



SOMPTING PARISH COUNCIL

POLICY ON: Training Development Policy, for Members and staff

STATEMENT

Sompting Parish Council aims to have a workforce that is innovative and effective. The workforce needs to be able to respond to ever-changing initiatives and demands on our services. The Parish Council is committed to the training and development of all its staff. There should be equality of access to training and development for all staff e.g. regardless of whether staff are part time or full time. Training and development will be designed to meet the corporate and service needs of the Parish Council both currently and in the future, taking into account the individual needs of employees. Members will be offered training in line with this policy.

SCOPE

Relates to all staff including temporary and casual staff, and all Members. The Parish Council will ensure that training and development is in line with Sompting Parish Council's Equalities Policy.

AIM

The aim of this policy is to provide an organisational framework for making training decisions and undertaking training activity. The principles and guidelines in this policy will ensure consistent standards of practice and equality of access to training and development throughout the organisation.

Sompting Parish Council is committed to be an example to the local community and other local employers by the way it trains and develops its staff. Each employee will be encouraged to continuously enhance their performance and maximise their potential in the workforce. The Parish Council will involve the local community where appropriate with its training. Staff will have access to a range of open learning materials so that they can study in their own time.

Sompting Parish Council is committed to all employees having personal development plans, with properly identified training needs relating to the needs of the individual and the Parish Council. Having a personal development plan enhances an individual's contribution in terms of personal effectiveness, job commitment and satisfaction and is an essential factor in meeting organisational need. Personal development plans also help establish the individual's responsibility for their own training and development needs.

The personal development plan will form part of the Performance and Development Review, process. In addition, throughout the year there should be regular reviews of training and development needs between staff and managers. It is a vital element of effective training and development that staff are aware of

the service objectives and targets within their areas of work, and these should be clearly communicated by managers.

Sompting Parish Council recognises the importance of training and development in supporting all Members to undertake their roles as community leaders and representatives. As part of our commitment the council recognises that needs should be individually tailored to take into account the skills and experience Members already possess and the diverse ways those needs could be met. All new Members will have induction training. A Members training programme will be organised through the Parish Clerk and the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The Parish Council is committed to a full range of training and development opportunities, not just internal or external courses. There should be appropriate training methods used for on the job and off the job training. Staff should be able to recognise the benefits of any on the job training that they receive and managers should ensure that new skills are put into practice.

HOW WILL THE POLICY BE PUT INTO PRACTICE?

There is a training budget to fund those training and development needs of staff and Members that are in line with corporate objectives and within the budgetary restraints.

The training development policy will be communicated to all staff and Members. The policy and the strategy are retained in the Council's training programme file. The Council's training programme includes training on customer care, various Information Technology courses, the council's financial systems, and health and safety courses.

Members are encouraged to attend relevant training in the corporate training programme alongside staff.

The Parish Council will ensure that every new starter will participate in a induction session within three months of joining the Council.

Every year monies from the Council's training budget will be notionally allocated to external training courses, seminars and conferences and presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration when setting the precept. This allocation will include for Continuous Professional Development where this is a work requirement.

Employees who receive financial assistance for training must repay the whole or a proportionate part (the full sum is reduced by 1/12 for each completed month's service after one year) if the employee leaves the Parish Council within two years of the end of the course. After obtaining the qualification, payment of the professional subscription may be agreed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and allocated to the training budget. If not agreed by the Committee,

the responsibility for payment rests with the employee.

All staff who successfully complete a qualification will be entitled to receive an increment within their salary range.

Before attending either an internal or external course all employees together with their managers should consider what they hope to learn from the training and how they plan to put their new skills into practice on their return. All staff need to be clear that their individual objectives are in accordance with the Council's objectives. Managers need to understand their crucial role in the development of their staff. Post development, participants should feedback to other appropriate staff the main points of what they have learnt and any relevant paperwork should be circulated.

On a regular basis the full range of training and development within the Parish Council will be evaluated to ensure that it is giving value for money and benefits the whole organisation.

Staff will be allowed time off to attend training and development, as agreed with their manager. Staff attending internal courses for one day should fill in their time sheets as if they have worked their normal contracted hours. This includes part time staff. This applies when attending external courses. This may not include the participants' travelling time but staff should be aware that the training they receive benefits them as well as the organisation. Staff attending courses (whether internal or external) that last half a day or less should show the actual time they spent attending the course. Staff are also entitled to paid leave for the purposes of sitting for required examinations.

The needs of part time workers and job sharers will be taken into account as much as possible by courses being held at a range of times and on different days of the week. The council is committed to ensuring that all staff who work part time and/or work non-regular hours are afforded equal access to training and development. Where practical, Members training will be organised at times best suited to Members' needs.

Staff attending external training courses and conferences are eligible to claim subsistence allowances up to specified maximum limits. Travel expenses are also payable. In each instance, reimbursement should be claimed for the actual expenditure and receipts are required in all cases. Claim forms and further details are available from the Parish Clerk.

Staff and Members who are booked on either internal or external courses should ensure that they attend. Apologies should be sent as soon as possible to the Parish Clerk. If an individual who has been booked on a course fails to attend without a reasonable excuse they will be charged a £10 administration fee that will feed back into the training budget. Those failing to attend any course, conference priced beyond £60 without reasonable reason will be charged the amount not refunded. It is the staff's or member's responsibility to inform the organisers of non attendance to ensure maximum refund.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PUTTING THE POLICY INTO ACTION?

All staff are ultimately responsible for their continuing personal and professional development and should be proactive in finding the training they need with the assistance of their manager. Members should discuss with the Clerk of any training course they wish to attend as it may be possible to train more on an “in-house” course.

Managers are responsible for making sure that the training and development needs of their staff are investigated and met in line with the Council’s objectives.

Members are responsible for their own personal development needs and should be proactive in finding the training they need with the help of the Parish Clerk.

The Parish Clerk is responsible for ensuring that the training budget is spent with regard to value for money and that all staff, Members have equal access to training and development. Part of the role of the Parish Clerk is to identify external funding opportunities and other resources such as local college facilities that can be used to assist in workforce development.

MONITORING

The Parish Clerk will monitor training and this policy by the use of evaluation reports and using any complaints or comments given to the Parish Clerk. All training attended by staff and Members is collated on a training database so the Council can evaluate the training and development through a number of different criteria. Both the policy and the strategy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they continue to accord with the Council's needs and objectives

