

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

This document forms the Council's Training and Development Policy. It applies to both Officers and Councillors. It sets out:

- The Council's commitment to training
- The identification of training needs
- Corporate training
- Continued Professional Development
- Financial assistance
- Study leave
- Short courses/workshops
- Evaluation of training
- Links with other policies
- Reporting on progress

2 Commitment to Training

2.1 Honiton 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 in providing the highest quality representation and services for the people of the town.

2.2 According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2007), 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."

2.3 Honiton Town Council recognises that its most important resource are its Members and staff and is committed to encouraging both Members and staff to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training and development. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

2.4 The Council expects senior and specialist staff to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their requisite professional bodies and all staff to undertake training as deemed necessary to fulfil their duties in accordance with their contract of employment and job description.

2.5 Providing training and development yields a number of benefits:

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- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that Honiton Town Council provides;
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives;
- Improves the skill base of the employees and Councillors, producing confident, highly qualified staff and Councillors working as part of an effective and efficient team; and demonstrates that the employees and Councillors are valued.

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

2.7 The process of development is as follows:

- Training needs should be identified by considering the overall objectives of the organisation, as well as individual requirements.
- Planning and organising training to meet those specific needs.
- Identifying, designing and delivering the training.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of training.

3 The Identification of Training and Development Needs

3.1 Employees and Councillors will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from their line manager during their annual appraisal or regular meetings with their line manager or Town Clerk. There are a number of additional ways that the training needs of both Members and staff may be recognised:

- Questionnaires
- During interview
- Following confirmation of appointment
- Formal and informal discussion (e.g. as part of Annual Staff Appraisal process)

3.2 Other circumstances may present the need for training and development, eg:

- Legislative requirements i.e. First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling, GDPR
- 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 Council Member
- Devolved services / delivery of new services

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3.3 Employees who wish to be nominated for a training course or development should discuss this in the first instance during their appraisal or as the need arises; where it will be determined whether the training is relevant to the authority's needs and/or service delivery.

3.4 Honiton Town Council recognises that Councillors also need support and training to rise to the challenges of their elected Member status.

3.5 New members need to know what the job entails and to build up their knowledge and skills and experienced councillors need to refresh their skills and knowledge to meet the ever-changing needs and demands of the modern world.

3.6 All Members will be offered new Councillor training within 1 month of taking their seat. All new Members will be given the opportunity to attend a councillor training event and annually all new Committee Chairmen will be given the option of attending a Chairmanship Training course.

3.7 All Members will be kept informed of relevant training courses and conferences particularly those offered by Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC), National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

3.8 Any Member and Officers wishing to attend any training event should discuss the training with the Town Clerk who will liaise with the Chairman of the Human Resources Committee before making any booking and seek any additional approval needed so that the training can be approved for the purposes of reimbursement of travelling and other expenses.

4 Corporate Training

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

5 Resourcing Training

5.1 The cost of approved staff training, travel and other expenses, for training identified during the annual appraisal, will be included in the annual budget. An allocation will also be made in the budget each year to fund training fees, travel and other expenses. The amount will be reviewed annually.

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5.2 The Town Council subscribes to the National Association of Local Councils, Devon Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks in order to receive regular up-dates on matters relevant to the sector and have access to the courses and conferences which are provided.

5.3 There will also be sufficient funds set aside for appropriate technical literature and other information.

6 Financial Assistance

6.1 It is important to note that all sponsored training must be appropriate to the needs of the Council, be relevant to the individual's current/future role and is subject to the availability of financial resources.

6.2 Each request will be considered on an individual basis and the benefits to the individual and the organisation will be identified.

6.3 Other considerations include the following:

- Implication of employee release 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

6.4 For approved courses Members and employees can expect the following to be paid by the Council:

- The course fee
- Examination fees
- Associated membership fees
- One payment to re-take a failed examination
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses.

6.5 Members and employees attending assisted courses are expected to inform the Town Clerk immediately of any absences. In the case of the Town Clerk – the Chairman of the HR Committee.

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

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6.7 Honiton Town Council will make payment of one individual membership per annum for the Town Clerk and any other employee working in a specialist area where professional membership is desirable as agreed by the Town Clerk, to a relevant professional body.

6.8 Honiton Town Council operates on a return of service basis . Any employee undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave the Council's employment within two years of completion of the qualification they may be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training. Each case to be reviewed by the HR Committee.

7 Study Leave

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

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

8 Short Courses/Workshops/Residential Weekends (including conferences)

8.1 Where employee attendance is required at a short course on a Saturday or Sunday, up to a normal working day of straight Time of In Lieu (TOIL) per day may be taken.

8.2 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 HMRC rates
- Subsistence expenses.

9 Evaluation of Training

9.1 Records of all training undertaken by employees will be kept in the personnel files of each member of staff.

9.2 As part of Honiton Town Council's continuing commitment to training and development, Members and employees are encouraged to share information received and circulate training presentation papers for in-house training use. They

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are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training they undertake highlighting in particular the key implications of new legislation, guidance and/or best practice for the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of the authority.

10 Linking with other Council Policies

10.1 This Policy links to the Council's other policies:

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of Member and officer development;
- Training for both Members and staff is a requirement for an award under the NALC 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;
- Undertaking training is a clear indication of Continuing Professional Development;
- Staff Performance Appraisal Policy

11 Reporting on Progress

11.1 The Town Clerk will report annually to the HR Committee, detailing attendance at training over the year, as well as the inclusion of the Member and staff evaluation of courses attended.

12 Conclusion

12.1 The adoption of a training and development policy should achieve many benefits for the Council. Training and development will:

- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council
- Widen skills and experience
- Provide opportunities to network
- Provide the skills to confront challenges
- Encourage innovation
- Improve the standards of Honiton Town Council.

12.2 It will assist in demonstrating that the Council is committed to continuing professional development and enhancing the skills of both Members and employees