



## **FAIR OAK & HORTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL**

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# CONSTITUTION

## CHAPTER 5

### OFFICER & COUNCILLOR

### TRAINING POLICY

Date Adopted: 20 March 2023

## 1 Introduction

1.1 This document forms the Council's Training Statement of Intent. It sets out:

- The Council's commitment to training.
- The identification of training needs
- Corporate training
- Financial assistance
- Study leave.
- Short courses/workshops
- Evaluation of training
- Links with other policies
- Reporting on progress

## 2 Commitment to Training

2.1 The Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors and staff to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives in providing the highest quality of services.

2.2 According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2007), 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."*

2.3 The Council recognises that its most important resource is its Councillors and staff and is committed to encouraging both Cllrs and staff to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

2.4 The Council expects senior and specialist staff to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their requisite professional bodies and all staff to undertake training as deemed necessary to fulfil their duties in accordance with their contract of employment and job description.

2.5 Providing training yields several benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that the Council provides;
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives.
- Improves the skill base of the employees, producing confident, highly qualified staff working as part of an effective and efficient team; and demonstrates that the staff are valued.
- **Ensures Councillors have the knowledge and skills required for effective decision-making.**

2.6 Training and development will be achieved by including a realistic financial allocation for training and development in the annual budget, as well as taking advantage of any relevant partnership or in-house provision available.

### 3 Identification of training needs

3.1. Staff will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from their line manager during their annual appraisal or regular meetings with their line manager. There are a number of additional ways that the training needs of both Cllrs and staff may be recognised:

- Questionnaires
- During interview
- Following confirmation of appointment
- Formal and informal discussion (e.g., as part of staff Annual appraisal process)

3.2. Other circumstances may present the need for training:

- Legislative requirements i.e. First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling
- Changes in legislation
- Changes in systems
- New or revised qualifications become available
- Accidents
- Professional error
- Introduction of new equipment
- New working methods and practices
- Complaints to the Council
- A request from a member of staff or Cllr
- Devolved services/delivery of new services

3.2 Staff who wish to be nominated for a training course should discuss this in the first instance during their appraisal; where it will be determined whether the training is relevant to the authority's needs and/or service delivery.

### 4 Corporate Training

4.1. Corporate training is necessary to ensure that staff are aware of their legal responsibilities or corporate standards e.g. Health and Safety, Data Protection and Equal Opportunities. Employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where suitable training is identified.

4.2. Staff are required to complete all health and safety webinar training, accessed via Bright HR. Where appropriate, these will also be undertaken by Councillors.

### 5 Resourcing Training

5.1. An allocation will be made in the budget each year to fund training fees and travel expenses. The amount will be reviewed annually. The 2023/24 budget for both 15 Councillors and 15 staff members is £2,500.

5.2. The Council subscribes to the National Association of Local Councils, South East Employers, and The Society of Local Council Clerks in order to receive regular updates on matters relevant to the sector and have access to the courses and conferences which are provided.

5.3. There will also be sufficient funds set aside for appropriate technical literature and other information.

## **6 Financial Assistance**

6.1. It is important to note that all sponsored training must be appropriate to the needs of the Council, be relevant to the individual's role and is subject to the availability of financial resources. Each request will be considered on an individual basis and the benefits to the individual and the organisation will be identified.

6.2. Other considerations include the following:

- The implication of employee release for training course(s) on the operational the capability of the Council
- The most economic and effective means of training
- Provision and availability of training budget

6.3. For approved courses Cllrs and staff can expect the following to be sponsored:

- The course fee.
- Examination fees
- Associated membership fees.
- One payment to re-take a failed exam.

6.4. Cllrs and staff attending courses are expected to inform the Clerk immediately of any absences.

6.5. Failure to sit an examination may result in the Council withdrawing future course funding and/or requesting a refund of financial assistance. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

6.6. The Council operates a Return of Service agreement. Any staff member undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave employment within two years of completion of the qualification they may be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training. Each case is to be reviewed by the Clerk, or in the case of the Clerk's training, by the Chairman of the Council.

## **7 Study Leave**

7.1. Employees who are given approval to undertake external qualifications are granted the following:-

- Study time to attend day-release courses.

- Time to sit exams.
- Study time of one day per examination (to be discussed and agreed upon by the line manager in advance)
- Provision of study time must be agreed upon with the line manager prior to the course being undertaken.

## 8 Short Courses/Workshops/Residential Weekends (including conferences)

8.1 Where staff attendance is required at a short course **outside normal office hours** or on a Saturday or Sunday, up to a normal working day of straight TOIL per day may be taken.

8.2 Cllrs and staff attending approved short courses/workshops/residential weekends can expect the following to be paid:

- The course fee (usually invoiced following the event)
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Council's current policy
- Study time of one day per exam (to be discussed and agreed upon by the line manager in advance)
- Provision of study time must be agreed upon with the line manager prior to the course being undertaken.

## 9 Training Evaluation

9.1. Records of all training undertaken by staff will be **stored on their BrightHR profile**.

9.2. As part of the Council's continuing commitment to training and development, Cllrs and staff are encouraged to share the information received and circulate training presentation papers for in-house training use. They are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training they undertake highlighting the key implications of new legislation, guidance and/or best practice for the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of the authority.

## 10 Linking with other Council Policies

10.1. How will this link to the Council's other policies?

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of Cllr and staff development.
- Risk Management Policy - a commitment to Training and Development greatly assists in achieving good governance and an effective system of Risk Management.
- Health and Safety Policy - on-going training and development is key to ensuring a positive approach to Health and Safety is embedded throughout the authority;
- Undertaking training is a clear indication of Continuing Professional Development.

## **11 Reporting on Progress**

11.1. The Clerk will report at least annually to the **Full Council**, detailing **outcomes of all staff appraisals, including attendance at training over the year and future training needs identified.**

## **12 Conclusion**

12.1. **The benefits of having an adopted training policy, include:**

- Widen skills and experience.
- Provide opportunities to network.
- Provide the skills to confront challenges.
- Encourage innovation.
- Raise the standards of the Council.

## **13 Transparency**

13.1. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this document will be posted on the Council's Website [www.fairoak-pc.gov.uk](http://www.fairoak-pc.gov.uk)