

# Woodchurch Parish Council

## Training and Development Policy



**WOODCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

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TRAINING / LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### Statement

Woodchurch Parish Council is an organisation in which learning is valued. Parish Councillors and staff will be supported to undertake the training and development which they need to help them achieve and maintain a high standard of performance and all will be given encouragement and support to achieve their full potential. This will allow them to provide the highest level of service to the Woodchurch community.

### Objectives:

- Encourage Councillors and staff to undertake appropriate training and learning & development through in-house and external training.
- Allocate training in a fair manner
- Ensure that, where possible, training is evaluated to assess its value
- Provide financial support to attend training
- The Council expects the Clerk to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with CILCA requirements

### Benefits of Training/Learning & Development:

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

### All are entitled to:

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of their development
- An induction programme into their own roles as well as to the workings of Woodchurch Parish Council.
- An understanding of the direction and objectives of the council
- An understanding of the contribution that is expected of them

### For staff:

- Clear and measurable objectives for their performance at work
- Annual appraisals of their performance, role and training needs
- A personal development plan which addresses their development needs
- A Chair and Parish Clerk who are committed to staff development.
- Paid release from work commitments in order to undertake relevant training.
- Training and certification in accordance with all legal and statutory requirements according to their role and equipment under their control.

### For New Councillors:

- New Councillors be provided with a "New Councillor's Pack" \* when joining the Council
- New Councillors are encouraged to attend courses for "new councillors" arranged by KALC

Pack to include at minimum

- Code of Conduct (for signature)
- Dignity Policy
- Local Government - Who does what?
- The role of the Parish Councillor
- Ultra Vires Doctrine and General Power of Competence
- Guide to Local Government finance
- Where appropriate - Community survey results

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### For Councillors - ongoing training needs:

- General training in Parish Council matters including Duties of a Councillor; Code of Conduct; Roles & Responsibilities
- Specialist/appropriate training according to need and role in the council and committees including Charing; Planning; Finance
- Existing Councillors encouraged to attend refresher training courses
- Other needs will be addressed through meetings and ascertaining from Councillors which courses would be appropriate for them to attend.
- If the whole Council requires training on a particular subject the clerk will source the appropriate qualified person to attend
- If appropriate - It is a requirement of the Local Council Award Scheme that training should be undertaken especially on financial management for which Councillors are responsible.

**Resources:** - Appropriate sums will be made available in each budgetary period to allow training to take place.

### Main Providers:

- Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)
- Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)
- Ashford Borough Council (ABC)
- Kent County Council (KCC)
- National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

### Identification of Training Needs:

- Employees will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from their line manager during their annual appraisal. There are several additional ways that the training needs of staff, and Councillors, may be recognised.
- Questionnaires
- During formal review
- During formal and informal discussions
- On receipt of notification of training available by outside bodies
- Following election/co-option (for Councillors)

### Other circumstances may present the need for training:

- Legislative requirements (ie First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling, Child Protection, Food Hygiene)
- Changes in legislation
- Changes in systems
- New or revised qualifications becoming available
- Accidents
- Professional error
- Introduction of new equipment/software
- New working methods and practices
- Complaints to the Council
- A request from a member of staff

### Corporate Training:

- Corporate training is necessary to ensure that employees are aware of their legal responsibilities or corporate standards eg Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equal Opportunities.
- Employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where suitable training is identified.

### Keeping the Council Informed:

- The Council pays an annual subscription to Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) and to SLCC for the Clerk. Regular publications are received from both organisations and e-mails advising of training opportunities are passed to members by the Clerk

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**Support for the Council:** - The Council is supported by Kent Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks

### **Measuring the Impact of Training:**

- Any Councillor or member of staff attending training should provide feedback to the Council at the first available Council meeting highlighting any relevant material to Councillors with regards to the working of the Parish Council.

### **Commitment to Officers and Councillors:**

#### **Woodchurch Parish Council makes the following commitment to Councillors:**

- That every new Parish Councillor, whether elected or co-opted, will be trained to an adequate standard as set out by the Council within a year of taking office.
- That specialist members (eg Planning) will be offered additional training along with the bulk of the Council to take account of legislative changes and new initiatives.
- That they will be trained to an adequate standard as set out in prevailing legislation, Local Authority standards and reflecting the aspirations of the Council as soon as possible upon appointment and on an on-going programme reinforcing professional development.

#### **Woodchurch Parish Council makes the following commitment to its employees:**

- That they will be trained to an adequate standard as set out in prevailing legislation, Local Authority standards and reflecting the aspirations of the Council as soon as possible upon appointment and on an on-going and rolling programme reinforcing professional development.
- A record of training undertaken by staff and Councillors will be recorded by the Clerk. Any training, workshops and seminars attended by Councillors during the course of their own employment, and which is relevant to Parish Council roles and responsibilities, will also be recorded