

WINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

TRAINING/ LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Discussed and approved at a meeting of the Parish Council on 10 October 2016

1 Introduction

This document forms Wingham Parish Council's Training and L & D Policy. It sets out:

- The Council's commitment to training
- The identification of training needs
- Financial assistance
- Short courses/workshops
- Evaluation of training
- Links with other policies
- Reporting on progress

The objectives of this strategy are to:

- Encourage Councillors and the Clerk to undertake appropriate training /L & D
- Allocate training in a fair manner
- Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value

2 Commitment to Training

Wingham Parish Council ("the Council") is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors and the Clerk 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 village.

The Council recognises that its most important resource is its Councillors and its Clerk and is committed to encouraging both Councillors and the Clerk to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training may be necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

Providing training can yield a number of benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that the Council provides;
- Improves the skills base of the Clerk and Councillors;

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:

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

3 The Identification of Training Needs

Councillors will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from the Chairman, the Clerk or other appropriate bodies e.g. Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) or the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

The Clerk will be asked to identify her development needs during her annual appraisal with the Council's Chairman, during regular meetings with the Chairman or from advice from other appropriate bodies.

Other circumstances may present the need for training, for example:

- 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
- Devolved services / delivery of new services

4 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 by the Council and the benefits to the individual and the organisation will be identified.

In order to best ensure cost effectiveness, Councillors and the Clerk will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required course, unless an alternative is authorised by the Council in the interest of operational effectiveness or Best Value.

Other considerations include the following:

- The most economic and effective means of training
- Provision and availability of training budget

5 Short Courses/Workshops/Residential Weekends

Where the Clerk is required to attend a short course, paid leave will be granted her.

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

- The course fee
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Council's current policy
- Subsistence in accordance with the Council's current policy

6 Evaluation of Training

Records of all training undertaken by Councillors and the Clerk will be maintained by the Clerk.

As part of the Council's continuing commitment to training and development, Councillor's and the Clerk 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 Council. This feedback will normally be done through an agenda item at a full Council meeting.

7 Linking with other Council Policies

This policy links directly with other Council policies including:

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of Councillor and Clerk development;
- A training policy and training record for both Councillors and the Clerk is a requirement for the accreditation of the national Local Council Award Scheme.
- Risk Management Policy – a commitment to Training and Development greatly assists in achieving good governance and an effective system of Risk Management;
- Undertaking training is a clear indication of Continuing Professional Development.

8 Reporting on Progress

The Clerk will report annually to the Council detailing attendance at training over the year

9 Conclusion

The adoption of a training or learning and development policy should achieve many benefits for the Council. It will assist in demonstrating that the Council is committed to continuing professional development and enhancing the skills of both Councillors and the Clerk.

The adoption of a training or learning and development policy has a practical implication for *Your 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.

APPENDIX A – Wingham Parish Council Annual Record of Training

APPEDIX B – Wingham Parish Council Individual Record of Training for Councillors and the Clerk

