

Bradwell Parish Council



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Training Policy

Approval and Revision Table

Review / Amendment Date	Section / Clause amended	Date of Council Adoption
January 2023	Policy adoption	30 th January 2023

Training & Development Policy

1. Introduction

Bradwell Parish Council recognises that well trained and informed officers and members promotes good work practice and encourages community engagement. The Council values the time given by members and this policy aims to maximize their rewards from their volunteered time by equipping them to be effective in their role as a councilor or member of staff. The Council is committed to ensuring staff. Members and volunteers are trained to the highest standard and kept up to date with new legislation. To support this, funds are allocated to a training budget each year to enable staff and councillors to attend training and conferences relevant to their office. Prospective councillors and applicants for the post of Clerk will be made aware of the content of this policy and the expectations placed upon them contained within it.

2 Commitment to training

2.1 Training and development describes the formal, on-going efforts that are made within organisations to improve performance and self-fulfilment of their employees and in our case members and other volunteers through a variety of educational methods and programmes. In modern local government, these efforts have taken on a broad range of applications, from instruction in highly specific job skills (e.g. finance for local councils) to long-term professional development (e.g. Certificate in Local Council Administration). In recent years, training and development has emerged as a formal business function, an integral element of strategy and a more recognised profession with distinct theories and methodologies. Councils of all sizes have embraced “continual learning” and other aspects of training and development as a means of promoting employee growth and acquiring a highly skilled work force.

2.2 The objectives of this policy are to:

- encourage councillors and staff to undertake appropriate training and development
- Regularly review the needs of Members and staff
- allocate training in a fair manner
- ensure that training and development is evaluated in order to judge its value to both the Council and individuals

2.3 The Council recognises that its most important resource is its Members, employees and volunteers and is committed to encouraging all to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further learning. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with legal and statutory requirements.

2.4 The Council expects its Clerk to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their professional bodies. Therefore, the Parish Council will maintain its subscription to NALC and SLCC each year, identifying relevant training courses that could be of use to its councillors and the parish clerk.

2.5 Ensuring access to training yields a number of benefits:

- Improves the quality of services and facilities the Council provides
- Enables the Council to achieve its corporate aims and objectives
- Improves the skill base of employee and member, producing a highly qualified team
- Demonstrates that members and employees are valued
- Increases stability within workforce and aids staff retention.

3 Process of development



4 Training need analysis

The clerk will identify appropriate training and development opportunities to meet the ascertained training and development needs of the Clerk and Members. This will involve the identification of skills gaps in roles that have been allocated to individual councillors and courses identified to enable this gap to be filled.

If Councillors wish to be nominated for training and development provision, they should discuss this in the first instance with the Clerk upon which it will be determined whether the training and development is relevant to the Council's needs and/or service delivery.

The Council will approve training and development opportunities for Councillors and the clerk. Appropriate training and development may be necessary to ensure that both the clerk and Councillors are aware of their legal responsibilities or the Council's requirements, e.g. health and safety, risk management, employment law and equal opportunities.

Both the clerk and Councillors will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where suitable provision is identified.

As soon as practicable after joining the Council, a parish councillor may be required to attend appropriate training sessions to familiarise themselves with the general work of a parish council.

The Clerk will provide a welcome pack to all new councillors. The pack will include the following:

- NALC Good Councillor Guide
- Contact details for Councillors and the Clerk
- Adopted Code of Conduct
- Standing Orders/Financial Regulations
- Meetings calendar
- Details of website
- Any other relevant and current information.

Employees who wish to be nominated for a training course should discuss this with their line manager (usually within their appraisal); where it will be determined whether the training is relevant to the Council's needs and/or service delivery.

Members are expected to be proactive in identifying their learning needs to the Clerk.

From employees:

- Annual appraisal
- Regular meetings with line manager (informal & formal)
- Initial interview & subsequent internal post interviews

From members:

- Annually ahead of budget setting
- At election/co-option
- Formal and informal discussion

Organisational needs:

- Mandatory Chairmanship
- Mandatory Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Legislative requirements: e.g. First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling
- Legislative compliance: e.g. GDPR, Civility & Respect
- Progression: Committee/Working Group specific e.g. Staffing / HR / Finance / Planning
- Changes in legislation
- Changes in systems
- New or revised qualifications become available
- Accidents
- Professional error
- Introduction of new equipment
- New working methods & practices
- Complaints to the Council
- Devolved services / delivery of new services

Training needs analysis informs decisions on setting the training and development budget, part of the Council's financial planning processes.

5 Corporate training

Corporate training is necessary to ensure that employees/volunteers are aware of their legal responsibilities or corporate standards, e.g. Health & Safety, Risk Management and Equal Opportunities. Employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops, or online courses where suitable training is identified.

The principal suppliers of such training are the Norfolk Association of Local Councils and Society of Local Council Clerks. Training is also available from HMRC, HSE, ACAS, Scribe, Community Action Norfolk and other bodies, often free or at low cost.

6 Induction training

All new Members will receive induction training. This will include attending a "New Councillor Course" delivered by Norfolk ALC and a 1-to-1 session with the Clerk to understand the specific work practices of this Council.

New employees and volunteers will also receive induction training, designed to their job role. This will be delivered in-house by the Clerk and involve contributions from other staff/members as appropriate.

7 Financial assistance

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 Council will be identified.

In order to best ensure cost effectiveness, Members and employees will be required to attend the nearest venue offering the required course, unless an alternative is authorised in the interest of operational effectiveness or best value.

Other considerations include:

- Implication of employee release for course on the operational capacity of the Council.
- Provision and availability of training budget.

For approved courses, members and employees can expect the following to be sponsored:

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

Members and employees attending courses are required to inform the Clerk immediately of any absences, giving reasons.

The council will give consideration to covering the cost of subscriptions to relevant professional bodies, such as SLCC.

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

Should the clerk leave Bradwell Parish Council employment within two years of completion of the qualification they may be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training.

8 Study leave

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

- Study time to attend day-release courses
- Time to sit examination
- Study time of one day per examination (to be discussed and agreed in advance)
- Provision of study time must be agreed prior to the course undertaken.

Councillors are not eligible for study leave as they are not paid.

9 Short courses / workshops / residential weekends

Where attendance is required at a short course, paid leave will be granted to employees. Members 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 policy
- Subsistence in accordance with the Council's policy.

10 Evaluation of training

Records of all training undertaken by employees will be kept in the personnel files. Feedback will be requested on the value and effectiveness of the training undertaken. Such feedback should be provided to the Clerk.

11 Linking with other Council policies

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of member and employee development
- A “Statement of Intent” on training for both members and employees is a requirement for the re-accreditation of any nationally recognised charter marks. (Local Council Award)
- Risk Management policy – a commitment to training and development greatly assists in achieving good governance and an effective system of risk management.
- Health & Safety policy – ongoing training and development is key to ensuring a positive approach to Health & Safety throughout the Council.
- Undertaking training is a clear indication of continuing professional development.

12 Reporting on progress

The Clerk will report annually to the Council, detailing attendance at training over the year, as well as the inclusion of member and employee evaluation of courses attended.

The parish clerk and Chair will be responsible for monitoring and management of the budget for this policy. The clerk and any Councillors who undertake training or development activities will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of the event. This feedback will then be used to evaluate the event for future reference.

All employee and councillor training each year will be recorded by the clerk for monitoring purposes.

13 Conclusion

The adoption of this policy should achieve many benefits for the Council. It will assist in demonstrating that the Council is committed to CPD and enhancing the skills of both members and employees.

The adoption of this policy has a practical implication on the 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.

14 Freedom of Information

In accordance with the Freedom of Information act 2000 and in support of transparency, this policy will be posted on the Council’s website.