



Training & Development Policy 46

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1. Introduction

Cuckfield Parish Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all councillors and employees. From this the Council helps them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services for the people of the town.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage councillors and staff to undertake appropriate training, ensure necessary training is undertaken, allocate training in a fair manner and ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value.

Training and development will be achieved by including a realistic financial allocation for training and development within the annual budget, as well as taking advantage of any relevant partnership or in-house provision available.

2. Identification of Training Needs

There are various circumstances in which training needs may arise, such as:

- ∂ Legislative requirements e.g. first aid, fire safety, manual handling etc.
- ∂ 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
- ∂ A request from a member of staff or councillor
- ∂ Devolved services/delivery of new services

2.1 Officers

An employee who feels they have a training need should in the first instance discuss this with their line manager. Similarly, if it is felt that an employee is in need of training, the line manager will discuss this with the employee.

Training needs should not be left to be identified during the annual appraisal process; they may arise at any point of the year and should be addressed as soon as possible. That said, as per the Council's Annual Appraisal Policy, individual training needs will be considered at each appraisal meeting.

The training need will be reviewed and assessed against the objectives of the Council, the responsibilities of the role and the development of the employee.

2.2 Councillors

If a councillor feels they have a training need they should discuss this in the first instance with the Clerk.

The Clerk will be able to assess the request and ascertain whether this is something all councillors may be interested in/benefit from undertaking.

The Council will undertake an annual training needs analysis with councillors soon after each Annual Meeting of the Council in May. This will encourage councillors to look at any personal development areas or knowledge gaps as a councillor that they wish to address and importantly, consider any training needs they feel they may have with regards to Committees they are members of following the Annual Meeting. This is particularly important with regards to the Personnel, Appeals and Finance & General Purposes Committees and Disciplinary/Grievance Sub-Committee.

On completing the training needs analyses, the results will be collated and reviewed by relevant officers. Officers will then take steps, to arrange any training required.

Below is a list of examples of internal training councillors may wish to seek:

- ∂ Code of conduct
- ∂ Chairmanship
- ∂ Conduct at meetings
- ∂ Standing Orders
- ∂ Council's Strategic Objectives (Business Plan)
- ∂ Specific Council projects
- ∂ Budget setting
- ∂ Finances and cost centres
- ∂ Disciplinary and Grievance procedures
- ∂ Appeals procedures
- ∂ Social media

3. Training Methods

There are different ways in which training and development can be achieved.

Internally: If training can be given utilising the in-house expertise and knowledge, this possibility will be explored. This often includes general computer training, training on specific work procedures or Council specific practices and legislation.

Partnership: The Council has links with other partners where training can be sourced, such as through the Sussex Association of Local Councils and Society of Local Council Clerks.

Day Workshops/Seminars: When Council Officers receive information on workshops and seminars this is shared with employees and councillors, where relevant.

Conferences: Details of conferences are shared with employees and councillors, again where relevant. Occasionally the Council has nominated representatives that are invited to attend, such as with the Lewes District Association of Local Council's annual conference.

Professional Qualifications: Training towards a professional qualification will often be sourced through the professional body and completed at a local University or College.

External Training Providers: There are numerous training providers available. When sourcing training from an external provider, the Council will always seek to obtain the best price and where possible, from a nearby location.

Upon identifying a training need, the employee/councillor and their line manager/Clerk should consider the most effective way in which the training can be sourced and whether or not others may benefit from the training.

4. Financial Implications

Each year as part of the annual budget setting process, the Council will include a training budget for employees and councillors. When calculating this, any training needs identified as part of the annual appraisal process and councillors training needs analyses will be taken into consideration.

All sponsored training must be appropriate to the needs of the Council and is subject to the availability of financial resources.

For approved courses the Council will cover the course fee, examination fees, associated membership fees and one payment to re-take a failed examination.

Recouping Costs

It is standard practice of the Council that where the Council is covering the costs of an employee's training course or qualification (this being a course or qualification, rather than one day course or workshop) a written agreement will be made that if the employee leaves the Council's employ within a set period of time during or having completed the course, the employee will be expected to reimburse the Council as per the agreement.

This does not apply to employees in apprenticeship positions.

Travel Expenses

Employees or councillors attending training outside of Cuckfield may submit an expense claim to cover travel costs to and from the venue. Where practical and possible, if there is more than one attendee from the Council, car-pooling or shared travel arrangements should be made.

5. Time Off Work

The Council will grant paid time off work for one-off training courses lasting one day or less, providing these are approved with the line manager.

Where a training course or workshop falls on an employee's non-working day, time off in lieu (TOIL) may be accrued for hours in attendance at the training.

An employee undertaking a longer training course or qualification will be required to use TOIL to cover any absences from work.

Where an employee requires time off work for an exam or study leave prior to an exam, the Council will be flexible to ensure this time off can be granted using either TOIL or annual leave, providing adequate notice is given by the employee.