

BATHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Approved and adopted by Bathampton Parish Council at their meeting on 20th July 2023, Minute 2023/105.

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Introduction:

Bathampton Parish Council is committed to the on-going training and development of its members, staff and volunteers and recognises that well trained and informed staff promote good practice within its organisation.

The policy sets out:

- The Council's commitment to training and development.
- The identification of training and development needs.
- Financial assistance.
- Study leave
- The evaluation and review of training
- The monitoring of the Policy.

Commitment to Training and Development:

Bathampton Parish Council recognises that some of its most important resources is its Clerk and Councillors, therefore it is committed to encouraging the enhancement of their knowledge and qualifications through appropriate training and development as well as being kept up to date with appropriate new legislation.

An aim of the council is to have the General Power of Competence (GPC), thus enabling them to fulfil additional functions on behalf of the community. The council seeks to employ a clerk that is trained, competent and confident in their work, and for them to feel supported, thus enabling stability among the council.

The Parish Council value the importance of their staff undertaking a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with their role and requirements of any relevant professional bodies. The Parish Council maintain it's NALC subscription each year to help identify relevant training courses that would be of benefit to its members and staff.

The Identification of Training and Development Needs:

Bathampton Parish Council consists of 7 Councillors and employs one part time Clerk and one part time Handyman. The Parish Council also have a small number of volunteers to help with footpath clearance and litter picking.

Appropriate training and development will be necessary to ensure the Councillors, Clerk and volunteers are aware of their legal responsibilities and the council's requirements e.g., health and safety, risk assessment, employment law and equal opportunities.

Training and Development will be regularly reviewed for these groups and will constitute as a minimum:

Clerk:

The development of a Clerk should include a comprehensive induction, and the provision of an annual appraisal and performance review, where personal development and training needs can be identified and discussed, and objectives set. In addition, the council will

encourage the clerk to identify their own learning needs. A wide variety of learning and training methods will be offered, including:

- Induction sessions for new clerks
- Online training and attendance at relevant conferences, seminars, and short courses.
- Subscriptions to relevant publications and advice services.
- Courses such as those provided via the ALCA.
- In-house learning resources ((reference books e.g., Local Council Administration by Charles Arnold-Baker, journals e.g. The Clerk, reference books etc.).
- Time for self-directed research and learning

The Clerk will be expected to hold (or be working towards) The Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) and will be encouraged to acquire additional training and qualifications as appropriate to the scope of their role as Clerk. Continual Professional Development is encouraged via training through: SLCC, ALCA and NALC courses, specific courses such as finance and planning (e.g., Parkinson Partnership courses) and attendance at regular local clerk's forum meetings.

Members:

The Clerk will provide a welcome pack to all new councillors. This pack will include the following:

- A copy of the NALC Good Councillor Guide.
- Contact details for all Councillors and the Clerk.
- Adopted Code of Conduct.
- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- Training and Development Policy.
- Details of the Parish Council website and meeting calendar.
- Details and access to the Parish Council's Dropbox.
- Any other relevant and current information.

Volunteers:

Members of the Council or the Clerk will provide volunteers with the following:

- Health & Safety briefings prior to volunteer work commencing.
- Briefings on the safe use of equipment provided by the council.

Financial assistance:

Support for qualifications, training and personal development can include financial assistance towards the cost of tuition, examinations, and resource materials in addition to time off for study leave and taking the examination.

All sponsored training and development must be appropriate to the needs and objectives of the council, be relevant to the individual's role, and is subject to the availability of financial resources. Any financial and non-financial support to training and development is entirely at the discretion of the Parish Council.

The support this, funds will be allocated to a training budget each year. Annually, the Council will consider covering the cost of relevant subscriptions such as a subscription to the Society of Local Councils (SLCC) and Avon Local County Association (ALCA).

Any employee undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave the Council employment within one year of completion of the qualification they may be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training. The Council additionally reserves the right to reclaim financial support where the employee fails to complete the training, or they fail to attend without good reason.

Councillors and staff attending courses will be required to inform the Clerk immediately of any absence, giving reasons.

Study leave:

Should the Clerk require study leave to undertake mandatory training, they will be able to take all leave within normal working hours. Time off for study leave must be approved in advance. To make a request the individual is asked to discuss this with the Chairperson of the Council setting out the details of the course of study, how it relates to their work, and the time being requested.

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.

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 Chairperson of the Council) will consider requests for flexible working to allow the study to take place if the needs of the council can be met.

Evaluation and review of Training:

All councillors and staff who attend training are expected to report back at a full Council meeting, verbally to evaluate the effectiveness of the event. This feedback will then be used to evaluate the event for future reference. All employee and councillor training each year will be recorded by the Clerk for monitoring purposes.

The Parish Clerk and Chair will be responsible for monitoring and management of the budget for this policy.

The Monitoring of the Policy:

The Policy will be monitored and reviewed annually in line with the objectives of the Council and needs of the staff and in view of any changes to legislation.