



St Ives Town Council

**Corporate Training and
Development Policy**

January 2021

Policy / File Status

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Jan 2021	0.1 Draft	Staffing Committee	New policy
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Review Record

Date	Type of Review Conducted	Summary of Actions Taken or Decisions Made	Completed By

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's position on the provision of training and development opportunities for both employees and councillors. It applies to all staff whether full or part time, temporary or fixed term.

The objectives of the policy are to

- Encourage Councillors and employees to undertake appropriate training and development activities
- Allocate training in a fair, equal and transparent way
- Ensure all training is evaluated to assess its value.

The Council's Commitment to Training and Development

The Town Council is an organisation in which learning is valued. It recognises that its councillors and employees are its most important resource. The Council is committed to encouraging both members and employees to enhance their skills, knowledge and qualifications through training and development activities. Some training is also necessary to ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

The Council expects senior staff and specialist officers to commit to a programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their requisite professional bodies.

Training can

- Improve the quality of service delivery
- Enable the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives
- Improve the skill base of employees to produce confident, highly qualified staff working as an effective and efficient team;
- Demonstrates that employees are valued.

Members and staff will be supported to undertake the training and development which they need to help them achieve and maintain a high standard of performance and will be given encouragement and support to achieve their full potential. This in turn will ensure the Council is better able to deliver excellent services to and for the local community of the St Ives parish. This is underpinned by an annual training and development plan, supported by a dedicated budget.

What Councillors and Employees can expect

As a minimum all are entitled to expect

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of their training and development
- An induction programme into their own roles as well as the broader work and operation of the Council
- An understanding of the Council's role in the community and working with partners
- An understanding of the direction and objectives of the Council
- An understanding of the contribution that is expected of them

For Employees

- A Council that is committed to staff development
- An annual appraisal and review of their performance, which shall include assessment of their training needs
- Clear objectives and measurable targets for their performance at work
- A personal development plan which addressed their development needs
- Release from work commitments in order to undertake training which has been identified and approved and financial support, as appropriate.
- Regular training to ensure that all legal and statutory requirements associated with their role and equipment under their control are met in full.

For Members

An induction programme for all new Councillors which covers

- The Role and duties of a Councillor
- Code of Conduct training
- Understanding key governance documents : Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and the budget
- Technical training related to their Committee membership including planning training, audit and budget monitoring.
- All Committee Chairmen to have the opportunity to develop their Chairing skills

How Training Needs Will be Identified

Primarily, employees will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from their line manager during their annual appraisal. However, members' and employees' training needs may also be identified through a variety of sources:

- Induction and probationary periods
- One-to-ones
- Appraisal
- Workforce planning
- Team meetings
- Annual plan
- Change processes

Training and development needs may also be identified due to:

- Legislative requirements
- Changes in legislation
- Changes in systems
- New or revised qualifications become available
- New working methods and practices
- Complaints to the Council
- A request from a member of staff
- Devolved services/ delivery of new services.

Employees who wish to attend a training course should discuss this with their line manager in the first instance. Councillors identifying a skills gap or a training need can raise this through a specific Committee or through the Staffing Committee.

FORMS OF TRAINING

Consideration

A number of factors will be taken into account when assessing a training request from an individual. The availability of funding and the individual's employment record will be factors.

In order to ensure that the Council is able to evaluate requests consistency and in some cases, prioritise, training and development opportunities have been organised into three categories according to the degree of importance each intervention has for different roles.

Categorising training and personal development

1. Mandatory

Mandatory training is legally required for the post-holder, or a qualification deemed to be so fundamental to the role, that the council makes it a mandatory requirement. Any mandatory training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description. For mandatory qualifications, it is unlikely that an applicant would be recruited without having previously attained the qualification. Where a qualification becomes mandatory for the role, the council will provide reasonable assistance for the employee to attain the qualification.

Some mandatory training may be specific to a particular job role whilst other training may be a generic requirement.

Examples of mandatory training include:

Induction

All new Councillors and employees will receive basic induction training on the workings of the Council, Council policies and governance. This will also include Council finance, assets, health, safety and welfare. Specific mandatory training (such as Code of Conduct Training for Councillors) will be included as well as an assessment of any essential training needed to effectively carry out the role. Any need identified in the assessment will be met in accordance with the Council's commitment to training and development.

Corporate Training

Corporate Training is necessary to ensure that members and employees are aware of their legal responsibilities or corporate standards e.g. Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Code of Conduct. Employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where suitable training has been identified.

2.0 Desirable

Desirable training is not legally required for the post, but it is directly relevant to the individual's job. Any desirable training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description.

For desirable qualifications or training, an individual may be recruited without having previously attained the qualification or undergone the training but may be expected to attain

the qualification within a defined period of time. The need for training may also be identified through one-to-one meetings or annual appraisals. A desirable qualification is likely to enhance the skills and reputation of the council. Examples may include:

Job specific

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)
- An accountancy qualification

3.0 Optional

An optional qualification or optional training may not be directly linked to the individual's current job. Optional training or development is generally more beneficial to the individual's career than it is for the council.

Personal development aimed at developing the skills or knowledge of an individual in order to provide a successor for an existing job is deemed to be optional. However, depending on the circumstances, training for succession may be 'desirable'.

THE APPROVAL PROCESS

The Council will seek, as far as possible to identify and plan for meeting training needs through the appraisal process and the development of an annual training programme. However, there will be circumstances as above where training needs and requests arise in year or at short notice.

All requests will be considered in relation to the Council's needs by the Town Clerk and, if necessary, the Staffing Committee.

In determining any request, priority will be given to the category of training (whether mandatory, desirable or optional), and whether the training is appropriate to the needs of the Council, 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 Council will be evaluated.

Members and employees will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required training unless an alternative is authorised in the interest of operational effectiveness or ensuring value for money.

Consideration will also be given to:

- The impact on operational capability;
- The most economic and effective means of providing the learning;
- Provision and availability of the training budget.

In addition, the Council will encourage staff to identify their own learning styles and will seek to provide a wide variety of learning and training methods, including:

- Attendance at conferences, seminars and short courses
- Online training
- Internal coaching
- Shared in-house learning resources (books, journals, DVDs etc.)

- In house training
- Work shadowing
- Time for self-directed research and learning

FUNDING

The Council will set an annual training budget to ensure the above commitments are achieved. The Council will negotiate and enter into training arrangements and programmes with recognised and qualified providers to ensure best value and quality assurance, taking advantage of any relevant partnership or in-house provision available.

Members and employees can expect the following to be sponsored for approved training and development activities:

- Course fee;
- Examination fees;
- Associated membership fees;
- One payment to re-take a failed examination.

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

St Ives Town Council operates a Return of Service arrangement. Any employee undertaking post entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that, should they voluntarily leave the Town Council's employment within two years of completing the qualification, they will be required to repay proportionate costs associated with undertaking such training. An exemption to this clause may be granted if an employee takes up employment with another local authority.

Study Leave

Employees who are given approval to undertake external qualifications will be 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 their line manager in advance)
- Provision of study time must be agreed with the line manager prior to the course being undertaken.

Short Courses/ Workshops/ Residential Weekends

Where officers attendance is required, out of normal working hours, at a short course, salary will be paid in accordance with the Members and Officers Expenses Policy. Members and staff attending approved short courses/ workshops/ residential weekend can expect the following to be paid:

- Course fee
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Council's Members and Officers Expenses Policy

- Subsistence in accordance with the Council's Members and Officers Expenses Policy.

Progress Reporting and Evaluation

The Town Clerk will produce an annual training and development plan to be approved by the Staffing Committee, as part of the budget setting process. The Committee will use the plan and the outcome of appraisals to approve a funded plan.

Post attendance or course completion, each attendee will be expected to complete post training evaluation on the effectiveness of training and development opportunities to be reported to Committee annually.

For short courses, attendees will be expected to cascade their learning where appropriate through circulating handouts and internal information sharing.

Attendance, attainment and copies of certificates should be recorded on personnel files.

Progress towards longer term professional qualifications should be recorded through the performance management and appraisal systems. Some attainment may result in remunerated. Conversely, unsatisfactory progress will result in a review and, in some circumstances, may result in the withdrawal of support.

POLICY REVIEW

The training and development policy has been devised by the Staffing Committee with support from the Town Clerk and adopted by the Council. The policy, together with a draft, funded training plan for the next financial year, will be reviewed by the Staffing Committee following the staff appraisal process in February each year.

