



# **STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Training and Development Policy**

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## General Principles

- The 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. We will also provide relevant training to any Town Council volunteers, if deemed necessary. (Please refer to the separate Volunteers Policy.)
- The Council recognises that its most important resource are its Councillors and staff and is committed to encouraging both Councillors and staff to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.
- 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 on accordance with their contract of employment and job description.
- 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.
- Training needs should be identified by considering the overall objectives of the organisation, as well as individual requirements.
- The Council is committed to encouraging continuing professional development and enhancing the skills of both Councillors and employees.

## Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs

Training and development needs will be identified from a variety of sources for staff:

- Induction and probationary periods
- One-to-ones
- Appraisal
- Workforce planning
- Team meetings
- Annual plan
- Change processes

In addition, the council will encourage staff to identify their own learning styles and will seek to provide a wide variety of learning and training methods, including:

- Attendance at conferences, seminars and short courses
- Online training/in house training
- Internal coaching
- Shared in-house learning resources (books, journals, DVDs etc.)
- Work shadowing
- Time for self-directed research and learning

## Consideration

A number of factors will be taken into account when assessing a request from an individual. This policy provides one element of the decision-making process. Other factors will include availability of finance and the individual's employment record.

In order to ensure that the council is able to consistently evaluate requests, training and development opportunities have been organised into three categories according to the degree of importance each intervention has for different roles.

## Categorising training and personal development

The following categories apply:

### 1. Mandatory

Mandatory training is legally required for the post-holder, or a qualification deemed to be so fundamental to the role, that the council makes it a mandatory requirement. Any mandatory training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description. They should also be stated in the contract for new starters, along with whom is responsible for the costs of the training/qualifications. For mandatory qualifications, it is unlikely that an applicant would be recruited without having previously attained the qualification. Where a qualification becomes mandatory for the role, the council will provide reasonable assistance for the employee to attain the qualification (see the section on Guidance for Support below). CPD – any training and development key to the Career Personal Development of an individual will be supported.

### 2. Corporate training

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. Some mandatory training may be specific to a particular job role whilst other training may be a generic requirement. Examples of mandatory training include:

- Health and Safety training
- Data Protection

### 3. Desirable

Desirable training is not legally required for the post, but it is directly relevant to the individual's job. Any desirable training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description.

For desirable qualifications or training, an individual may be recruited without having previously attained the qualification or undergone the training but may be expected to attain the qualification within a defined period of time. The need for training may also be identified

through one-to-one meetings or annual appraisals. A desirable qualification is likely to enhance the skills and reputation of the council. Examples may include:

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)
  - Cemetery Legal Compliance
4. Optional

An optional qualification or optional training may not be directly linked to the individual's current job. Optional training or development is generally more beneficial to the individual's career than it is for the council.

Personal development aimed at developing the skills or knowledge of an individual in order to provide a successor for an existing job is deemed to be optional. However, depending on the circumstances, training for succession may be 'desirable'.

#### Job specific

- Community Governance
- Town Planning Technical Support - Level 3 Diploma

## Guidance for support

Support for qualifications, training and personal development can include financial assistance towards the cost of tuition, examinations and resource materials in addition to half / day release and time off for study leave and taking the examination. Any financial and non-financial support to training and development is entirely at the discretion of the council.

Any financial support in excess of £500 including the offer of a loan, will always be conditional upon the employee's agreement to either a full or partial repayment of the financial support provided. The council reserves the right to reclaim financial support where the employee;

- Leaves the council during the duration of the course, or up-to 1 year following completion of the course.
- Fails to complete the training
- Fails to attend training without good reason

### **Study leave**

Where individual requires study leave to undertake mandatory training, they will be able to take all the leave within normal working hours.

Where individuals require study leave to undertake study which is not mandatory but part of the individual's formal continuous professional development, the council will contribute up to 50% of study leave time, to a maximum of 3 days per annum.

Where individuals require study leave to undertake training which is not mandatory but part of the individual's desire for career development, the council will contribute up to 3 days study leave per annum for courses which are directly related to the individual's role.

Time off for study leave must be approved in advance. To make a request the individual is asked to write to the Town Clerk setting out the details of the course of study, how it relates to their work, and the time being requested.

No study leave will be granted where individuals undertake study which is not required for their role, or not directly related to their role. However, the Town Clerk will consider requests for flexible working to allow the study to take place, as long as the needs of the council can be met.

## Training for Councillors

- The Council recognises that Councillors also need support and training to rise to the challenges of their elected Councillor status. New Councillors 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 role
- All Councillors will receive a Councillor Induction Handbook within 1 month of taking their seat.
- All new Councillors will be given the opportunity to attend Councillor training events and annually all new or aspiring Committee Chair & Vice Chair will be given the option of attending a Chairmanship Training course.
- All Councillors will be kept informed of relevant training courses and conferences, particularly those offered by Warwickshire Association of Local Councils and the National Association of Local Councils.
- Any Councillor wishing to attend any training event should seek approval from the Town Clerk.

Date of policy: March 2025

Approving Committee: Personnel Committee

Date of Committee meeting: May 2025

Policy Review: Every four years or sooner there are changes in legislation or other relevant matters.