

Crudwell Parish Council

Training and Development Policy – Adopted April 2024

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Crudwell Parish Council is committed to ensuring its councillors, staff and volunteers are trained to the highest standard and kept up to date with all new legislation. The parish council is committed to ensure that it continues to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to residents professionally. To that end the council's intention is that councillors, and staff are suitably equipped with knowledge and skills to carry out their roles and maintain effective working practices. The council will procure or provide such training and development opportunities as it deems necessary and relevant.

1.2 This document constitutes the council's training and development policy.

The objectives of this policy are to:-

- encourage volunteers, councillors and to undertake appropriate training and development;
- allocate training in a fair manner;
- ensure that all provision is evaluated in order to judge its value to both the council and individuals.

2.0 Commitment to training and development

2.1 Crudwell Parish Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors, staff and volunteers to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the council's aims and objectives in order to provide the highest quality representation and services for the people of the village. In this document training and development are defined as follows:-

- **Training** is a form of development which specifically addresses the acquisition and development of new knowledge and skills, or fills gaps in existing knowledge and skills, both of which are required for adequate performance in the workplace (i.e. parish council).
- **Development** is a short-form for people development, which can involve a wide range of learning activities (including training) all of which are aimed at improving and sustaining workplace performance in terms of knowledge, skills and behaviours.

2.2 Providing training and development realises a number of benefits:-

- improves the quality of services and facilities that the council provides
- enables the council to achieve its aims and objectives
- improves the skill base of both staff, councillors and volunteers, leading to confident, qualified people who are able to operate as part of an effective and efficient team
- demonstrates that both staff and councillors are valued as individuals and as members of a team.

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

2.4 The process of provision will be as follows:-

- Training and development needs will be identified by considering the overall objectives of the council in conjunction with the requirements of individuals.
- Appropriate training and development will be planned and organised to meet these specific needs.
- Where necessary, training and development will be designed and then delivered to those who require it.
- The effectiveness of the training and development will be evaluated.

3.0 The identification of Training and Development Needs

3.1 Staff will be asked to identify their training and development needs as follows:-

- The clerk/RFO – during the recruitment process, at council meetings, annual staff appraisal, in discussions with the council/committee chairman
- Other employees and volunteers – during regular meetings/interaction with the clerk/RFO, and at staff appraisals.

3.2 Councillors will be asked to identify their training and development needs:

- at any point during their tenure
- as a result of parish council and/or committee meetings
- in conversations with other councillors and/or the clerk/RFO.

3.3 There is a number of additional ways in which the training and development needs of both councillors and staff may be identified, such as:-

- questionnaires
- during interview, if co-opted
- following confirmation of appointment
- formal and informal discussion.

3.4 Other circumstances may also present the need for training and development, such as:-

- legislative requirements
- changes in legislation
- changes in systems
- new or revised qualifications becoming available
- accidents
- professional error
- introduction of new equipment
- new working methods and practices
- complaints to the council
- a request from a member of staff
- devolved services / delivery of new services.

4.0 Training and Development Activity

4.1 The parish council recognises that its most important resource is its staff and councillors, and is committed to encouraging the enhancement of their knowledge and qualifications through appropriate training and development. Training and development for each of these groups will be regularly reviewed. The parish council consists of nine elected councillors and currently employs the following staff on part-time:-
parish clerk/RFO

5.0 Training and Development for Councillors

- a) Attendance at induction sessions explaining the role of councillors;
- b) Provision of councillor induction pack containing copies of the standing orders, financial regulations, code of conduct, policies of the council and other information deemed relevant;
- c) Training on code of conduct, parish council finances;
- d) Attendance to relevant courses provided by bodies such as the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC); Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Wiltshire; the neighbouring parish/town councils;
- e) Expenses for attending briefings, consultations and other general meetings for councillors in the area, and;
- f) Circulation of documentation such as briefings, newsletters and magazines.

6.0 Training and Development for the Clerk/RFO/RFO

- a) Induction session explaining the role of the clerk/RFO;
- b) Provision of copies of the standing orders, financial regulations, code of conduct, policies of the council and other information deemed relevant;
- c) Any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as IT, legal powers, finance and understanding the planning system, identified through regular training needs assessments;
- d) Attendance at relevant local meetings of bodies such as the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) and briefings by SLCC Wiltshire;
- f) Subscription to relevant publications and advice services;
- g) Provision of Local Council Administration by Charles Arnold Baker and other relevant publications, which will remain the property of the council;
- h) Mentoring opportunities with suitably qualified officers from neighbouring towns/parishes, and;
- i) Regular feedback from the chairman of the council on their performance.

7.0 Training and Development for other staff

- a) Induction session with the clerk/RFO explaining their role;
- b) Provision of copies of the standing orders, financial regulations, code of conduct, policies of the council and other information deemed relevant;
- c) Gaining relevant qualifications within two years of appointment;
- d) Any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as IT, legal powers, finance, health and safety identified through regular training needs assessments;
- e) Mentoring opportunities with suitably qualified officers from neighbouring towns/parishes, and;
- f) Regular feedback from the clerk/RFO.

8.0 Study Leave and Course Attendance

- 8.1 Employees who are given approval to undertake external qualifications are granted the following: -
- a) Study time to attend day-release courses;
 - b) Time to sit examinations;

- c) Study time of one day per examination (in consultation with the Clerk/RFO);
- d) Provision of study time must be agreed with the council prior to the course being undertaken;
- e) Where attendance is required at a short course, a full day of paid leave will be granted, and;
- f) Councillors and staff attending approved short courses/workshops/ residential weekends can expect the following to be paid:
 - i. The course fee (usually invoiced before of following the event);
 - ii. Travelling expenses in accordance with the Council's current policy, and;
 - iii. Subsistence in accordance with the Council's current policy

9.0 Training Resources

- a) Annually, an allocation will be made in the budget each year as required to enable reasonable training and development. The amount will be reviewed at the meeting where the Council sets a budget, usually January;
- b) Annually, the Council will consider an allocation in the budget for the payment of a subscription to WALC and;
- c) The purchases of relevant resources such as publications and subscriptions will be considered on an ongoing basis.

10. Evaluation and Review

- a) All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the council to gauge its relevance, content and appropriateness. Any additional training needs highlighted as a result will be brought into the identification of training needs process (section 3 above);
- b) Training will be reviewed in the light of changes to legislation or any quality systems relevant to the council; new qualifications; new equipment; complaints received or incidents which highlight training needs and requests from councillors, the clerk/RFO or volunteers, and;
- c) The clerk/RFO will maintain a record of training that they, councillors and volunteers attend.

11.0 Linking with Other Council Policies

11.1 A commitment to training and development greatly assists in achieving good governance and an effective system of risk management. Ongoing training and development is key to ensuring a positive approach to health and safety is embedded throughout the council. It is also acknowledged that undertaking training and development is a clear indication of continuing professional development.

11.2 This training and development policy will link to the following policies and documents of Crudwell Parish Council:-

- a) Code of conduct;
- b) Standing orders;
- c) Contract of employment;
- d) Health and safety policy;
- e) Risk assessment and management;
- f) Equality and Diversity policy