

Training and Development Policy

1. Purpose

Honeybourne Parish Council is committed to supporting the ongoing development of both its councillors and its staff. This policy sets out the Council's approach to training and development, recognising that a well-informed and capable council is better placed to serve its community effectively and to fulfil its legal obligations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all councillors (whether elected or co-opted) and all members of staff employed by the Council.

3. Approach to Development

The Council recognises that learning and development takes many forms. It is not limited to formal training courses and qualifications. In line with guidance from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Council takes a broad view of development activity, which includes:

- Attendance at formal training courses, workshops and seminars provided by WALC, NALC or other recognised providers
- Attendance at conferences and sector events
- Reading and reviewing legislation, statutory guidance, good practice guidance and circulars relevant to local council governance
- Clerk's reports prepared for council meetings, which inform and educate councillors on governance matters, legislative requirements and best practice
- Relevant circulars, updates and briefings received by the Clerk and circulated to councillors
- Learning through active participation in council business, including consideration of planning applications, financial management, policy development and community engagement
- Involvement in specific council projects such as the Neighbourhood Development Plan Review, allotment governance, cemetery administration and procurement
- Online learning and self-directed study
- Mentoring and peer learning

4. Councillor Development

The Council encourages all councillors to:

- Undertake induction training on joining the Council, including familiarisation with the Council's standing orders, financial regulations, code of conduct and key policies
- Attend WALC training sessions and events where possible
- Read governance guidance and updates circulated by the Clerk
- Engage actively in council business as a means of building knowledge and experience

The Council acknowledges the practical constraints faced by volunteer councillors and does not impose mandatory training requirements. However, the Council strongly encourages participation in development activities and will support councillors in accessing relevant training opportunities.

The Council will maintain a training record for each councillor noting development activities undertaken during the year. This record will be reviewed annually.

5. Staff Development

The Council is committed to supporting the professional development of the Parish Clerk and any other members of staff. The Council will:

- Support the Clerk in achieving and maintaining a relevant professional qualification (CiLCA or equivalent)
- Support the Clerk in achieving the minimum Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points required under the SLCC Professional Development Scheme each year
- Consider reasonable requests for training and development in the context of the Council's annual budget
- Conduct an annual appraisal of the Clerk's performance, which will include discussion of training and development needs

A training budget is maintained within the Council's annual budget to support staff and councillor development activities.

6. Training Record

The Council will maintain a record of all training and development activities undertaken by staff and councillors during the year. The record will include:

- The name of the individual
- The date of the activity
- A description of the activity
- The provider or source

This record will be available to the accreditation panel on request and will be used to inform the annual review of this policy.

7. Funding

The costs of training and development activities will be met from the Council's approved training budget where available. Councillors and staff will be advised of the budget available at the start of each financial year.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if legislation or guidance changes. The policy will be reviewed in conjunction with the Council's annual training record to ensure it remains relevant and effective.