

Cholsey Parish Council

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

Cholsey Parish Council is committed to the training and development of its councillors, employees and volunteers to assist the Council in achieving its goals and objectives, and to ensure that the Council acts in accordance with the law and proper standards.

The Council recognises that its councillors, employees and volunteers are its most important resource and supports any relevant training and continuous professional development that they may wish to undertake. This helps ensure that councillors and employees feel valued and able to carry out their role with confidence.

Funds are therefore allocated to a training budget annually. This policy sets out the general approach that the Council will follow in respect of training and development.

2. Training and development activity

2.1. Councillors

Training and development for each Councillor will include as a minimum:

- a) Attendance at introductory training (usually provided by the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils) explaining the role of the council, councillors and officers
- b) Provision of a Councillor Induction Pack which includes: an overview of the Parish Council's responsibilities, email/website details, officer contact details, meetings calendar, *The Good Councillor's Guide (2024)*, *The Good Councillor's Guide to Finance and Transparency (2018)*, core Council documents including Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Councillor Code of Conduct, Strategic Plan and the Current Annual budget
- c) Access to any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties, e.g. information technology, legal powers, the planning system, finance, Chair's training, being a good employer, the planning system. Requests should be made to the Staffing Committee or to the Clerk. Additional training is essential where a Councillor has taken on a specialist role as a Councillor Lead, on a Committee or as a Chair.
- d) Expenses for attending training and other meetings for councillors in the local area.
- e) Circulation of briefings and newsletters.

2.2. Employees

Training and development for each employee will include as a minimum:

- a) Induction sessions explaining the role, including for the Clerk attendance at a 'New Clerk's training course or similar, within three months of their date of employment
- b) Provision of the Staff Handbook, Health and Safety policies, GDPR policies, and Councillor Induction pack
- c) Access to other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their role as identified through regular training needs discussions. In particular: council finance training for the RFO and the Clerk; health and safety training for all employees; specialist health and safety training where appropriate for the Estate Manager and Maintenance person; cemetery management training for the Burials Clerk. Requests should be made to the Staffing Committee or to the Clerk.
- d) Training and enrolment on the Certificate of Local Council Administration (CiLCA) qualification for the Clerk within twenty-four months of appointment (unless already CiLCA qualified) with the required approval from Council.
- e) Attendance at relevant training courses and/or local meetings of external bodies such as Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)

- f) Provision of relevant subscriptions as approved by Council, including SLCC membership for the Clerk.
- g) Provision of Local Council Administration by Arnold-Baker, and other relevant publications, which will remain the property of the council
- h) Provision of suitable mentoring if required

The Council will meet the costs of all pre-approved training undertaken or meetings attended, including mileage and parking costs involved.

2.3. Volunteers

Training for volunteers (e.g. station gardening team, community litter picking) will depend on the nature of the voluntary work and will include necessary health and safety training or briefings provided by the relevant officer or a qualified third party.

3. Review of training and development needs

Training needs for councillors will be ongoing but will usually be identified by the councillors, the Staffing Committee and/or the Clerk with opportunities to attend courses being investigated by the Clerk and brought to the attention of full Council.

Employees will be encouraged to be proactive in identifying their own training and development needs to assist the Council in fulfilling its objectives and obligations. Employee development should include the provision of an annual appraisal and half year review where personal development and training needs can be discussed.

In particular, additional training needs will be considered when embarking on a new activity or project.

4. Training budget

An allocation will be made in the budget each year as required to enable necessary training and development. The Council will also consider an allocation in the budget for the payment of a subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks and Oxfordshire County Association of Local Councils to enable the Clerk and Councillors to take advantage of their training courses and conferences. Purchase of relevant resources such as publications will be considered on an ongoing basis.

5. Evaluation and review

All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the Council to gauge its relevance and effectiveness. Any additional training needs highlighted as a result will be brought into the training review process outlined in section 3 above. Training will be reviewed in the light of: changes to legislation relevant to the Council; requirements for new qualifications; new Council services, activities or equipment; complaints received; incidents which highlight training needs; or requests from Councillors, employees or volunteers.

The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by themselves and Councillors.

6. Review

This document was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 16th October 2024, and shall be reviewed annually.

Signed:

Dated:

L. Nixon, Chair, Cholsey Parish Council

16th October 2024