



WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Purpose and scope	2
Identifying, meeting and evaluating training and development needs	2
Consideration	3
Categorising training and personal development	3
Guidance for support	4
Study Leave	5

Purpose and scope

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

Commitment to Training

West Dean Parish Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors and staff, 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 parish.

West Dean Parish Council recognises that its most important resource is its Councillors and Officers/staff and is committed to encouraging everyone to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

New Councillors will be expected to attend induction training provided locally by the Clerk/RFO and will be provided with an information pack containing the core documents as set out in the Councillor Induction Training pack. Further Councillor training is detailed in the induction pack and all new councillors are expected to fulfil the detailed training requirements from Gloucestershire Association of Town & Parish Councils as soon as it is available.

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

Providing training yields several benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that West Dean Parish Council provides.
- Enables the Council to achieve its corporate aims and objectives.
- Improves the skill base of the employees, producing confident, highly qualified staff working as part of an effective and efficient team.
- Demonstrates that employees are valued.

The process of development is as follows:

- a) Training needs should be identified by considering overall objectives of the Council, as well as individual requirements
- b) Planning and organising training to meet those specific needs
- c) Designing and delivering the training
- d) Evaluation and effectiveness of the training

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
- Workforce planning
- Team meetings
- Annual plan
- Change processes
- Changes in legislation
- Devolved services/delivery of new services

In addition, the council will encourage staff and councillors 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/Mentoring
- Time for self-directed research and learning

It is recognised by WDPC that there needs to be a training and development matrix created, which will allow both monitoring of the training requirements following staff appraisals and aid the identification of knowledge gaps enabling training programmes for councillor's, staff, and volunteers to be planned and budgeted for by council.

To further enhance this matrix, a training and skills assessment will be included to enable Councillor and volunteer training courses etc and skills to be captured, so that appropriate training can be identified as required or to ensure continued professional development.

Consideration

A number of factors will be taken into account when assessing a request from an individual for training. This policy provides one element of the decision-making process. Other factors will include availability of finance, via the training budget, 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 or a confirmed commitment to achieve 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:

Generic training

- Health and Safety (Personal Safety, Manual handling, Display Screen equipment)
- Risk/Hazard Management (COSHE guidance for clean materials etc)
- 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:

Job specific

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) -also considered to be mandatory by WDPC for the clerks.
- Financial introduction to Local Council Administration (FiLCA) – recently added as a mandatory requirement within the contracts of employment for clerks.
- 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'.

Job specific

- Community Governance
- Town Planning Technical Support - Level 3 Diploma

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 more than £250, 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, or up-to 2 years following completion of the course.
- Fails to complete the training
- Fails to attend training without good reason

Study leave

Where individual requires study leave to undertake mandatory training, they will be able to take all the leave within normal working hours.

Where individuals require study leave to undertake study which is not mandatory but part of the individual's formal continuous professional development, the council will contribute up to 50% of study leave time, to a maximum of 5 days per annum.

Where individuals require study leave to undertake training which is not mandatory but part of the individual's desire for career development, the council will contribute up to 3 days study leave per annum for courses which are directly related to the individual's role.

Time off for study leave must be approved in advance. To make a request the individual is asked to write to the Clerk (or Chair of the Council), setting out the details of the course of study, how it relates to their work, and the time being requested.

No study leave will be granted where individuals undertake study, which is not required for their role, or not directly related to their role. However, the Clerk (or Chair of the Council) will consider requests for flexible working to allow the study to take place, if the needs of the council can be met.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time, or at least annually to ensure its relevance.

Policy version reference:

Date for next review:

— policy ends here —

Notes

1. Green Book terms

If the council adopts Green Book terms and conditions of employment, staff attending or undertaking required training are entitled to payment of normal earnings; all prescribed fees and other relevant expenses arising. Employees are also entitled to paid leave for the purpose of sitting for required examinations. When attending training courses outside contracted daily hours, part-time employees should be paid on the same basis as fulltime employees.

2. “Being a good employer – a guide for parish and town councillors”.

The “Being a good employer guide” provides comprehensive advice and guidance around training and development, including what a policy might contain, identifying training needs, as well as information and guidance on appraisal.

Guidance

Where there is text in [square brackets] this part may be updated or be deleted if not relevant. An alternative option may have been provided.

Important notice

This is an example of an employment policy designed for a small council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.

This document was commissioned by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in 2019 for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

This document has been written by the HR Services Partnership – a company that provides HR advice and guidance to town and parish councils. Please contact them on 01403 240 205 for information about their services.