National Association of Local Councils

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MICKLETON PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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Purpose and scope

This purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's position on the provision of training and development opportunities for staff, councillors and volunteers. It applies to all staff (whether full or part time, temporary or fixed term), as well as councillors and volunteers.

Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs

Training and development needs will be identified from a variety of sources:

- Induction and probationary periods – the Council requires all councillors to attend the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Council's (GAPTC's) 'being a better councillor' two-part training course
- Representatives − the Council requires all planning representatives to attend the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Council's (GAPTC's) planning in plain English training course or equivalent
- Councillors are encouraged to take GAPTC or equivalent training to enhance their representative roles
- All new chairmen should take GAPTC's chairman ship skills training course
- Volunteers − Volunteers (including litter pickers and community activities) should be trained so that they are aware of what they are going to do and also so that they are insured under the Council's insurance policy
- One-to-ones
- Appraisal
- Workforce planning
- Team meetings
- Annual plan
- Change processes

In addition, the council will encourage staff and councillors 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

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Consideration

A number of factors will be taken into account when assessing a request from an individual. This policy provides one element of the decision-making process. Other factors will include availability of finance, staff employment record and councillor/volunteer experience.

In order to ensure that the council is able to consistently evaluate requests, 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

The three categories are as follows:

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. The job description will include a person specification, which will outline the required experience, qualifications and skills the individual will need to carry out the role.

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 (see the section on Guidance for Support below).

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

Generic training

- Health and Safety (Personal Safety, Manual handling, Display Screen equipment)
- Data Protection

2. 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.

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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)
- Cemetery Legal Compliance

3. 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'.

Guidance for support

Support for qualifications, training and personal development can include financial assistance towards the cost of tuition, examinations and resource materials in addition to half/day release and time off for study leave and taking the examination. Any financial and non-financial support to training and development is entirely at the discretion of the council.

Any financial support, including the offer of a loan, will always be conditional upon the employee's agreement to either a full or partial repayment of the financial support provided. The council reserves the right to reclaim financial support where the employee:

- leaves the council during the duration of the course, or up to 1 year following completion of the course (for CiLCA: 100% repayable up to 1 year following completion and 50% repayable in the second year following completion)
- fails to complete the training
- fails to attend training without good reason

Study leave

Where individual requires study leave to undertake mandatory training, they will be able to take all the leave within normal working hours.

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Where individuals require study leave to undertake study which is not mandatory but part of the individual's formal continuous professional development, the council will contribute up to 50% of study leave time, to a maximum of 3 days per annum.

Where individuals require study leave to undertake training which is not mandatory but part of the individual's desire for career development, the council will contribute up to 3 days study leave per annum for courses which are directly related to the individual's role.

Time off for study leave must be approved in advance. To make a request the individual is asked to write to the Chairman of the Council, setting out the details of the course of study, how it relates to their work, and the time being requested.

No study leave will be granted where individuals undertake study which is not required for their role, or not directly related to their role. However, the Chairman of the Council will consider requests for flexible working to allow the study to take place, as long as the needs of the council can be met.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

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