



**WESTGATE-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL**  
**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

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### **Purpose and scope**

The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's position and commitment 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. The Town Council encourages the acquisition of qualifications and new skills because it recognises that a highly trained and educated workforce and Members are essential to deal with priorities for the Council. The objective is to enable the Council to operate to the best of its ability for the benefit of its community and training and development is one means of achieving this.

### **Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs for Officers**

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

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

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

### **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. An annual budget allocation is identified each year in November to meet the likely requirements for training and development the following financial year within the main budget setting process undertaken by the Town Council.

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 for officers**

The three categories are as follows:

#### 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. 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)
- Data Protection

#### 2. 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

- Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA)
- Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration (FILCA)
- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)
- Training for Allotments in Local Authorities
- IOSH Managing Safely

#### 3. 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. The approved qualifications and/or memberships undertaken by officers will be sponsored by the Town Council and will include reimbursement and/or payment of the following:

- Course fees
- Examination fees
- Professional membership fees

Where a Member or officer is required to attend a conference or seminar the conference/seminar fees will be met; in addition, if there is the requirement for attendance for more than one day the following expenses will be paid:

- Travelling expenses that are reasonable and in line with the Council's current policy
- Subsistence expenses that are reasonable and in line with the Council's current policy

The policy should be reviewed on an annual basis as a minimum; also, if any of the following occur:

- Employment Law and/or Legislation alters, for example Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 or regulations made under that Act
- Introduction of any new equipment or services
- Alteration to any working methods or practices
- Accidents, dangerous occurrences, learning events or complaints to the Council

#### **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 as their Line Manager and copy in the Chairman of the HR Committee, setting out the details of the course of study, how it relates to their work, and the time being requested. The Town Clerk is required to make a request direct to the Human Resources Committee.

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 (or Chairman of the Council) will consider requests for flexible working to allow the study to take place, as long as the needs of the council can be met.

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

#### **Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs for Members**

Any new Councillor will be encouraged to attend Dynamic Councillor training provided by the local Association – KALC. There will be refresher training for existing Councillors offered annually and more specific Committee training, for example Planning, Human Resources and Finance.

There is also the option to join seminars, conferences, online training as well as access to in-house resources such as books and journals.

All requests for training should be directed to the Town Clerk and/or HR Committee.

#### **Evaluation and Recording Training for the Corporate Body**

The Human Resources Committee will work closely with the Town Clerk to implement this policy and monitor the effectiveness for the authority. The officer training and development needs will be identified following confirmation of appointment and/or during the appraisal process. The Member training and development requirements will be identified following election or co-option as well as an annual review following the forming of the committee structure for the Town Council in May.

Where appropriate evaluation feedback should be sought from the Member or officer for any training undertaken to assist with the monitoring process. The records for all training courses undertaken, seminars and conferences attended, and qualifications obtained will be the responsibility of the Town Clerk; a report will be produced at least once a year to the Human Resources Committee and should include any evaluations obtained. The Town Clerk will

closely monitor the requirements for training and priorities in relation to the annual budget during the financial year to ensure value for money is secured.

### **Volunteers**

Westgate on Sea Town Council should support volunteers to develop their own skills and knowledge who in turn help and support our communities. Volunteers must be aware of the Council's safeguarding obligations and have received a role appropriate training input alongside any volunteer induction they may undertake. Volunteers can expect to have access to appropriate training.