



Training and Development Policy

March 2026

Purpose and scope

This purpose of this policy is to set out the Parish Council's position on the provision of training and development opportunities for staff and Councillors. It applies to all staff whether full or part time, temporary or fixed term and volunteers.

Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs

Herne and Broomfield Parish Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all staff and Councillors to meet the Parish Council's aims and objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services for our Parish.

Herne and Broomfield Parish Council recognise that its most important resource is its staff and Members. It is committed to encouraging both to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training, some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all the legal and statutory requirements.

Training provides several benefits including:

- Improves the quality of service and facilities that Herne and Broomfield Parish Council provide.
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives.
- Improves the skill base of its Councillors and staff.
- Provides confident, highly qualified staff working as part of an effective and efficient team.
- Demonstrates that employees are valued.

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

- Induction and probationary periods
- One-to-ones
- Appraisal
- Workforce planning
- Team meetings
- Annual plan
- Change processes

In addition, the Parish Council will encourage staff to identify their own learning styles and 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

Consideration

Several factors will be considered when assessing a request from an individual. This policy provides one element of the decision-making process.

Other factors will include:

- Availability of finance through the training budget.
- The need of the training, giving the individual the ability to carry out their role.
- The individual's employment record.
- The implication of the employee being released for training on the operational capability of the Parish Council.
- The most economic and effective means of training.

To ensure that the Parish Council can consistently evaluate requests, training and development opportunities have been organised into three categories according to the degree of importance each intervention has for different roles.

Categorising training and personal development

The three categories are as follows:

1. Mandatory

Mandatory training is legally required or a qualification deemed to be so fundamental to the role, that the Parish Council makes it a mandatory requirement.

Any mandatory training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description for staff or stipulated to volunteers before they start. They should also be stated in the contract for new starters, along with whom is responsible for the costs of the training/qualifications.

Where a qualification becomes mandatory for the role, the Parish Council will provide reasonable assistance for the employee to attain the qualification (see the section on Guidance for Support below).

Some mandatory training may be specific to a particular job role whilst other training may be a generic requirement. Examples of mandatory training may include:

- Health and Safety at Work
- Fire Marshall
- First Aid at Work
- Manual handling
- Food Hygiene Level 2
- Data Protection

2. Desirable

Desirable training is not legally required but it is directly relevant to the individual's job or role within the Parish Council. Any desirable training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description or advised to the volunteer or Member.

For desirable qualifications or training, an individual may be recruited without having previously attained the qualification or undergone the training but may be expected to attain the qualification within a defined period.

The need for training may also be identified through one-to-one meetings or annual appraisals, or through discussion with the Chair of the Parish Council or Clerk.

A desirable qualification is likely to enhance the skills and reputation of the Parish Council. Examples may include:

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)
- Microsoft Excel

3. Optional

An optional qualification or optional training may not be directly linked to the individual's current job or roll. Optional training or development is generally more beneficial to the individual's career or development than it is for the Parish Council.

Personal development aimed at developing the skills or knowledge of an individual to provide a successor for an existing job is deemed to be optional. However, depending on the circumstances, training for succession may be 'desirable'.

- Community Governance Foundation Degree
- Town Planning Technical Support - Level 3 Diploma

Guidance for support

Since 2020 new contracts need to reference, any training provided by the employer. It should also note if there is a requirement to gain a qualification within a stipulated amount of time, or where it is required that a qualification is maintained. If it is possible that the employment will end if the qualification is not gained in the stipulated time, then the contract clearly should state this.

Support for qualifications, training and personal development can include:

- financial assistance towards the cost of tuition, examinations and resource materials,
- half / day release and time off for study leave and taking the examination.

Any financial and non-financial support to training and development is entirely at the discretion of the Parish Council.

Any financial support, including the offer of a loan, will always be conditional upon the employee's agreement to either a full or partial repayment of the financial support provided.

The Parish Council reserves the right to reclaim financial support where the employee;

- Leaves the council during the duration of the course, or up-to 2 years following completion of the course.
- Fails to complete the training
- Fails to attend training without good reason

Study leave

Where individual requires study leave to undertake mandatory training, they will be able to take all the leave within normal working hours.

Where individuals require study leave to undertake study which is not mandatory but part of the individual's formal continuous professional development, the Parish Council will contribute up to 50% of study leave time, to a maximum of 3 days per annum.

Where individuals require study leave to undertake training which is not mandatory but part of the individual's desire for career development, the council will contribute up to 3 days study leave per annum for courses which are directly related to the individual's role.

Time off for study leave must be approved in advance. To make a request the individual is asked to write to the Parish Clerk (or Chair of the Parish Council), setting out the details of the course of study, how it relates to their work, and the time being requested.

No study leave will be granted where individuals undertake study which is not required for their role or not directly related to their role. However, the Parish Clerk (or Chair of the

Parish Council) will consider requests for flexible working to allow the study to take place, if the needs of the Parish Council can be met.

Reporting on Progress

The Parish Clerk will report at the next applicable Finance & Resources Committee Meeting detailing attendance of staff, volunteers and Members at training since the last meeting, costs and evaluation of the training provided.

Conclusion

The adoption of a training and development policy should achieve many benefits for the Parish Council. It will assist in demonstrating that the Parish Council is committed to continuing professional development and enhancing the skills of both elected Members and its staff.