

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1 Introduction

Little Waldingfield Parish Council is committed to ensuring its Councillors and staff are trained to the highest standard and kept up to date with all new legislation. To support this, funds are allocated to a training budget each year to enable staff and councillors to attend training and conferences relevant to their office. Prospective Councillors and applicants for the post of Clerk should be made aware of the content of this policy and the expectations placed upon them contained within it.

2 Policy Statement

The council is committed to ensure that it continues to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to residents professionally. To that end the Council's intention is that Councillors, Clerk and any other workers of the Council are suitably equipped with knowledge and skills to carry out their roles and maintain effective working practices. The Council will procure or provide such training and development opportunities as it deems necessary and relevant for the delivery of its work.

3 Training and Development Activity

The council consists of seven elected Councillors and employs one part-time Parish Clerk. In addition, volunteers from within the parish provide invaluable support for its work. Training and development for each of these groups will be regularly reviewed but will contain as a minimum requirement:

3.1 For Councillors

- a. Attendance at induction sessions explaining the role of Councillors
- b. Provision of a Councillor Information Handbook containing copies of the Standing orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, policies of the Council and other information deemed relevant
- c. Access to relevant courses provided by bodies such as the *Suffolk Association of Local Councils* (SALC).
- d. Expenses for attending briefings, consultations and other general meetings for Councillors in Suffolk
- e. Circulation of documentation such as briefings and newsletters/magazines

3.2 For the Clerk

- a. Induction session explaining the role of the Clerk
- b. Provision of copies of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, policies of the Council and other information deemed relevant.
- c. Completion of the Introduction to Local Council Administration course or similar.
- d. Gaining the *Certificate in Local Council Administration* (CiLCA) within 12 months of appointment (this is a condition of employment) in order to retain Quality Parish Council status and the General Power of Competence.
- e. Any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as IT, Legal powers, Finance and understanding the planning system, identified through regular training needs assessments.
- f. Attendance at relevant local meetings of bodies such as the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and briefings by SALC.
- g. Subscription to relevant publications and advice services.
- h. Provision of *Local Council Administration* by Paul Clayden and other relevant publications, which will remain the property of the Council.
- i. Arranging mentoring opportunities with suitably qualified Clerks from neighbouring parishes.
- j. Regular feedback from the Chairman of the Council in their performance.

3.3 For Volunteers on Parish Council activities

- a. Briefings on relevant health and safety matters and the scope of their work prior to starting.
- b. Assessment of their skill, knowledge and capacity to complete the task in hand.
- c. Briefing on the safe use of any equipment provided by the Council.
- d. Training for volunteers will not be beyond that which is necessary for their role.

4. Training needs identification

4.1 Training requirements for Councillors will usually be identified by themselves, the Chairman and Clerk. Opportunities to attend courses will be investigated by the Clerk and brought to the attention of the full council.

4.2 Annually, the Council will formally review the training needs of Councillors and the Clerk at a meeting of the Parish Council.

4.3 Training needs for the Clerk will be identified through the recruitment process for new clerks, including application form and interview, formal and informal discussions and annual staff appraisal. The Clerk is expected to keep up-to-date with developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training required.

5. Resourcing Training

5.1 Annually, an allocation will be made in the budget each year as required to enable reasonable training and development.

5.2 Annually, the Council will consider an allocation in the budget for the payment of a subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks, Institute of Local Council Management and Suffolk Association of Local Councils to enable the Clerk and Councillors to take advantage of their training courses and conferences.

5.3 Purchases of relevant resources such as publications will be considered on an ongoing basis.

6. Evaluation and review of training

6.1 All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the Council to gauge its relevance, content and appropriateness. Any additional training needs highlighted as a result will be brought into the training identification process in section 4 above.

6.2 Training will be reviewed in the light of changes to legislation or any quality systems relevant to the Council; new qualifications; new equipment; complaints received or incidents which highlight training needs and requests from Councillors, the Clerk or volunteers.

6.3 The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by themselves and Councillors.

This policy was adopted by Little Waldingfield Parish Council on 27th October 2015.