

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Hungerford Town Council training policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Hungerford Town Council is committed to provide a level of training for both its members and staff to enable them to undertake their respective roles for the betterment of not only the Council and the Community it serves, but also the Councillor and Officer personnel development.

2 Training

2.1 Training is defined as “a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the Organisation”.

2.2 Learning can be categorised into the following:

- Intuitive – learning which happens by chance and we may not be conscious of it.
- Incidental – learning by reflection on particular events or activities.
- Retrospective – a system approach to reflecting on activities and identifying what we learned from them.
- Proactive – planning to learn from an activity, reflecting on it and planning to use what we learned.

2.3 It is anticipated that member/staff learning will reflect many of the above.

3 Training Aims

3.1 The Council’s training aims are the following:

1. To improve the understanding of its members, of their role as a local Councillor, the powers available to the Council and how best to utilise the resource available to the Council for the betterment of the residents it serves.
2. To provide the necessary training to its staff to ensure that they are able to undertake their respective roles.
3. To ensure an acceptable level of succession planning in order to:
 1. Ensure the Council can operate effectively following local elections and potential changes to the Council membership.
 2. Ensure the Council can continue to operate during times where staff may be unavailable (e.g. holidays, sickness staff turnover etc.)

4 Staff Training

4.1 Training and Development are the responsibility of each member of staff and therefore all employees are encouraged to be proactive in identifying their training and development needs.

4.2 Induction training is provided for all new employees.

4.3 The Clerk will be responsible for identifying training needs due to changing circumstances, health and safety issues or new legislation and appropriate training will be given whenever necessary.

4.4 Future training requirements will form part of the annual appraisal for every member of staff.

4.5 The Clerk may suggest additional training any time.

4.6 All staff are encouraged to read regular publications such as 'The Clerk' and updates from council support services such as SLCC and NALC.

4.7 Any member of staff may apply to take qualification training. Authorisation and sponsorship will be dependent upon corporate and service priorities and each application will be considered on this basis.

4.8 Any training and development key to the personal development of an individual will be supported.

5 Councillors' Training

5.1 All new Councillors will be provided with an Induction pack following Local Council Elections or Co-option. New councillor training will be offered as soon as practicable.

5.2 Any individual training requirements will be discussed with Councillors.

5.3 All Councillors are encouraged to read the following publications: A good councillor's guide

5.4 All Councillors are encouraged to attend conferences and training events as appropriate to members and Councils needs and responsibilities

5.5 Councillors training and development opportunities will be arranged mainly through the Berkshire Association of Council (BALC), or surrounding counties and also in- house.

6 Prioritising Training and Development

6.1 Any personal development training will be prioritised as follows:

- i. Corporate/Service delivery,
- ii. Specialist needs,
- iii. Improving existing skills,
- iv. Personal development.

7 Financial Assistance

7.1 A training budget will be set and approved annually to cover provision of training activities, attendance at conferences and training publications for members & staff.

7.2 Where training is approved, the Town Council will pay and/or assist with expenses incurred which may cover such items as tuition and examination fees.

7.3 Travel expenses will be met by the Town Council following pre-approval from the Town Clerk.

7.4 Individual employees are responsible for their own registration on a course, but not before approval has been obtained. The Town Council will not meet a financial commitment where prior approval has not been granted.

8 Evaluation and Training Records

8.1 All employees and members who undertake training are expected to complete a training evaluation form upon completion of the training to measure its relevance and effectiveness.

8.2 A record of staff training will be kept in the staff training folder.

8.3 Members training will be recorded in the members' training folder.

8.4 An annual record of employee training will be noted in the staff appraisals.

8.5 In certain circumstances an employee may be required to provide a briefing note or discuss the training at a team meeting.

8.6 All employees are expected to keep their training record up to date.

8.7 The Clerk must be qualified if Hungerford Town Council is to be eligible to use the General Power of Competence.

The clerk must hold at least one of the sector-specific qualifications and should have completed the relevant training designed as part of the National Training Strategy for local councils. From April 2012, this training is undertaken as part of a clerk's preparation for one of the recognised sector-specific qualifications. Where a clerk studied for one of these qualifications before April 2012, they undertake the relevant training and must pass the short section 7 of CILCA Portfolio Guide in order to be fully qualified for the purposes of the GPC (see below). From 1/8/2025 anyone who undertook CILCA before 2012 and has not achieved standalone L07 top up by this date will have to undertake CILCA 2026 to demonstrate their competency.

- The recognised sector-specific qualifications are:
 - The Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) awarded by the Monitoring and Verification Board (or previously by the AQA)
 - The higher education qualifications for clerks awarded by the University of Gloucestershire or its predecessor institutions, namely:
 - The Certificate of Higher Education in Local Council Administration
 - The Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy
 - The first level of the Foundation Degree in Community Engagement and Governance (the Level Four course)
 - Any equivalent successor qualification

It is important that the council pays attention to the advice of its trained and qualified clerk when taking decisions to ensure that it acts lawfully.

8.8 The Clerk must obtain and record 12 cpd points annually if Hungerford Town Council is to be eligible for a Local Council Award.