

RUYTON XI TOWNS PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Introduction

The Council is responsible for monitoring and meeting the training needs of its councillors and staff, and for managing the associated budget. Providing staff and councillors with the appropriate training will promote good practice, ensure compliance with legislation, and help the Parish Council achieve its current and future objectives as set out in its Action Plan.

This document forms the Parish Council's Training and Development Policy and covers:

- The Council's commitment to training
- The identification of training needs for councillors and staff
- The budget/funds allocated for training and development.

The model shown below demonstrates the process of how the Parish Council will implement its Continuous Professional Development in order to improve the efficiency of service delivery.

The Parish Council recognises that training is vital to its development and is necessary not only for its staff, but also for its members.

Benefits of training

- Enhances the performance of both staff and members
- Widens skills and experience
- Provides opportunities to network
- Provides the skills to confront challenges
- Encourages innovation
- Raises the standards of the Parish Council

1. COMMITMENT TO TRAINING

The Parish Council is committed to training its staff and councillors to the highest standards. It recognises that well-trained and informed officers promote good practice within the local council and throughout the community. The Parish Council supports staff and councillors to ensure they maintain and develop the skills and knowledge required to meet the needs of their roles, and to achieve the objectives set out in the Action Plan.

To support this, funds are allocated to a training budget each year to enable councillors and staff to attend training.

2. TRAINING NEEDS

The Parish Council acknowledges that it is equally important to train both its members and staff in order to adequately carry out its service provision in an efficient and professional manner. Training will primarily focus on specific topics and areas of work pertinent to local government, as well as training that will enhance the professional skills of staff and members, thereby improving service delivery. Specialist training may assist with achieving Action Plan objectives e.g. Neighbourhood Planning.

Training will include:

- Formal training courses
- Distance learning

- Briefings (both in-house and external) and seminars/webinars
- Conferences such as NALC (regional and national) and SLCC

3. IDENTIFYING TRAINING NEEDS

a) Chairman

A new Chairman should attend the appropriate training in Chairmanship as soon as possible after being elected.

b) Councillors

All new councillors should attend Fundamentals for Councillors training as soon as possible after election or co-option, and should be issued with a Council induction pack and/or have an induction meeting with the clerk. All councillors will be encouraged to attend on-going training and development, and are expected to attend training on the Code of Conduct.

Councillors carrying out specific functions (e.g. Chairmanship, Staff appraisals, etc.) and/or on Committees or working groups (e.g. Neighbourhood Planning, AED, etc.) are encouraged to attend relevant training/briefings in those areas.

c) Staff

New staff will have an induction/handover which should include:

- Introductions to councillors
- Health & safety
- Council policies
- Financial and administration systems
- Council background information e.g., existing contracts, projects etc.

The clerk will be expected to hold or be working towards the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) as a minimum, and the Council will provide appropriate training and support to enable this to be achieved.

The clerk will be encouraged to join the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) which provides on-going training for its members. The cost of annual membership will be covered by the Parish Council.

Staff training needs will be identified through an annual appraisal. However, should additional training needs arise during the year then appropriate training will be provided (subject to full council approval). Time will be allowed and remunerated for attending any such training.

Training and development needs may arise due to:

- The introduction of new equipment/services
- Health & safety
- The need for specialist knowledge in relation to an objective in the Action Plan
- Changes in legislation

The Clerk will inform members of appropriate training/briefing sessions, and the Clerk will assess staff training needs through careful monitoring and evaluation of the council's administration process.

4. RESOURCING AND PROVISION OF TRAINING

Training and development for councillors and staff will be achieved by including a sufficient financial allocation for training and development in the Council's annual budget.

The Council will agree to cover the cost of:

- The clerk's annual subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)
- The fees for CiLCA registration and associated training
- The annual affiliation fees to the Shropshire Association of Local Councils and the National Association of Local Councils
- All training sessions attended by staff and councillors (training requests to be approved by full council)
- Additional staff mileage and overtime relating to training, in accordance with the clerk's contract of employment (provided training is approved first by full council)

It is acknowledged that councillors may at times struggle to attend training due to work or other commitments.

Where possible (and financially viable), the clerk will request alternative timings from training providers, and online and in-house training should be considered. However, Councillors will be expected to make reasonable efforts to attend relevant training to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to fulfil their duties.

5. MEASURING THE IMPACT OF TRAINED STAFF AND MEMBERS

Following training, Councillors and staff will share relevant material and give a verbal report at the next Council meeting. This should include an assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the training. The impact of training will be measured through the council's service delivery. Well-trained staff and members will see the benefits through its successes such as:

- Well-chaired council meetings
- Professional and pertinent responses to planning applications
- Well-documented policies and reports
- Well-managed projects
- Well-managed finances
- Well-informed staff and members
- The professional conduct of staff and members
- Achieving and maintaining Local Council Award Foundation status

Review of policy

This policy shall be reviewed by the Parish Council at least every 2 years and revised in accordance with any changes in legislation and/or guidance from NALC/SLCC.

Revised and adopted: June 2020, Last reviewed: Sept 2024 Next review date: September 2026