

# THRAPSTON TOWN COUNCIL

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## **TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR STAFF & MEMBERS**

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## THRAPSTON TOWN COUNCIL

### 1. Introduction

This document sets out The Town Council's Training and Development Policy by detailing:

- the Town Council's commitment to training and development
- the identification of training needs
- corporate training
- financial assistance
- study leave
- short courses and workshops
- evaluation of training
- reporting progress.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- encourage Members and employees to undertake appropriate training and development activities
- allocate training in a fair manner
- ensure all training is evaluated to assess its value.

### 2. Commitment to Training and Development

Training has been defined as "a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual to satisfy current and future needs of the organisation" (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development 2007).

The Town Council is committed to continuous training and development to enable Members and employees to effectively contribute to achieving the Town Council's aims and objectives by providing the highest quality representation and services.

The Town Council recognises that its Members and employees are its most important resource. The Town 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 all legal and statutory requirements.

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

Training and development:

- improves the quality of the services and facilities provided by The Town Council
- enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives
- improves the skill base of employees to produce confident, highly qualified staff working as an effective and efficient team
- demonstrates that employees are valued.

Training and development will be achieved by including a realistic financial allocation for learning activities in the annual budget as well as by taking advantage of any relevant partnership or in-house provision available.

The learning and development process will:

- identify training needs by considering The Town Council's objectives as well as individual requirements
- plan and organise training and development activities to meet those specific needs
- ensure the appropriate activity is delivered
- evaluate the effectiveness of the training and development activity

### **3. Identification of training and development needs**

Employees will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from their line manager during their annual appraisal. Members' and employees' training needs may also be identified through:

- questionnaires
- during interview
- following confirmation of election/appointment
- formal and informal discussion.

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 Town 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. All requests will be considered in relation to the Town Council's needs by the Town Clerk.

### **4. New Councillors and Employees**

All new Councillors and employees will receive basic induction training on the workings of the Town 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 Town Council's commitment to training and development.

### **5. Corporate Training**

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

### **6. Financial Assistance**

It is important to note that all sponsored training must be appropriate to the needs of the Town 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 Town Council will be identified. Members and employees will be required to attend the nearest 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.

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 Town Council withdrawing future course funding and/or requesting the refunding of financial assistance. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

The Town Council operates a Return of Service arrangement. Any employee undertaking post entry qualifications funded by the Town Council must be aware that, should they voluntarily leave The Town Council's employment they will be required to repay proportionate costs associated with undertaking such training as defined in the Training Agreement agreed and signed by the employee at the commencement of any such qualification. An exemption to this clause may be granted if an employee takes up employment with another local authority.

## **7. 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.

## **8. Short Courses / Workshops / Residential Weekends**

Where an employee's attendance is required out of normal working hours at a short course, he or she will be paid additional hours or given time off in lieu in accordance with the terms of their employment contract.

Members and staff attending approved short courses / workshops / residential weekend can expect the following to be paid:

- course fee
- travelling expenses
- subsistence.

## **9. Recording and Evaluation of Training**

As part of the Town Council's continuing commitment to training and development, Members and employees are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training and development they undertake. This information will be used to assess and improve the training process.

Evaluation tools will be developed, which will allow each training and development activity to be evaluated against the following criteria:

- how the training and development will meet the needs of the individual, and the impact on the service users
- the degree of learning that will take place as a result of the training
- the impact of the training on individual performance
- how the training contributes to the achievements of the Town Council's goals
- the number of Members/employees who will gain from the training
- whether the training should be provided externally or can be arranged in-house.

Records of all training undertaken by Members and employees will be kept in Council files.

***The Town Council reserves the right to amend and update this policy from time to time.***

Adopted by the Town Council  
23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020

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Chairman

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Town Clerk