



Councillor and Staff Training and Development Policy

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Approved by: Finance and Partnership Committee

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1. Policy Statement

The Council recognises the value and importance of providing opportunities to all Councillors and staff to develop their knowledge and skills in order to contribute fully to the democratic process and to better understand and enjoy the role they undertake in the community.

The Council will encourage all Councillors to attend training conferences and seminars to gain knowledge of specific subjects as well as an overall overview of the role of Councillor and the functions of a Council.

All training will be made equally accessible to all Councillors and staff.

2. Responsibilities

The Town Council will:

- ensure new Councillors and staff receive induction training.
- make Councillors and employees aware of development and training opportunities open to them.
- identify training needs in the light of the overall objectives of the Council and the requirements of the individual by means of formal and informal discussions, including performance review.
- evaluate the effectiveness of staff training in relation to service delivery through the Performance Review process.
- ensure that the training offered to its staff will be no less than the minimum requirement of Continuous Professional Development required by the Institute of the Society of Local Council Clerks.
- ensure that training for both Councillors and staff and membership fees for associated organisations are adequately covered in the annual budget.
- ensure that all Councillors and staff receive equal opportunities in accessing training and development.

Councillors and staff are expected to:

- Demonstrate commitment to personal development and training.
- Share learning and knowledge.

3. Types of Training and Development

On the Job	Off the Job
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mentoring – as a mentor or being mentored• Job shadowing• On-the-job training from members of staff• ‘Acting Up’• Project work• Developing others• Coaching/professional supervision either internal from experienced members of staff or external professionals• Working groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal or external courses or conferences• Away days• Visits to other similar organisations• Professional or technical qualifications• Programmes of self-study• Networking with other professionals• Distance learning• Internet searching• E Learning• Interest/professional groups• Private study

4. Identification of Learning and Development Needs

Councillors

Whilst the opportunities are non-compulsory, Councillors are positively encouraged to participate.

On joining the Council by election or co-option:

- All new Councillors will be given an information pack containing copies of the following documents:
 - a) NALC ‘Local Councils Explained’.
 - b) The Code of Conduct for parish Councillors.
 - c) A copy of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
 - d) A timetable of all the scheduled Council meetings for the year.
 - e) Terms of Reference for the committees of the Council.
 - f) Councillor and office contact details.
- New Councillors are encouraged to undertake a relevant course organised by the Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA).
- New Committee Chairs are encouraged to undertake the Chairmanship course organised by ALCA.

Other sources of support:

- Working closely with another Councillor acting as a mentor for the first six months of office.
- Reading through Council agendas and minutes of meetings and asking members of staff for an explanation or clarification of the various terms used.

- Reading and assimilating briefings supplied by government agencies, South Gloucestershire Council, the National Association of Local Councils, Avon Local Councils' Association and the Clerk.

Staff

New members of Staff:

Within the probationary period the Clerk will assess any immediate training, and development needs to allow the new member of staff to undertake their role effectively.

Existing members of Staff:

Staff must be aware that external qualifications will require an element of personal study in their own time and should consider the course requirements prior to committing to study.

The Council will consider rewarding staff for attainment where qualifications increase the value of their input by reference to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) salary scales.

One full-time or two part-time staff members are required to hold valid First Aider qualifications.

The planning of staff training should take account of any recommendations made by the Council's health and safety advisors and financial auditors.

5. Attendance at Training and Completion of Learning

Once a place on a training course has been booked every effort should be made to ensure attendance. If Councillors or staff are unable to attend a booked programme the training organiser must be notified as early as possible, so that the place can be offered to another person where possible.

A report and evaluation on training attended will be required from participants.

6. Costs

- The Council will pay for the full cost of training, other than obtaining professional qualifications which is dealt with below.
- Costs associated with obtaining professional qualifications will be subject to agreement with the individual. In principle the Council would expect an individual to make a financial contribution of up to 50% of these costs. Travel,

accommodation and other expenses will be reimbursed in line with Council policy.

- It is recognised that staff may need to attend a course in their own time. In such cases time off in lieu or payment at the employees' normal rate of pay will be agreed.
- Exam study leave: paid leave may be granted to sit for approved examinations. This must be agreed and arranged in advance.
- The Council will pay or reimburse the cost of membership of professional associations if this is a requirement or relevant to the employee's role.

7. Appeal Process

Appeal Process Staff who feel that have been unreasonably refused the right to training and development should in the first instance raise the matter with the Clerk. If this does not resolve the matter the member of staff can appeal through the Grievance Procedure.