

YAXHAM PARISH COUNCIL

STAFF TRAINING POLICY

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This document follows the council's staff Training Policy and 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

1.2 The objectives of this strategy are to:

- Require staff to undertake appropriate training
- Allocate training in a fair manner
- Ensure training is evaluated to assess its value

2.0 Commitment to Training

2.1 Yaxham Parish Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all employees to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the council's aims and objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services for the people of the Parish.

2.2 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 Yaxham Parish Council recognises that its most important resource (apart from its elected members) are its officers and staff and is committed to encouraging individuals 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 officers to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with requirements of their professional bodies (such as the Institute of Local Council Management).

2.5 Providing training yields a number of benefits:

- It improves the quality of the services and facilities that Yaxham Parish Council provides
- It enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives
- It improves the skill base of employees, producing confident, highly qualified and motivated staff working as part of an effective and efficient team
- It demonstrates that employees are valued.

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

2.7 The process of development is as follows:

- 1- Training need should be identified by considering overall objectives of the organisation as well as individual requirements
- 2- Planning and organising training to meet those specific needs
- 3- Designing and developing the training (where appropriate)
- 4- Evaluating the effectiveness of training

3.0 The Identification of Training Needs

3.1 Employees 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 staff training needs may be recognised or identified:

- During interview
- At appraisal
- Through formal or informal discussion

3.2 Other circumstances may present the need for training:

- Legislative requirements ie Health and Safety, first aid etc
- New or changes to existing legislation (eg General Power or Competence)
- Changes or improvements required to operational 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
- Development services/delivery of new service

3.4 Employees who wish to be considered for a training course should discuss this in the first instance with their line manager either during appraisal or informal discussion. The line manager will consider, together with colleagues and (depending on the training and the cost involved) with the council, to determine whether: the training is relevant to the authority's needs and/or service delivery; the training costs represent value for money; and, if there is sufficient funding available.

4.0 Corporate Training

4.1 Corporate training is necessary to ensure that employees are suitably qualified to ensure the council's legal compliance with such legislative requirements as Health and Safety, risk management, equality etc. employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where suitable training is identified.

5.0 Financial Consideration

5.1 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.

In order to best endure cost effectiveness, employees will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required course, unless no alternative is available, it is a nationally offered (rather than regionally), urgency or the interests of operational effectiveness require otherwise. Where necessary the council will consider specific training requests (for example, for reasons of cost or benefit).

5.2 Other considerations include the following:

- The implications of employee release for training course attendance on the operational capacity of the council
- The most economic and effective means of training (value for money)
- The provision and ability of the training budget and other demands on it

5.3 For approved courses, employees can expect the council to fund the following:

- The course and registration fee
- The examination fees (if any)
- Associated members fees (if any)
- One payment to re-take a failed examination or assignment
- Travel costs
- Accommodation costs (only if absolutely necessary and only by prior agreement)

5.4 Staff attending training courses must inform the Parish Clerk immediately of any absence, giving reasons.

5.5 Failure to sit an examination (where there is one) may result in the council withdrawing future course funding and/or requesting the refunding by the employee of costs paid by the council. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

5.6 In the case of further education, such as the Certificate of Higher Education or Degree course, employees may be required to repay some or all costs associated with the study if they leave within five years following completion of the course.

Decisions will be made on a case by case basis by the Parish Clerk in agreement with the Chairman.

6.0 Study Leave

6.1 Employees who are given approval to undertake external qualifications are granted the following:

- Study time to attend day-release courses
- Time to sit examinations
- Study time of one day per examination or assignment (to be discussed and agreed with the line manager in advance)
- Provision of study time must be agreed with the line manager prior to the course being undertaken.

7.0 Short Courses/Workshops/Conferences and Continuing Professional Development

7.1 Where attendance is required on a full day or half day (short) course, leave will be granted on full pay for the duration of travel and attendance.

7.2 Staff attending workshops, residential or day conferences can expect the following to be paid by the council:

- The course or the conference fee (with accommodation and meals if this forms part of the cost package)
- Travelling expenses in accordance with council policy
- Subsistence in accordance with council policy
- In exceptional circumstances, council may also pay an additional nights' accommodation where this will improve the ability of the attendee to gain the most of the even (particularly if significant travel is required).

8.0 Evaluation of Training

8.1 Records of all training undertaken by employees will be kept in the personnel files of each member of staff.

8.2 As part of Yaxham Parish Council's continuing commitment to training and development, employees are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training they undertake highlighting in particular the key implications of new legislation, guidance and/o best practice for the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of the authority.