

KIDSGROVE TOWN COUNCIL



Training Policy

February 2021

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1. Introduction

Kidsgrove Town Council is committed to provide a level of training for both its members and staff to enable them to undertake their respective roles for the betterment of not only the Council and the Community it serves, but also the Councillor and Officer personnel development.

2. Purpose and scope

This purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's position on the provision of training and development opportunities for staff and councillors. It applies to all staff whether full or part time, temporary or fixed term and to all councillors.

3. Training Aims

a. The Council's training aims are the following:

- To improve the understanding of its members, of their role as a local Councillor, the powers available to the Council and how best to utilise the resource available to the Council for the betterment of the residents it serves.
- To provide the necessary training to its staff to ensure that they are able to undertake their respective roles.
- To ensure an acceptable level of succession planning in order to: Ensure the Council can operate effectively following local elections and potential changes to the Council membership and to ensure the Council can continue to operate during times where staff may be unavailable (e.g. holidays, sickness staff turnover etc.)

b. Budget provision

The Council will consider and set a suitable budget each financial year to provide sufficient training to meet its aims for both employees and councillors.

4. Staff Training

a. Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs

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

- Induction and probationary periods. All new staff must have a clearly defined induction program put into place.
- One-to-ones
- Appraisal. All staff must receive an appraisal, at least annually, where training requirements can be identified.
- 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
- Internal coaching
- Shared in-house learning resources (books, journals, DVDs etc.)
- In house training
- Work shadowing
- Time for self-directed research and learning.

b. 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.

c. Categorising training and personal development

The three categories are as follows:

d. 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. 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).

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

Generic training

- Health and Safety (Personal Safety, Manual handling, Display Screen equipment)
- Food hygiene
- Data Protection

e. 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:

Job specific

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA)
- Microsoft 365

f. 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'.

g. 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.

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

h. Study Leave

Where individual requires study leave to undertake mandatory training, or training requested by the Council, 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 Clerk and chair of staffing, 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 Clerk, in consultation with the staffing

committee, will consider requests for flexible working to allow the study to take place, as long as the needs of the council can be met.

5. Councillor Training

- All new Councillors will be provided with an Induction pack following Local Council Elections or upon being inducted onto the council and will receive a short training session as soon as practicable after.
- New Councillors will be encouraged to complete a skills audit to identify training needs.
- Individual training requirements will be discussed with Councillors.
- All Councillors are encouraged to read suitable publications such as those produced by the National Association of Local Councils.
- All Councillors are encouraged to attend conferences and training events as appropriate to needs and responsibilities.
- Councillors training and development opportunities will be arranged mainly, but not exclusively, through the Staffordshire Parish Council Association and also in- house.

6. Recording Training

The Clerk will maintain a training log for each member of staff and councillor which will be available to public scrutiny upon request. The training log can document relevant experience, relevant qualifications held and relevant training received through other roles as well as training received whilst in the role of Kidsgrove Town Councillor.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

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