LOGGERHEADS PARISH COUNCIL
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Approved by Council: 15th May 2023
Date of Review: May 2026

Introduction

Loggerheads Parish Council recognises that its most important resources are its Councillors and Officers and it is committed to keeping them apprised of current issues and to developing them to their potential. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

Training can be defined as "a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy current and future needs of the organisation" (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)

The objectives of this Policy are to:-

- Encourage Councillors and Officers to undertake appropriate training and development
- Allocate training in a fair manner
- Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value.
- Ensure that the Parish Council has the necessary skills to plan and deliver high quality services.

Commitment to Training

Loggerheads Parish Council is committed to the training and development of all Councillors and Officers to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services to the Town.

There are a number of benefits to training:-

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities provided by the Council.
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives.
- Demonstrates commitment to employees and acts as a motivator, attractor and retention aid.
- Enables Councillors to undertake their duties to the best of their ability.
- Improves the skill base of both Councillors and employees and aids team working.

Councillors

Councillors bring a vast range of skills and experience to the Council. However, both local government and the world around it are fast changing and it is an essential investment to develop Councillors to their full potential. In addition, the Council is likely to have a number of new functions over the coming years and it will be important for Councillors fully appreciate the implications of the decisions they make.

The Council will establish a comprehensive Development Programme for Councillors, based on the following approach:-

- Skills development for individual Councillors or groups of Councillors.
- Seminars, Briefings and Workshops to raise general awareness of topical issues.
- Briefings and awareness raising prior to making a key decision or policy

A rolling programme will be established immediately following the adoption of this Policy and following normal elections and updated annually.

Certain training is identified as essential for all Councillors including:-

- Induction for new Councillors;
- General Power of Competence;
- Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework
- Equality responsibilities.
- Understanding the Planning System (for Councillors of Planning and Environment Committee).

Some Councillors may have undertaken relevant training at principal Council level or in some cases as part of their employment.

Training needs are prioritised by the Personnel Committee following advice from the Parish Clerk and completion of a questionnaire by Councillors.

Employees

An annual training and development plan will also be established by the Parish Clerk and approved by Personnel Committee for employees and volunteers. It will however be flexible to accommodate new Officers or newly identified needs.

Training needs are determined by the appraisal process and are set as targets for individual Officers Councillors by the Parish Clerk on a yearly basis. Training needs are also identified during the appointment process and by informal discussion. Although sometimes training does need to be prioritised, the Council will try to accommodate requests from Officers which are reasonable and appropriate.

Certain Officers are required to hold valid First Aider qualifications or be trained

as fire wardens Training is prioritised on the following grounds (not in priority

order):-

- Legislative requirements e.g. health and safety
- Changes in relevant legislation
- Changes in systems, new working methods or equipment
- New or revised qualifications available
- The delivery of devolved or new services
- Specialist need.
- Unexpected need e.g. following a service failure or accident
- Identified competence issue

Corporate training is necessary for subjects including corporate objectives or working

practices, equality, health and safety.

Other considerations include:-

- Implications of employee release for training courses upon the operational need and capacity of the Parish Council
- Economic and effective means of training the employee
- Provision and availability of the training budget
- Continued professional development in line with requisite professional bodies.

All new Officers will receive induction training.

Resourcing Training

Sufficient funds are allocated in the budget for Officers and Councillors for training purposes with a forecast of anticipated expenditure presented to Councillors for consideration each year as part of the Budget setting process. Separate budget headings are allocated for Councillors and Officers

Qualifications

Employees may apply to take qualification training. These will be considered on an individual basis and will be dependent upon the need or priorities of the Parish Council. Qualifications may include:-

- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)

The Parish Council view these as accrediting existing knowledge and is greatly encouraged.

- Career Personal Development (CPD)

The Parish Council supports the Career Personal Development of all its employees.

- Employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where necessary relating to legal responsibilities and corporate standards

Delivery

Councillors training, learning and development opportunities will be arranged predominately by Staffordshire Parish Council Association (SPCA). This will be supplemented as appropriate by in-house provision, the use of local training organisations and by inviting "guest speakers" to Council or committee meetings.

Most Officers training needs are catered for by SPCA, Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), or local colleges, again supplemented by specialist providers.

Some joint training for both Councillors and Officers is not only cost effective but often gives added value through a cross fertilisation of ideas.

Officers and Councillors attending courses are encouraged to pass on what they have learned to colleagues where appropriate.

Financial Assistance

The cost of training for Councillors will be paid for by the Council and reasonable associated

costs such as travel an subsistence, reimbursed.

The Parish Council will pay and/or assist with expenses incurred to cover the cost of tuition and examination fees for employees provided that the training is approved by the Parish Clerk

Costs for travel to tuition, courses or examination will generally be paid. This will include such expenses as:-

- Course fees
- Examination fees
- Associated Councillorship fees
- The purchase of resources to complete a course or examination

Where training is provided for a qualification or exceeds the general costs of training, then employees will be expected to sign an appropriate agreement to manage the risks associated with the Council's investment in the training. If an employee fails to sit an examination within a reasonable period of time, fails to satisfyingly progress or discontinues the course, the Parish Council may withdraw its support and may request reimbursement of the financial assistance the employee has received to that date

Should any absence from attending any training or courses occur, it must be reported to the Parish Clerk immediately. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken.