

# **Hemyock Parish Council**

## **Training and Development Policy**

### **Introduction**

This document constitutes Hemyock Parish Council's Training and Development Policy. It details:

- the council's commitment to training and development
- the means by which training and development needs will be identified
- the means by which the council will fund its training and development programme
- the means by which the effectiveness of training and development will be evaluated
- the means by which training and development will be reported and reviewed

### **Commitment to training and development**

The council acknowledges that the ongoing training and development of councillors and staff is necessary to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the achievement of the council's aims and objectives.

The council acknowledges its obligation to provide a realistic financial allocation in the annual budget to meet the costs of its training and development schedule.

The council acknowledges the significant role played by the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) in the provision of relevant training and will be mindful of that significance when considering the renewal of annual subscriptions to those bodies.

### **The identification of training and development needs**

The clerk will provide new councillors with an induction pack. This pack will contain copies of:

- contact details for councillors and the clerk
- 'The Good Councillor's Guide'
- code of conduct
- standing orders
- financial regulations
- meetings calendar
- asset register
- annual budget and financial statements
- council policies
- emergency plan
- details of the council's online presence

As soon as is practicable after joining the council, a councillor will attend an induction training session to familiarise themselves with the general work of a parish council.

Appropriate training and development is necessary to ensure that both clerk and councillors are aware of their legal responsibilities and the council's obligations in areas such as health and safety, risk management, employment law and equal opportunities. The clerk and councillors will be

expected to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where suitable provision is identified.

The clerk and councillors are expected to identify additional training and development needs and to report these to the council.

Training needs may become apparent during the normal course of council activities. Other circumstances may also prompt the need for additional training: changes in legislation, procedural changes, the availability of new or revised qualifications, accidents, the introduction of new equipment, new working methods or practices, complaints to the council, the devolution of services or the delivery of new services.

A review of the clerk's training and development requirements will form part of his or her annual appraisal.

### **Financial provision for training and development**

A training and development budget will be set annually.

All funded training and development must be appropriate to the needs of the council, be relevant to the individual's role, and is subject to the availability of financial resources.

Each request for funding will be considered on an individual basis with due consideration given to the benefits to both the individual and the council.

In the event that funding requests exceed the allocated budget, priority will be given to the training and development of a new clerk and/or new councillors.

To ensure cost effectiveness, the clerk and councillors will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required provision, unless an alternative is authorised by full council in the interests of operational effectiveness or 'best value'.

With regard to the clerk, consideration will be given to the implications of release for training and development on the operational capacity of the council.

For approved training and development courses, for clerk and councillors, the following will be met from the training and development budget:

- course fee
- examination fee
- associated membership fee
- one payment to re-take a failed examination
- travel costs

A councillor who fails to attend a financially-assisted course must inform the clerk with immediate effect and advise the reason for absence. If the clerk fails to attend a sponsored course then he or she should advise the chairman of the Finance Committee.

Failure to sit an examination may result in the council withdrawing future course funding and/or request the refunding of financial assistance. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

If the clerk should leave the employment of the council within two years of completing a financially-assisted qualification then he or she may be required to repay all costs associated with such training.

### **Evaluation of training and development**

Records shall be kept of all training and development undertaken by the clerk and councillors.

The clerk and councillors will provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training and development that they receive. They will seek to highlight to others the key implications of new legislation, guidance or best practice learned during training and thus help promote the continuing efficiency and effectiveness of the council.

### **Reporting and review**

The clerk will report annually to the full council detailing attendance at training and development events during the year.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

### **Freedom of Information**

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this document will be posted on the council's website and copies will be available for inspection upon request.