



Seaton Town Council Constitution

Chapter 18 Training & Development Policy

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1 Introduction

1.1 This document forms Seaton Town Council's ('the Council') Training & Development Policy for staff and councillors.

It sets out:

- The Council's commitment to training
- The identification of training needs
- Financial assistance
- Study leave
- Short courses/workshops
- Evaluation of training
- Links with other policies
- Reporting on progress

2. Commitment to Training

2.1 The Council is committed to the on-going training and development of all councillors and staff to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services for the people of the town.

2.2 The Council recognizes that its most important resource is its councillors and staff and is committed to encouraging both to enhance knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with legal and statutory requirements. The Council expects senior staff to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their requisite professional bodies and all staff to undertake training as deemed necessary to fulfil their duties on accordance with their contract of employment and job description. The Council requires all new councillors to undergo training and, thereafter, to attend training as appropriate to their responsibilities, such as finance or planning.

2.3 Training and development will be achieved by including a realistic financial allocation for training and development in the annual budget, as well as taking advantage of any relevant partnership or in-house provision available.

2.4 The process of development is as follows:

- i. Training needs should be identified by considering the overall objectives of the organisation, as well as individual requirements.
- ii. Planning and organising training to meet those specific needs.
- iii. Designing and delivering the training.
- iv. Evaluating the effectiveness of training.

3. The Identification of Training Needs

3.1 Staff will be asked to identify their development needs, with advice from their

line manager, during their annual appraisal or regular meetings with their line manager.

3.2 Other circumstances may present the need for training:

- Legislative requirements i.e. First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling
- Changes in legislation
- Changes in office software and systems
- New or revised qualifications become available
- Accidents
- Professional error
- Introduction of new equipment
- Complaints to the Council
- A request from a member of staff or councillor
- delivery of new services

4. Resourcing Training

4.1 An allocation will be made in the budget each year to fund technical literature, training fees and travel expenses. The amount will be reviewed annually.

4.2 The Council subscribes to the National Association of Local Councils, Devon Association of Local Councils, and The Society of Local Council Clerks, in order to receive regular up-dates on matters relevant to the sector and have access to the courses and conferences which are provided.

5. Financial Assistance

5.1 It is important to note that all sponsored training 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 will be considered on an individual basis and the benefits to the individual and the organisation will be identified.

5.2 Other considerations include the following:

- Implication of employee release for training course(s) on the operational capability of the Council
- The most economic and effective means of training
- Provision and availability of training budget

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

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

5.4 Councillor and staff attending assisted courses are expected to inform the Town Clerk immediately of any absences for any reason.

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

5.6 The Council operates a 'Return of Service Agreement'. Any staff member undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave the Council's employ within two years of completion of the qualification they may be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training. Each case to be reviewed by the Town Clerk, or in the case of the Town Clerk's training, jointly by the Chair of the Personnel Committee and the Chair of the Council.

6. Study Leave

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

- Study time to attend day-release courses
- Time to sit examinations
- Study time of one day per examination (to be discussed and agreed by line manager in advance)
- Provision of study time must be agreed with the line manager prior to the course being undertaken.

7. Short Courses/Workshops/Residential Weekends (including conferences)

7.1 Where staff attendance is required at a short course on a Saturday or Sunday, up to a normal working day of straight TOIL per day may be taken.

7.2 Councillors and staff attending approved short courses/workshops/residential weekends can expect the following to be paid:

- The course fee (usually invoiced following the event)
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Council's current policy
- Reasonable subsistence in accordance with the Council's current policy

8. Evaluation of Training

8.1 Records of all training undertaken by staff will be kept in the personnel files of each member of staff.

8.2 As part of the Council's continuing commitment to training and development, councillors and staff are encouraged to share information received and circulate training presentation papers for in-house training use. They are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training they undertake, highlighting the key implications of new legislation, guidance and/or best practice for the on-going efficiency and effectiveness of the authority.

9. Linking with other Council Policies

9.1 How will this link to the Council's other policies?

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of councillor and staff development
- Risk Management Policy — a commitment to Training and Development greatly assists in achieving good governance and an effective system of Risk Management
- Health and Safety Policy — on-going training and development is key to ensuring a positive approach to Health and Safety is embedded throughout the Council's activities

10. Reporting on Progress

The Town Clerk will report to the Personnel Committee, detailing attendance at training over the year including an evaluation of courses attended.

11. Conclusion

The adoption of a training policy should achieve many benefits for the Council.

Training will:

- Widen skills and experience
- Provide opportunities to network
- Provide the skills to confront challenges
- Encourage innovation
- Raise the standards of Seaton Town Council

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Council's Personnel Committee as to continuing fitness for purpose with recommendations for any changes made to the Council at the annual general meeting.

14. Freedom of Information

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this document will be posted on the Council's website www.seaton.gov.uk and copies of this document will be available for inspection on deposit in the Council's offices.