

Stonehouse Town Council Training and Development Policy

1. Definition

- 1.1. According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2016), training can be defined as: *'A planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy current and future needs of the organisation.'* Development describes the formal, ongoing efforts that are made within organisations to improve the performance and self-fulfilment of Councillors and employees through a variety of educational methods and programmes

2. Policy

- 2.1. Stonehouse Town Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors and employees to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives.
- 2.2. The Council recognises training and development are key to enhancing the organisation management, capacity and efficiency of the Council.
- 2.3. Stonehouse Town Council recognises that its most important resource is its Councillors and Officers and is committed to encouraging both Councillors and Officers to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training. It recognises that some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements. The Council expects senior officers to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) either in line with the requirements of their requisite professional bodies or to support their ongoing development.
- 2.4. We will:
- ensure that training and development needs are assessed and sufficient resources are provided to meet these needs.
 - Provide information about training courses, induction programmes and development opportunities to all staff and councillors.
 - Comply with Equal Opportunities and other council policies when assessing training and development needs.
 - Ensure each employee receives annual appraisals, feedback and assessment of personal development needs from their manager.
 - Evaluate all training activities to ensure that delivery is relevant to needs, cost effective and that the quality of training is of high quality.

3. The identification of training needs

- 3.1. **Councillors:** On appointment/election/cooption to the Council and following every election, councillors will be asked to complete a Training Needs Assessment. The Clerk will use the information gathered from this exercise to produce a training programme which addresses these needs, particularly as they reflect the priorities set out in the Council's Strategic Plan. The Clerk will identify suitable external training opportunities or, where there is sufficient demand, arrange in-house training sessions.

3.2. **Employees:** Employees will identify their development needs and complete a Training Needs Assessment with advice from their line manager during their annual appraisal or regular supervision meetings.

3.3. Other circumstances which may present the need for training for either councillors or staff:

- Induction (new councillors and staff)
- Legislative requirements or changes to legislation
- Feedback on Councillor performance
- Changes in systems
- Complaints to the Council
- Devolved services / delivery of new services

3.4 Employees who wish to be nominated for a training course should discuss this in the first instance with their line manager who will determine whether the training is relevant to the Council's needs and/or service delivery.

3.5 Corporate training is necessary to ensure that employees are aware of their legal responsibilities or corporate standards.

4. Financial Assistance

4.1. 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. Training support for employees will be assessed against the following priorities:

Priority	Training	Examples (not a complete list)
1	Training which is a legal requirement or identified in risk assessments as essential for the safe performance of the role (including periodic refresher courses)	Manual handling, First aid, Fire warden
2	Skills and qualifications described as essential in the job description and person specification and supports development in role	CiLCA or equivalent (Town Clerk/Deputy) Book keeping Customer service Planning Health and safety management Horticulture Biodiversity Maintenance
3	Refresher training or continual professional development requirements to maintain skills and qualifications in priority 2	Attendance at relevant conferences, seminars and branch events for relevant sector bodies.

4	Skills and qualifications described as desirable in the job description and person specification	SLCC Community Governance course (levels 4 to 6)
5	Other training which supports personal/career development	

4.2 Supported training for councillors will typically include:

- “Being a Better Councillor” – required for all new councillors as part of their induction. This includes: Standing Orders and Code of Conduct
- Employment law and practice – recommended for all councillors, required for councillors of HR Sub Committee
- Finance/budget setting – recommended for all councillors of Business Committee
- Chairing meetings – recommended for all chairs of committees and Council Chair
- Public speaking
- Planning

4.3 Each request will be considered on an individual basis and the benefits to the individual and the organisation will be identified. Other considerations include the following:

- Implication of employee being released for training course(s) on the operational capability of the council
- The most economic and effective means of training
- Provision and availability of training budget

4.4 For approved courses Councillors and employees can expect the following to be sponsored:

- The course fee*
- Examination fees
- Associated councillorship fees
- One payment to re-take a failed examination
- Travel and accommodation costs in accordance with the Personnel Handbook

4.5 For some courses there will be a need for employees to study in their own time or take TOIL, although reasonable time off will be allowed to attend mandatory study days and exams.

4.6 Consideration will be given to purchasing study books and materials. Where these are purchased by the Council they will remain the Council’s property and should be returned if the employee leaves the Council’s employment either during or having completed the course.

4.7 Where the Council is covering the costs of an employee’s training course or qualification at priority level 4 or 5 a written agreement may be required that if the employee leaves the Council’s employment within a set period of time during of having completed the course, the employee will be expected to reimburse the Council for some or all of the course fees.

* Councillors who book training and fail to attend will be required to pay for any non-refundable training fees, except in the case of sudden illness or emergency.

5. Feedback and Evaluation of Training

- 5.1. Records of all training undertaken by employees will be kept in the personnel files of each member of staff. A register of courses completed by councillors will be maintained.
- 5.2. As part of Stonehouse Town Council's continuing commitment to training and development, councillors and employees are expected to provide a summary report to their line manager. This report will summarise the training and identify any key implications of new legislation, guidance and/or good practice for the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of the Council. This report will also contain feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training

6. Links With Other Council Policies

Relationship with other Council policies:

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of Councillor and officer development;
- A training policy and training record for both Councillors and staff 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;
- Health and Safety Policy – ongoing training and development is key to ensuring a positive approach to health and safety is embedded throughout the authority;
- Capability Policy

7 Reporting on Progress

- 7.1 The Clerk will report annually to the HR Sub-Committee detailing attendance at training over the year and provide a summary of the Councillor and staff feedback and evaluation of courses attended.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 The adoption of a training 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 Elected Councillors and staff.
- 8.2 The adoption of a training and development policy has a practical implication for 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.