

# **Alderholt Parish Council**

## **Training and Development Policy**

### **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. It applies to all staff whether full or part time, temporary or fixed term.

Alderholt Parish Council is committed to ensure that it continues to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to the residents of the Parish in a professional manner. To that end, the Council's intention is that the Councillors, Clerk and any other workers of the Council are suitably equipped with the knowledge and skills to carry out their roles and maintain effective working practices.

The Council will procure or provide such training and development opportunity as it deems necessary for the delivery of its work.

### **Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs**

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

- Induction and probationary periods
- One-to-ones
- Appraisal
- 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

### **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. 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 training including first aid

#### **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 the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)

#### **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'.

## **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, 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
- Fails to complete the training
- Fails to attend training without good reason

## **Identification of Individual Training Needs:**

Councillors – Often councillors will identify training needs themselves. The Clerk and the Chairman should also advise on the training available to councillors. Any courses should be brought to the attention of Full Council. Councillors should understand that training is an ongoing process and should undertake on a regular basis so that councillors can better understand the law, finances and general running of a good practice Parish Council.

Clerk/RFO - Once appointed the training needs for the Clerk will depend on previous qualifications and experience/training courses already attended. Training must continue even for experienced qualified Clerks to keep them up to date. The Chairman and Staffing Committee will often, with the help of the Clerk, be able to advise on areas that need to be focused on.

## **Resources for Training**

Annually the Council will discuss and allocate a set budget for training and development for all staff. The Council will allocate a set budget for the subscriptions of the SLCC for the Clerk along with any other bodies the council feel will aid this development.

## **Evaluation of Training**

The Council, as a whole will evaluate the relevance and content of training courses. Guidance from the Clerk may be necessary. Training will be reviewed with any change to legislation and or new software/systems that staff may need training for. Records of training should be kept by the Clerk.