



# Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

## Training and Development Policy

### 1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The Council is committed to ensure that it fulfils its duties and responsibilities to the residents of the Parish in a professional manner.
- 1.2 It is the Council's intention that Councillors, Officers and Volunteers are suitably equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills to carry out their roles, maintain effective working practices, and keep up to date with relevant legislation.
- 1.3 The Council will procure or provide such training and development opportunities as it deems necessary for the delivery of its work and achievement of its objectives.

### 2 Commitment to Training and Development

- 2.1 As one of its most important resources, the Council recognises that Councillor and Officer development is an integral part of Council business. It is committed to encouraging the enhancement of their knowledge and qualifications through appropriate training and development.
- 2.2 The Council expects its Officers to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with their role and the requirements of their professional bodies.
- 2.3 Volunteers will be briefed on health and safety, and other training requirements, as appropriate.

### 3 Resourcing Training and Development

- 3.1 An allocation will be made in the annual budget to enable training and development relevant to the duties of Councillors and Officers, and the needs of the Council.
- 3.2 The Council will allocate a budget for the payment of subscriptions to the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), Berkshire County Association of Local Councils (BALC) (or equivalent) and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).
- 3.3 The purchase of other relevant resources, such as publications, will be considered on an ongoing basis.
- 3.4 Where necessary, the Council 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.

## 4 Training and Development Needs

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

- induction and probationary periods;
- self-assessment;
- appraisal;
- workforce planning;
- team meetings;
- action plans;
- legislative requirements, eg first aid, fire safety, manual handling;
- changes in legalisation;
- new or reviewed qualifications becoming available;
- professional publications, newsletters, etc;
- new working methods or practices;
- complaints to the Council;
- requests from Councillors or Officers;
- devolved services/delivery of new services;
- procurement exercises.

## 5 Induction and Minimum Training

### 5.1 Councillors

5.1.1 As a minimum, Councillors will be provided with (as documents, or email attachments, or a link to electronic versions):

- a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form for completion;
- a Register of Members' Interests (ROI) form for completion (with guidelines);
- a Contact Details Form for completion;
- a data protection privacy notice;
- guidance relating to email requirements and data protection;
- a map of the parish;
- a calendar of meeting dates;
- all of the Council's policies, but in particular the Standing Orders, Code of Conduct, Committee Terms of Reference, Financial Regulations and current Budget;
- 'The Good Councillor's Guide' and 'The Good Councillor's Guide to Finance & Transparency';
- login details to BALC and NALC systems.

5.1.2 It is expected that new Councillors will undertake 'Knowledge and Core Skills Training for New Councillors' (or its equivalent) provided by the Hampshire Association of Local Councils on behalf of BALC.

## 5.2 Officers

5.2.1 As a minimum, Officers will be provided with (as documents, or email attachments, or a link to electronic versions):

- copies of relevant documents including Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Committee Terms of Reference and current budget;
- all other relevant the Council documents;
- the current version of 'Local Council Administration' by Charles Arnold Baker and other relevant publications (any such publications will remain the property of the Council).

5.2.2 Officers will receive training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties, including:

- attendance at relevant training courses and/or local meetings of external bodies such as SLCC and BALC;
- training relevant to any requirement for CPD in accordance with 2.2;
- subscriptions to relevant publications and advice services;
- mentoring opportunities with suitably qualified clerks from neighbouring parishes;
- regular feedback from the Chairman of Council on their performance;
- support from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council, and Chairmen of Committees, as necessary.

5.2.3 The Parish Custodian will also be provided with:

- briefings on relevant health and safety matters and the scope of their work prior to starting;
- an assessment of their skill, knowledge and capacity to complete the task in hand including risk assessments;
- briefings on the safe use of any equipment provided by the Council.

5.2.4 It should be noted that, as a condition of employment:

5.2.4.1 the Clerk is required to have the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA), or gain it within 2 years of appointment;

5.2.4.2 the Parish Custodian is required to undertake RoSPA training regarding the inspections and management of play areas within 6 months of appointment.

## 5.3 Volunteers on Parish Council Business

5.3.1 Volunteers will be provided with:

- briefings on relevant health and safety matters and the scope of their work prior to starting;

- assessments of their skill, knowledge and capacity to complete the task in hand including risk assessments;
- briefings on the safe use of any equipment provided by the Council.

5.3.2 Training for volunteers will not be beyond that which is necessary for their role.

## 6 Guidance for Support

6.1 All training and development must be appropriate to the needs of the Council and/or be relevant to the individual's role.

6.2 Training and development is subject to the availability of financial resources.

6.3 Support for qualifications, training and personal development can include financial assistance towards the cost of tuition, examinations and resource materials and travel to and from a venue, noting that:

6.3.1 where practical and possible, if there is more than one attendee from the Council, car-pooling or shared travel arrangements should be made; and

6.3.2 any financial and non-financial support to training and development is entirely at the discretion of the council.

6.4 The council reserves the right to reclaim financial support where the Officer:

6.4.1 leaves their employment during the course or within one year of its conclusion;

6.4.2 fails to complete or attend training without good reason.

## 7 Study Leave

7.1 Study leave must be approved in advance by the individual's line manager.

7.2 Where Officers require study leave:

7.2.1 to undertake mandatory training, they will be able to take such leave within normal working hours;

7.2.2 to undertake training which is not mandatory, but forms part of the individual's CPD, the Council will contribute up to 50% of study leave time, to a maximum of 3 days per annum.

7.3 In any other circumstances, the individual's line manager may agree to a request for flexible working to allow study to take place, provided always that the needs of the Council can be met.

## 8 Evaluating and Monitoring Training Undertaken

8.1 All training undertaken will be evaluated by the Council to gauge its relevance, content and effectiveness.

8.2 The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by Councillors and Officers.