



Bingham Town Council

Training and Development Policy

Introduction

Bingham Town Council is committed to appropriate training and development of all Councillors, Staff and volunteers. This will enable everyone to make an effective contribution toward the Council's aims and objectives and will serve to strengthen the Town Council as an organisation and an employer as well as increasing and encouraging the activities that will promote community cohesion.

Training and development is 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.
- 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.

This document sets out:

- Training and Development Recommendations and Provision
- The Identification of Training and Development Needs
- Financial Assistance
- Study Leave
- Evaluation of Provision
- Ethos and Linking with Other Council Policies
- Reporting on Progress.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Encourage Councillors, Staff and volunteers to undertake appropriate training and development
- Allocate training in a fair manner, which serves the Town Council's aims and priorities.
- Ensure that all provision is evaluated in order to judge its value to both the Town Council and individuals

Training & Development Expectations and Provision

The Town Council values the time given by its Councillors to serve the community. This policy is aimed at ensuring that its Councillors enjoy their role as well as understanding their responsibilities to the Town Council, its employees and residents of Bingham.

The Town Council recommends all new Councillors (within the term of their office) to receive induction training within 6 months of becoming a Councillor. The training will help familiarise Councillors with their role and responsibilities, the general work of the Town Council and their adherence to the Town Council's Code of Conduct. For those Councillors taking the positions of Mayor or committee Chairs, Effective Chair training will be offered at the earliest opportunity when being elected, to assist them in their new role. This training will also be offered to all Councillors interested in the role of Chair/Mayor.

The Town Clerk will assist with a Councillor's familiarisation by providing an induction pack to all new Councillors. The pack will include the following:

- Contact details for Councillors and the Town Council offices
- The website address – www.bingham-tc.gov.uk
- Code of conduct for Councillors
- Good Employers Guide
- Pecuniary Interests form
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Terms of reference for Committees and membership of those groups
- Meetings calendar

The Town Council appreciate the volunteers that give up time to assist to the Town Council in delivering its objectives. The Town Council will provide relevant training to volunteers in the following circumstance:

- To provide health & safety training to assist in the delivery of a Council activity

The Town Council's staff will be encouraged to identify appropriate training and development that will assist in the performance of their duties.

Providing training and development realises a number of benefits:

- Improves the quality of services and facilities that the Town Council provides
- Enables the Town Council to achieve its aims and objectives
- Improves the skill base of both Officers, staff and Councillors, leading to confident, qualified people who are able to operate as part of an effective and efficient team
- Demonstrates that both Officers, staff and Councillors are valued as individuals and as members of a team

Training and development will be achieved by including a financial allocation in the annual budget, as well as taking advantage of any relevant partnership or available in-house provision. The Town Council is also committed to networking with other Councils, as it sees this as an effective means of information gathering.

There will be two budget allocations for training and development (volunteers training would be identified with an event/activity budget):

- Councillors
- Staff

Provision will also be made in the annual budget for travel expenses, again, split into two:

- Councillors
- Staff

The process of provision will be as follows:

- Training and development needs will be identified by considering the overall objectives of the Town 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.

The Identification of Training and Development Needs

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

- Town Clerk – during meetings with the HR Committee and at appraisal time
- Other Staff – during regular meetings with the Town Clerk and at appraisal time

Councillors are encouraged to identify training and development needs:

- At any point during the term of their office
- As a result of Town Council and/or Committee meeting
- In conversations with other Councillors and/or the Town Clerk

Volunteers will be asked to identify any training needs:

- If a member of staff or a Councillor is not trained to perform the role for a Council activity
- If it was a health and safety requirement of the voluntary role they are undertaking for a Council activity

There are a number of additional ways in which the training and development needs of both Councillors, Officers and staff may be identified, such as:

- Questionnaires
- During interview
- Following confirmation of appointment
- Formal and informal discussion

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.

Staff and Councillors who wish to be nominated for training and development provision should discuss this in the first instance with either the Town Clerk or Chairman of Policy and Resources upon which it will be determined whether the training and development is relevant to the Town Council's needs and/or service delivery.

Appropriate training and development will ensure that Staff, Councillors and volunteers are aware of their statutory responsibilities e.g., health and safety, risk management, employment law and equal opportunities.

Financial Assistance

All sponsored training and development must be appropriate to the aims, objectives and needs of the Town Council, be 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 considered by the Policy and Resources Committee.

In order to ensure cost effectiveness, Councillors, Officers and staff will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required provision, unless an alternative is recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee in the interest of operational effectiveness or 'best value'.

Other considerations include the following:

- The implications of staff release for training and development courses on the operational capacity of the Town Council
- The most economic and effective means of providing training and development
- The provision and availability of a training and development budget
- Volunteers can only be trained if the Council determines that there would be a health and safety concern for the delivery of a Council activity

For approved courses Councillors and staff can expect the following to be sponsored:

- The course fees
- Course literature
- *Examination fees
- *Associated membership fees
- *One payment to re-take a failed examination

- Travel expenses

*These items are for the benefit of Officers and staff and are not required for Councillors.

Councillors and staff attending financially assisted courses will be required to inform immediately the Chair of Policy and Resources or Town Clerk (as appropriate) of any absence, 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.

Study Leave

Employees who are given approval to undertake external qualifications are granted the following:

- Paid study time to attend day-release courses
- Paid time to sit examinations
- Paid, study time of one day per examination (to be discussed and agreed in advance by the Town Clerk or the HR Committee in the case of the Town Clerk)
- Provision of study time must be agreed with the Town Council prior to the course being undertaken
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Town Council's current policy
- Subsistence in accordance with the Town Council's current policy

Where attendance is required at Short Courses/Workshops employees will receive paid leave. In regard to Residential Weekends, subject to approval of the HR Committee and Full Council, the employee may request time off in lieu rather than receive paid leave.

Councillors and staff attending approved Short Courses/Workshops/Residential Weekends can expect the following to be paid:

- The course fee (usually invoiced before or following the event)
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Town Council's current policy
- Subsistence in accordance with the Town Council's current policy.

Evaluation of Training and Development

Records (including any certificates) of all training and development undertaken by Councillors staff and volunteers will be maintained by the Town Clerk, on behalf of the Town Council.

As part of the Town Council's continuing commitment to training and development, Councillors, Officers and staff are encouraged to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the provision they undertake, highlighting in particular the key implications of new legislation, guidance and/or best practice for the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of the Town Council.

Ethos and Linking with Other Council Policies

This training and development policy will form part of the Town Council's ethos and will link to other policies:

- HR policies
- Contracts of employment and job descriptions given to employees will include details of the Town Council's commitment to training and development
- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of Councillor and employee development
- A commitment to training and development greatly assists in achieving good governance and an effective system of risk management
- Training and development is key to ensuring a positive approach to health and safety is embedded throughout the Town Council
- Undertaking training and development is a clear indication of continuing professional development (CPD).

Reporting on Progress & Review

The Town Clerk will report annually to the Full Council detailing training and development activity over the year. Bi-monthly updates will be provided to Policy and Resources for monitoring purposes.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

This Training and Development Policy was considered and approved by Full Council on 16 May 2023

This Policy was reviewed and adopted by Bingham Town Council on 07 May 2024.

Minute Reference: 23q