

ASHINGDON PARISH COUNCIL



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Training and Development Policy

It is the Council's policy that all employees and Councillors of the Parish Council will be trained to a high standard to ensure that they are able to discharge their duties and deliver services to the community as efficiently as possible.

1. Budget

- 1.1 The training budget is set annually and the year to date figures are reported through the quarterly financial reports to ensure that the budget is monitored.
- 1.2 The Parish Council as a whole will have the ultimate say on whether training is relevant and, should there be insufficient training budget remaining for that year, determine whether training should be undertaken. Priority will be given to new Councillors if there are budget constraints.
- 1.3 The Parish Council will reimburse travel expenses associated with attending training courses. Expenses incurred other than normal travel expenses must be approved in advance of the course where appropriate.
- 1.4 Should a Councillor be unable to attend a training session for which they have been booked onto, the Councillor must notify the Clerk 3 weeks before the session in order for the Clerk to request a full refund from the training provider.
- 1.5 Should a Councillor not attend a training session for which they have been booked onto, the Councillor will reimburse the Parish Council 50% of the course cost in the first instance and then 100% of the course costs thereafter. If a Councillor is unable to attend a training session for which they have been booked onto due to ill health, the onus is on the Councillor to find a replacement for the training session.

2. Staff Training

- 2.1 The employees of the Parish Council are seen as being fundamental in all areas of its service delivery and development. It is essential that they are all fully trained to carry out their duties as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- 2.2 Each member of staff is interviewed by way of a staff appraisal once a year and training needs are discussed as part of this process.
- 2.3 Additionally, any weaknesses in staff training will be highlighted during the appraisal process and thereafter addressed.

- 2.4 To ensure the Parish Council achieves its objective of having a motivated and skilled workforce providing a high standard of service to the public, all employees will be required to notify the Clerk of any areas of work in which they feel they require training.
- 2.5 The Clerk should hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) or equivalent or be working towards this qualification.
- 2.6 The Parish Council will support the Clerk as a member of the Society of Local Council Clerks.

3. Councillor Training

- 3.1 The Parish Council recognises that because of its size most formal training will be provided by outside bodies. Therefore, close links have been established with various training providers including Rochford District Council, Society of Local Council Clerks and the Essex Association of Local Councils.
- 3.2 All Councillors are offered the opportunity to attend all relevant training courses by the various service providers. This will be addressed through agendas and ascertaining from members which courses would be appropriate for them to attend.
- 3.3 As the policies of the Parish Council are set by the Council as a corporate body, it is essential that all Councillors are afforded appropriate training.
- 3.4 It is a requirement that Councillors attend Councillor Training Days 1 and 2 provided by the Essex Association of Local Councils. It is preferable that Councillors taking on the duties of Chairman of the Council or as a member of one of its Committees have undertaken appropriate training.
- 3.5 The Clerk will provide a short in house training session for new Councillors should there be a delay in attending Councillor Training Days 1 and 2.
- 3.6 At any time a Councillor can ask the Clerk to investigate training of either a standard or specific nature and to provide details of dates, venues, costs and subject matter content. Once assembled the Councillor can choose the date they would like to attend and ask the Clerk to make any booking arrangements. Training will be given on a first come first served basis providing it is relevant and the costs can be met from within the available training budget.

4. Course Feedback

- 4.1 In order to evaluate training, employees and members are required to evaluate how successful and appropriate the training has been.
- 4.2 Councillors attending training sessions are expected to brief the Clerk on the effectiveness of the training given and specifically bring to the Clerks attention any new legislation changes covered by the training course. This can be done either verbally or by providing a hardcopy report to help ensure the Clerk remains current on changes.
- 4.3 The purpose of feedback is to provide shared learning across the organisation, which provides both training benefits and represents value for money.