

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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1. Purpose and scope

The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's position on the provision of training and development opportunities for staff, councillors, and volunteers. It applies to all staff whether full or part time, temporary or fixed term.

Training is "a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the Council."¹

Training supports the Council to meet its objective to provide efficient, friendly, transparent, and accountable local government for the Parish, and to carry out its projects and plans.

Ensuring that staff, councillors, and volunteer are appropriately trained means the Council will be better equipped to provide services to the community². Similarly appropriately trained councillors are better equipped to fulfil their roles.

DPC recognises that appropriate training prevents problems and enables the Council to focus resources on providing a service to the community.

Training volunteers can amplify the Council's resources and its capacity to meet its objectives, increase community engagement and the Council's ability to understand and represent the interests of the community, and increase community resilience. Increasing the capability of individual volunteers benefits those volunteers, as well as others with which they may be working.

2. Identifying Training and Development Needs

Training and development needs will be identified by the Council from a variety of sources:

- Induction and probationary periods³
- One-to-ones
- Informal discussions⁴
- Questionnaires
- Performance Appraisals
- Project planning
- Team meetings
- Annual plan
- Change to council processes or services
- Change to legislation
- Council meetings
- Skills required to meet the Council's goals and plans

¹Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development in Being a Good Employer, June 2016, NALC on behalf of the Improvement and Development Board

²Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development in Being a Good Employer, June 2016, NALC on behalf of the Improvement and Development Board

³Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development in Being a Good Employer, June 2016, NALC on behalf of the Improvement and Development Board

⁴Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development in Being a Good Employer, June 2016, NALC on behalf of the Improvement and Development Board

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- Complaints
- Relevant opportunities identified by the Clerk⁵

3. Meeting Training and Development Needs

The council will encourage staff, councillors, and volunteers to identify their own learning styles and will seek to provide a range of learning and training methods, including:

- Attendance at conferences, seminars, and short courses
- Online training
- Internal coaching
- Shared in-house learning resources (books, journals, DVDs etc.)
- In house training
- Work shadowing
- Time for self-directed research and learning

3.1 Training and Development Activity⁶

Councillors

- Issued with an information folder emailed upon their acceptance of office which includes copies of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, a list of the Council's Policies, and any other information which is deemed relevant. All Policies are available from the Parish website. Paper copies will be provided on request.
- Given an electronic copy of 'The good councillor's guide'.
- When appointing councillors to participate on DPC working groups or to be nominated to represent DPC in external forums Councillors DPC will consider the skills and knowledge of members. In general Councillors participating on DPC working groups or nominated to represent DPC in external forums are expected to complete within six months of becoming a councillor the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) 'Being a Good Councillor' training (£72) or equivalent.
- The other two types of core training that are strongly encouraged are:
 - data protection training such as DALC or Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Data Protection training (£14 and £30 respectively), and
 - Code of Conduct related training such as DALC's 'Standards in Public Life' (£16), 'Code of Conduct' (£36) training, or Civility and Respect.
- Encourage councillors to build their knowledge and expertise by participating in relevant training and development opportunities.

⁵February 2021 Millom Without Parish Council, Training and Development Policy.
<https://millomwithoutparishcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/Training-and-Development-Policy-2020.html>

⁶Adapted from: February 2021 Millom Without Parish Council, Training and Development Policy.
<https://millomwithoutparishcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/Training-and-Development-Policy-2020.html>

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- Encouraged to have their own access to the DALC website, which is an excellent source of information.
- Chairs and Vice-Chair are encouraged to attend Chair training e.g. DALC 'Chairing Local Council Meetings' (£36)
- Personnel Committee councillors are encouraged to attend relevant training e.g. DALC 'Managing employees through effective supervision and appraisals' (£30).
- Finance Working Group councillors are encouraged to attend relevant training eg DALC 'Finance for Councillors' (£30).

The Clerk

- Provided with a contract of employment and job description setting out clear objectives and expectations.
- Required to attend DALC 'Clerks Essential' training within one month of the date on which they are employed (£108).
- Encouraged to gain the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) (£710).
- Encouraged to regularly attend training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties and to read subscriptions to relevant publications and newsletters.
- Encouraged to use DPC's reference textbooks.
- Required to take part in an annual performance appraisal.

4. Evaluating Requests for Training

Consideration

Requests for training will be considered by the Clerk in consultation with the Personnel Subcommittee. A number of factors will be taken into account when assessing a training request. This Policy provides one element of the decision-making process. Other factors will include availability of finance and staff's employment record. The Council will comply with equality and diversity legislation when assessing training and development needs.

Approved training will be booked by the Clerk.

Staff Training Requests

In order to ensure that the Council is able to consistently evaluate staff requests, training and development opportunities have been organised into three categories according to the degree of importance each intervention has for different roles.

Categorising training and personal development

The three categories are as follows:

I. Mandatory

Mandatory training is legally required for the post-holder, or a qualification deemed to be so fundamental to the role, that the council makes it a mandatory requirement. Any mandatory training or

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qualifications are to be stated on the job description. For mandatory qualifications, it is unlikely that an applicant would be recruited without having previously attained the qualification. Where a qualification becomes mandatory for the role, the council will provide reasonable assistance for the employee to attain the qualification (see the section on Guidance for Support below).

Some mandatory training may be specific to a particular job role whilst other training may be a generic requirement. Examples of mandatory training include:

- Health and Safety (Personal Safety, Manual handling, Display Screen equipment)
- Data Protection
- Chapter 8 training regarding working safely on the highway

II. Desirable

Desirable training is not legally required for the post, but it is directly relevant to the individual's job. Any desirable training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description.

For desirable qualifications or training, an individual may be recruited without having previously attained the qualification or undergone the training but may be expected to attain the qualification within a defined period of time. The need for training may also be identified through one-to-one meetings or annual appraisals. A desirable qualification is likely to enhance the skills and reputation of the council. Examples may include:

Job specific

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)
- The Certificate of Higher Education in Local Council Administration
- The Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy
- The first level of the Foundation Degree in Community Engagement and Governance (the Level Four course)

III. Optional

An optional qualification or optional training may not be directly linked to the individual's current job.

Optional training or development is generally more beneficial to the individual's career than it is for the council.

Personal development aimed at developing the skills or knowledge of an individual in order to provide a successor for an existing job is deemed to be optional. However, depending on the circumstances, training for succession may be 'desirable'.

Job specific

- Community Governance
- Town Planning Technical Support - Level 3 Diploma

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5. Guidance for Support

Support for qualifications, training and personal development can include financial assistance towards the cost of tuition, examinations and resource materials in addition to half / day release and time off for study leave and taking the examination. Any financial and non-financial support to training and development is entirely at the discretion of the council.

Any financial support in excess of £500, including the offer of a loan, will always be conditional upon the employee's agreement to either a full or partial repayment of the financial support provided. The council reserves the right to reclaim financial support where the employee;

- Leaves the council during the duration of the course, or up-to 1 year following completion of the course.
- Fails to complete the training
- Fails to attend training without good reason

6. Evaluation and Review of Training⁷

- The trainee is required to evaluate how relevant and effective the training has been.
- Where useful and possible the trainee will provide a summary to a meeting of the Council and also circulate more detailed information to the Council.
- The Clerk will maintain a training record of all training arranged by the Council.

7. Resourcing Training⁸

- The budget process will include an assessment of the Council's training requirements.
- The budget will include provision for training courses, annual subscriptions, and purchase of relevant publications.
- The budget will include an earmarked reserve for unusual training requirements including the employment of a new Clerk.

8. Study Leave, Study Time, and Costs

Staff attending or undertaking mandatory training are entitled to payment of normal earnings; all prescribed fees and other relevant expenses arising. Employees are entitled to paid leave for the purpose of sitting for required examinations. When attending training courses outside contracted daily hours, part-time employees will be paid on the same basis as full-time employees.

⁷ February 2021 Millom Without Parish Council, Training and Development Policy.
<https://millomwithoutparishcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/Training-and-Development-Policy-2020.html>

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Where an individual requires study leave to undertake mandatory training, they will be able to take all the leave within normal working hours.

Where individuals require study time to undertake study which is not mandatory but part of the individual's formal continuous professional development the council will contribute up to 100% of study leave time and prescribed fees and other relevant expenses arising, subject to negotiation and based on the official course hours allocation and resource guidance.

Where individuals require study leave to undertake training which is not mandatory but part of the individual's desire for career development, the council will contribute up to 3 days study leave per annum for courses which are directly related to the individual's role.

Study Leave and Study Time must be approved in advance. To make a request the individual is asked to write to the Personnel Subcommittee, setting out the details of the course of study, how it relates to the Council's work, and the time being requested.

No study leave will be granted where individuals undertake study which is not required for their role, or not directly related to their role. However, the Personnel Subcommittee will consider requests for flexible working to allow the study to take place, as long as the needs of the Council can be met.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Notes:

The training costs in the Policy were correct at the time of its production.

The courses named are indicative. There may be alternative courses and providers.

Date of policy: April 2023

Approved by: Dittisham Parish Council

Date of meeting: 5/4/23

Policy version reference: V1

Supersedes: [None]

Policy effective from: Date of Approval

Date for next review: For review by the Personnel Committee for consideration by DPC May 2024