



Somerton Town Council
Policy Documents
Staff and Councillor Training
and Development Policy
Adopted: September 2018
Review Date: October 2023

Staff and Councillor Training and Development Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 This document forms the Council's Training and Development Policy. 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
- Member specific training
- Reporting on progress

1.2 The objectives of this strategy are to:

- Encourage Members and staff to undertake appropriate training that supports the Council's aims and objectives
- Allocate training in a fair manner
- Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value

2 Commitment to Training

2.1 Somerton Town Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors and employees to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives.

2.2 Somerton Town Council recognises that its most important resource is its Members and officers and is committed to encouraging both Members and officers to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training.

2.3 Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements and it is expected that all Members and officers undergo such training.

2.4 The Council expects senior and specialist officers to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their role and/or professional bodies.

2.5 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 The Identification of Training Needs

3.1 Employees and members will be asked to identify and agree their development needs with advice from the Clerk and HR Committee. This will be done formally for employees as part of the annual appraisal process.

3.2 Other circumstances may present the need for training:-

- Legislative requirements eg 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
- Devolved services / delivery of new services

4 Financial Assistance

4.1 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 be 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. Specific requests should be made via the Town Clerk who will review funding or make further recommendation to Full Council dependant on the requirements of the Financial Regulations.

In order to best ensure cost effectiveness, Members and employees will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required course, unless an alternative is authorised in the interest of operational effectiveness or Best Value.

4.2 Other considerations include the following:-

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

4.3 For approved courses Members and employees can expect the following to be sponsored:-

- The course fee
- Examination fees
- Associated membership fees
- One payment to re-take a failed examination
- Travel and subsistence allowance

4.4 Members and officers attending assisted courses are required to inform the Town Clerk immediately of any absences, giving reasons.

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

4.6 Somerton Town Council operates a Return of Service agreement. Any employee undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council in excess of £300 must be aware that should they leave Somerton Town Council employment within one year of undertaking such training, they will be required to repay 100% of the costs associated with the training; within two years of completion of the qualification they will be required to repay 50% of all costs associated with the undertaking of such training. If the employee takes up employment with another Local Authority an exemption to this clause may be granted.

5 Study Leave

5.1 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 (to be discussed and agreed by line manager in advance)
- Provision of study time must be agreed with the line manager prior to the course being undertaken.

6 Short Courses/Workshops/Residential Weekends

6.1 Where attendance is required at a short course, up to a full day of paid study absence in order to attend the course will be granted.

7. Members' specific training

7.1 All Members of Somerton Town Council will be provided with and are expected to attend training and updates on

- Somerton Town Council Induction
- Planning Training
- Finance Training
- Code of Conduct

7.2 It is the responsibility of Members to provide the Town Clerk with appropriate information in order for their personal training log to be kept up to date.

8 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 Somerton Town 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/or best practice for the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of the authority.

9 Reporting on Progress

9.1 The Chair of the HR Committee will provide a report for the Somerton Town Council's annual meeting detailing an overview of training undertaken in the previous year and the benefits to the organisation.