaints or incidents which highlight training needs.
- 6.3 Councillors and staff can ask the Clerk to investigate training of either a standard or specific nature and provide relevant details regarding costs, content, venue, etc.
- 6.4 Feedback from training courses and sharing of learning across Council benefits Council in terms of what it might use and implement in the future and represents value for money.
- 6.5 The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by Councillors and employees.

Meeting Proposed: Policy Committee / February 2023

Meeting Adopted: Full Council / March 2023

Review Date: 2025