PILSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Policy Reference Number	Date Approved	Review Date
21	11/4/2023	April 2026

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.

The objectives of the policy are to:
- Facilitate the ongoing training and development of our councillors, staff and volunteers to enable them to make their most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives and adapt to changing needs and/or priorities.
- Provide the foundations for the highest quality representation and services for the people of Pilsley.
- Foster a collaborative team approach in which councillors, staff and volunteers are encouraged to undertake appropriate training
- Allocate training in a fair manner
- Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value

The reasons for this policy are:
- Valuing our staff through timely and relevant training and development to deliver effective services.
- Demonstrating our commitment to general principles of councillor conduct, also known as the Nolan Principles, as shown by the Council's adoption of the LGA Model (2021) Code of Conduct in February 2021 and signing the Civility & Respect Pledge in August 2022.
- Understanding how using the skills and enthusiasm of local community volunteers can increase the quality and level of services the Council can provide.

The scope of the policy includes:
- The Council's commitment to training
- The identification of training needs
- Corporate training
- Financial assistance
- Study leave
- Short courses/workshops
- Evaluation of training
- Links with other policies
- Reporting on progress

Exclusions from the policy:
Pilsley Parish Council is not responsible for the training of contractors commissioned to deliver services for the Council so contractor training is excluded from the scope of this policy. The Council commits to ensuring that any commissioned contractors that have the relevant professional expertise and qualifications.

Commitment to Training

Pilsley Parish Council is responsible for its performance and improvement as a corporate body and is committed to the development of its councillors and staff to fulfil current and future needs.

The Council recognises that its most important resource is its councillors and staff and provides training to both to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements. In addition, the Council is committed to encouraging councillors and staff to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services for Pilsley.

Training Expectations for Councillors
The Council expects new Councillors to undertake Councillor Essentials training, provided by Derbyshire Association of Local Councils, within 6 months of election or co-option.

The following training for Councillors, provided by DALC, is also recommended:
- Finance and Budgeting for Town & Parish Councils
- VAT for Town and Parish Councils
- Being a good employer – HR training for councillors
- Planning for town and parish councils

Training Expectations for Employees
The Council expects the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their requisite professional bodies.

The Council expects other employees to discuss training and development with the Parish Clerk at annual appraisals, as needs arise and if new duties assigned.

Benefits of Training

Training yields a number of benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that Pilsley Parish Council provides.
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives.
- Improves the skills base of the employees and members.
- Produces confident, highly qualified staff working as part of an effective and efficient team; and
- Demonstrates that the employees are valued.

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.

The process of training and development

For councillors and staff, the process of training and development is as follows:

- Training needs to be identified by considering the overall objectives of the organisation, as well as individual requirements.
- Planning and organising training to meet those specific needs.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of training.
- Councillors completing a Learning Needs Assessment (LNA) alongside completing of Declaration of Interest.
- Staff complete a LNA as part of their annual appraisal.

For volunteers, the process of training and development is as follows:

- The Council will ensure any volunteers engaged to support service delivery are adequately trained to be able to carry out the role or activity they are undertaking.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken by the event or activity nominated lead, either a councillor or the clerk. This risk assessment will have regard to any safeguarding arrangements and identify any risks that might be faced and how they will be managed.

The risk assessment should include as a minimum
- The job or activity
- The existing competency of volunteers
- The circumstances of the work (e.g., the degree of supervision)
- The tools and/or equipment being used
- Training requirements

The training standard must be sufficient to ensure the Health and Safety of volunteers and any people who might be affected by the work.

Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs

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

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

In addition, the Council will encourage councillors and 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

Consideration

A number of factors will be considered when assessing a request from an individual. This policy provides one element of the decision-making process. Other factors will include availability of finance and the individual's employment record.

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

Any training legally required for the post-holder, or a qualification deemed to be so fundamental to the role, the council deems as 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 (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

The Council deems Councillor Essentials training as mandatory for all new councillors.

Desirable

Desirable training is not legally required for the post, but it is directly relevant to the individual's job or role. Any desirable training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description for employees. Councillors are encouraged to consider desirable training opportunities to provide them with skills and knowledge to be effective civic leaders.

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
- Microsoft Excel
- Waste Collection
- Planning
- First Aid

2. 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.'

Job specific

- Community Governance
- Town Planning Technical Support - Level 3 Diploma

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 in excess of £250 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.
- 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.

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 Clerk (or 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 Clerk (or 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 policy which will be reviewed a) in the event of any statutory or legal changes to training and development procedures (identified from Dalc Circulars) b) or every three years.