



# Church Stretton

Town Council

## INTRODUCTION

### **Purpose and Scope**

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

This policy sets out the Council's Training, Learning and Development Policy. It sets out:

- The Council's commitment to training.
- Responsibilities.
- Areas of Training.
- The identification of training needs.
- Corporate training.
- Financial assistance.
- Study leave.
- Short courses/workshops.
- Evaluation of training.
- Links with other policies.
- Reporting on progress.

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Encourage Officers and Councillors to undertake appropriate training, learning and development.
2. To ensure all Officers and Councillors have received the required health and safety training to assist them in their roles.
3. To allocate training in a fair manner.
4. To ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value

## COMMITMENT TO TRAINING

Church Stretton Town Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Officers and Councillors to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services for the people of the Strettons.

Church Stretton Town Council recognises that its most important resource is its Officers and Councillors and is committed to encouraging both to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through training. All Officers and Councillors will, as a minimum be provided with the information / training as set out in the training and

development plan attached as Appendix A to this policy. The Council will actively encourage Officers and Councillors to enhance their learning through the identification of and engagement in further training.

Training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements. Church Stretton Town Council is committed to ensuring provision of such training is provided for all Officers through a combination of both online and face to face sessions.

The Council expects senior and specialist officers to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their requisite professional bodies.

Providing training yields a number of benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that Church Stretton Town Council provides;
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives;
- Improves the skills base of the Officers and Councillors;
- Produces confident, highly qualified staff and Councillors working as part of an effective and efficient team; and
- Demonstrates that the employees are valued.

Training and development will be achieved by including a realistic financial allocation for training and development in the annual budget, as well as taking advantage of any relevant partnership or in-house provision available.

The process of development is as follows:

1. Training needs should be identified by considering the overall objectives of the organisation, as well as individual requirements.
2. Planning and organising training to meet those specific needs.
3. Evaluating the effectiveness of training.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

### **Personnel Committee Role**

The Personnel Committee will:

- Demonstrate a commitment to train and develop Officers and Councillors in relation to the organisation's objectives.
- Ensure that training and development plans are focused on the organisation's needs at corporate and service levels and provide adequate resources.
- Ensure training and development actions are evaluated in relation to service and organisational objectives and the benefits clearly identified.

### **Clerk's Role**

- Induct new employees jointly with Chairman of Personnel Committee, or line manager as necessary.
- Liaise with Chairman of Personnel Committee on identification of required training in line with new legislation and the Council's objectives.
- Identify training needs with staff and line managers in relation to individual objectives.
- Formulate training plans in liaison with staff and line managers.

- Appoint a relevant Officer to undertake on-the-job instruction or coaching, where appropriate.
- Make all employees and Councillors aware of training and development opportunities.
- Ensure that those who are trained, share their learning with colleagues.
- Evaluate, together, the effectiveness of training events in relation to service and individual objectives with those involved and their line managers.

### **Employee's Role**

- Identify personal training needs in relation to personal objectives, job description and service plans.
- Be aware of training and development opportunities and request training where appropriate.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of training with their line manager.
- Share learning with colleagues where possible and appropriate.

### **Councillors**

- Consider attending any training event available.
- Undertake training relevant to their Committee roles.
- Discuss with colleagues and the Chairman of Personnel Committee to establish if in-house training would be beneficial to all Councillors.
- Discuss with the Chairman of Personnel Committee any personal training or development, or just information sharing, that would enhance their role.

## **AREAS OF TRAINING**

### **Induction**

Every new Councillor and Employee should be provided with information and instruction about the Council, its role and functions.

### **Councillor Training**

Training and development is based on individual needs and can be identified

### **Generic Training**

All Officers and Councillors will be provided with necessary training to meet required health and safety requirements and any other generic training considered necessary in line with their roles.

### **Qualifications**

The Council will provide training and further education in pursuit of qualifications for employees where a clear link can be made to meet service objectives.

## **THE IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS**

Employees will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from their line manager during their induction, annual appraisal or through regular meetings with their line manager. To assist with the budgeting process all annual appraisals should be complete by the end of September each year. There are number of additional ways that the training needs of staff may be recognised:

- During formal interview/review.
- Following confirmation of appointment.

- Formal and informal discussion.
- Induction and probationary periods.
- One-to-ones.
- Appraisal.
- Through circulation of training seminar information.
- Workforce planning.
- Team meetings.
- Annual plan.
- Change processes.

In addition, the council will encourage staff to identify their own learning styles and will seek to provide a wide variety 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.

Councillors will be asked to identify their development needs through an annual questionnaire circulated to all Councillors prior to the budget setting process. There are number of additional ways that the training needs of Councillors may be recognised:

- Through circulation of training seminar information.
- Questionnaires.
- Following election/co-option.
- Formal and informal discussion.

Other circumstances may present the need for training:

- Legislative requirements i.e. First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling.
- Changes in legislation.
- Changes in systems.
- New or revised qualifications become available.
- Accidents.
- Professional error.
- Introduction of new equipment.
- New working methods and practices.
- Complaints to the Council.
- A request from a member of staff.
- Devolved services / delivery of new services.

Employees who wish to be nominated for a training course should discuss this in the first instance during their appraisal; where it will be determined whether the training is relevant to the Council's needs and/or service delivery.

### **Consideration**

A number of factors will be taken into account when assessing a request from an individual. This policy provides one element of the decision-making process. Other factors will include availability of finance and the individual's employment record.

In order to ensure that the council is able to consistently evaluate 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:

### **1. 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 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.

### **2. 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:

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA);
- Cemetery Legal Compliance;
- Grounds Maintenance specific e.g. Cross Cutting and Chainsaw Maintenance;
- Microsoft Excel.

### **3. 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'.

- Community Governance;
- Countryside Management;
- Town Planning Technical Support - Level 3 Diploma.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

It is important to note that all supported training must be appropriate to the needs of the Council, be relevant to the individual's role and is subject to the availability of financial resources.

Each request will be considered on an individual basis and the benefits to the individual and the organisation will be identified.

In order to best ensure cost effectiveness, Councillors and employees will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required course, or through online provision, unless an alternative is authorised by the Personnel Committee in the interests of operational effectiveness or Best Value.

Other considerations include the following:

- Implication of employee release for training course(s) on the operational capability of the council.
- Any previously funded training.
- The most economic and effective means of training.
- Provision and availability of training budget.

For approved courses Officers and Councillors can expect the following to be sponsored:

- The course fee.
- Examination fees.
- Associated membership fees.
- One payment to re-take a failed examination.

Officers and Councillors attending assisted courses are required to inform the Clerk immediately of any absences, giving reasons.

Failure to sit an examination may result in the Council withdrawing future course funding and/or requesting the refunding of financial assistance. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

Church Stretton Town Council operates a Return of Service agreement. Any employee undertaking optional qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that, should they leave the Council's employment within two years of completion of the qualification, they will be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training. The employee will be asked to sign an agreement to this effect before the commencement of the training.

## **STUDY LEAVE**

Employees who are given approval to undertake external qualifications are granted the following:

- Study time to attend day-release courses or to take part in online training sessions.
- Time to sit examinations.
- Study time of one day per examination (to be discussed and agreed by line manager in advance).
- Provision of study time must be agreed with the line manager prior to the course being undertaken.

## **SHORT COURSES/WORKSHOPS/RESIDENTIAL WEEKENDS**

Where attendance is required at a short course, paid leave will be granted to employees.

Councillors and staff attending approved short courses/workshops/residential weekends can expect the following to be paid:

- The course fee (usually invoiced following the event).
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Council's current policy.
- Subsistence in accordance with the Council's current policy.

## **EVALUATION OF TRAINING**

Records of all training undertaken by employees will be kept in the personnel files of each member of staff.

As part of Church Stretton Town Council's continuing commitment to training and development, employees and Councillors are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training they undertake highlighting in particular the key implications of new legislation, guidance and/or best practice for the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of the authority, and a proforma will be provided for this purpose.

## **LINKING WITH OTHER COUNCIL POLICIES**

Relationship with other Council policies:

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of Member and officer development.
- Risk Management Policy – a commitment to Training and Development greatly assists in achieving good governance and an effective system of Risk Management.
- Health and Safety Policy – ongoing training and development is key to ensuring a positive approach to Health and Safety is embedded throughout the authority.
- Undertaking training is a clear indication of Continuing Professional Development.

## **REPORTING ON PROGRESS**

The Clerk and Chair of Personnel Committee, as appropriate, will report annually to the Personnel Committee, detailing attendance at training over the year, as well as the inclusion of the Member and staff evaluation of courses attended.

## **CONCLUSION**

The adoption of a training or learning and development policy will achieve many benefits for the Council. It will assist in demonstrating that the Council is committed to ensuring provision in required health and safety training, continuing professional development and enhancing the skills of both Elected Councillors and staff.

The adoption of a training, learning and development policy has a practical implication for Church Stretton Town Council's budget and ensures that the Council is aware of the implication of its commitments and allocates adequate and appropriate funding in a long term and sustainable platform that supports these aspirations and commitments.

**Created:      October 2023**

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<b>Councillors</b>			
<b>Information / Training</b>	<b>On Attaining Office</b>	<b>Within 6 months of Attaining Office</b>	<b>In Accordance with Committee Membership</b>
<b>Documents</b>			
Good Councillors Guide	√		
Standing Orders	√		
Financial Regulations	√		
Approved Budget	√		
Councillor Code of Conduct	√		
Councillor / Officer Protocol	√		
Scheme of Delegation	√		
Complaint Procedure	√		
Index of all Policies and Procedures and weblink	√		
Timetable of all planned Council meetings	√		
List of Civic Functions	√		
Councils 3/5 Year Plan	√		
<b>Training</b>			
Joint Induction with Clerk and Chairman of Personnel Committee	√		
Fundamentals for Councillors (SALC)		√	
Planning (SALC)			√
Tour of Public Realm	√		
Finance			√
Chairmanship Training			√
Civility and Respect Training		√	
Other training offered by SALC / NALC			√
<b>Other Sources of Support</b>			
Reading of previous Agendas and Minutes and coaching from staff on terminology	√		
Mentor to be appointed to assist new Councillor on Co-Option	√		

<b>Officers</b>			
<b>Information / Training</b>	<b>On commencing role</b>	<b>Within 6 months of attaining role</b>	<b>As Necessary dependent upon role</b>
<b>Documents</b>			
Staff Induction Pack (including general information on Church Stretton, holidays, sickness etc.)	√		
Health and Safety Handbook	√		
Standing Orders			√
Financial Regulations			√
Approved Budget			√
Officer Code of Conduct	√		
Councillor / Officer Protocol	√		
Scheme of Delegation			√
Complaints Procedure		√	
Index of all Policies and Procedures and weblink	√		
Timetable of all planned Council meetings			√
List of Civic Functions			√
Councils 3/5 Year Plan	√		
<b>Training</b>			
Joint Induction with Clerk and Chairman of Personnel Committee	√		
Tour of Public Realm	√		
Introduction to Bright HR	√		
Online Health and Safety Training through Brightspark		√	
Website Administrator Training			√
Identified Job Training		√	
Civility and Respect Training		√	
Other training offered by SALC / NALC			√
<b>Other Sources of Support</b>			
Line Manager	√		
Reading of previous Agendas and Minutes and coaching from staff on terminology			√
Staff member to be appointed for on-the-job training as necessary	√		

