

OLD CATTON PARISH COUNCIL

TRAINING, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Purpose

The Parish Council is committed to supporting the training, learning, and development of its councillors, employees, and volunteers. This policy outlines the Council's approach to ensuring all individuals have the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to carry out their roles effectively and to meet the needs of the community.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Parish Councillors, employees, and volunteers.

3. Objectives

The Parish Council's training, learning, and development objectives include:

- Enabling councillors and staff to carry out their roles effectively and efficiently.
- Supporting personal and professional development to enhance service delivery.
- Ensuring compliance with legal, statutory, and best practice requirements.
- Promoting a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

4. Training Needs Assessment

The Parish Council will identify training needs through:

- **Induction Programs:** All new councillors, employees, and volunteers will receive induction training to familiarize them with the Parish Council's operations, policies, and procedures.
- **Annual Appraisals:** Employees will have annual appraisals to review performance and identify development needs.
- **Legislative Changes:** Training needs will be reviewed in response to changes in legislation or regulations.
- **Role-Specific Requirements:** Training will be provided for specific roles or responsibilities as required.

5. Training Provision

The Parish Council will provide access to a variety of training methods, including:

- **In-House Training:** Delivered by experienced staff, councillors, or external trainers.
- **External Courses:** Attendance at courses, seminars, and conferences relevant to the role.
- **E-Learning:** Access to online training resources for flexibility and convenience.
- **Workplace Learning:** On-the-job training and mentoring opportunities.

6. Budget Allocation

6.1 The Parish Council will allocate an annual budget for training, learning, and development activities. This budget will cover:

- Course fees and materials.
- Travel and accommodation costs, where applicable.

- Membership of relevant professional bodies or associations.

6.2 The Parish Council operates a Return of Service Agreement. Any employee undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave the Council's employment within five years of completion of the qualification they will be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training. Each case will be considered on an individual basis by the Parish Council.

7. Study Leave

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

- Study time to attend day release course.
- Time to sit examinations.
- Study time of one day per examination (to be discussed and agreed by Line Manger in advance).
- Provision of study time must be agreed with Line Manager prior to the course being undertaken.

7.2 Where attendance is required at a short course, paid leave will be granted for the duration of travel and attendance.

7.3 Where attendance is required on a weekend, up to a "normal" working day's toil may be taken in lieu.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation To ensure the effectiveness of training, the Parish Council will:

- Gather feedback from attendees after training sessions.
- Monitor improvements in performance or service delivery.
- Review training outcomes against the Council's objectives.

9. Responsibilities

- **Councillors:** Are responsible for identifying their own training needs and participating in relevant programs.
- **Clerk to the Council:** Oversees the implementation of this policy, identifies training needs, and ensures appropriate training opportunities are available.
- **Employees and Volunteers:** Are encouraged to highlight their training requirements and take advantage of development opportunities.

10. Equal Opportunities

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring equal access to training and development opportunities for all individuals, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.

11. Commitment to Members and Employees

11.1 Old Catton Parish Council has a fully integrated training, learning and development Policy in this document and the commitment to funding in its regular budget. Your Council supports the concept of investing in life-long Learning and Development for Members and employees and will commit an appropriate percentage (%) of its annual budget on a regular sustainable

basis. The Council will avail itself to the resources available via NPTS, NALC, SLCC and other bodies as appropriate to ensure high quality learning and development programmes.

11.2 Old Catton Parish Council makes the following commitment to its Members: that every new Member of the Council whether elected or co-opted will be trained to an adequate standard as set out by the Council and reflecting prevailing accepted standards within a year of taking office. In addition, skills audits will be acted upon to ensure specialist Members receive additional training along with the bulk of the Council to take account of legislative changes and new initiatives.

11.3 Old Catton Parish Council makes the following commitment to its employees that they will be trained to an adequate standard as set out in prevailing legislation, Local Authority standards and reflecting the aspirations of the Council as soon as possible upon appointment and on an on-going and rolling programme reinforcing professional development.

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required by changes in legislation, regulations, or the Council's strategic objectives.

12. Policy Approval and Adoption

This policy was approved and adopted by the Parish Council on 13th January 2025.

Adopted: 13th January 2025

Reviewed: 12th January 2026