

IDEFORD PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Adopted by Ideford Parish Council on 2 September 2015

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1. Introduction

Ideford Parish Council is committed to ensuring that its' Councillors and staff are trained to the highest standard and kept up to date with all new legislation. To support this, funds are allocated to a training budget each year to enable staff and councillors to attend training and conferences relevant to their office. Prospective Councillors and applicants for the post of Clerk should be made aware of the content of this policy and the expectations placed upon them contained within it.

2. Policy Statement

Ideford Parish Council is committed to ensuring that it continues to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to electors, parishioners and parish residents in a professional manner. To that end the Council's intention is that the Councillors, Clerk and any other workers of the Council are suitably equipped with knowledge and skills to carry out their roles and maintain effective working practices. The Council will procure or provide such training and development opportunities as it deems necessary and relevant for the delivery of its work.

3. Training and Development Activity

Ideford Parish Council consists of seven elected Councillors and employs one part-time Parish Clerk. In addition, volunteers from within the Parish often provide invaluable support for its work. Training and development for each of these groups will be regularly reviewed but will contain as a minimum requirement:

3.1 For Councillors

- a. Attendance at induction sessions explaining the role of Councillors
- b. Provision of an Ideford Parish Council Councillor Information Handbook containing copies of the National Association of Local Councils "Good Councillors Guide", Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, policies of the Council and other information deemed relevant
- c. Training on the use of the General Power of Competence (if applicable)
- d. Access to relevant courses provided by bodies such as the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC).
- e. If authorised, expenses for attending briefings, consultations and other general meetings for Councillors in Devon
- f. Circulation of relevant documentation such as briefings, updates and newsletters.

3.2 For the Clerk

- a. Induction session explaining the role of the Clerk
- b. Provision of copies of the Standing orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, policies of the Council and other information deemed relevant.
- c. Attendance at a DALC New Clerks Short Course and a Responsible Finance Officers Course or similar.
- d. Encouragement to gain the *Certificate in Local Council Administration* (CiLCA) qualification. This would be essential if the Parish Council chose to obtain or needed to retain Quality Parish Council status.
- e. Any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as IT, Legal powers, Finance and understanding the planning system, identified through regular training needs assessments.
- f. Attendance at relevant local meetings of bodies such as the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and briefings by DALC.
- g. Subscription to relevant publications and advice services.

- h. Provision of the current edition of *Local Council Administration* by Charles Arnold Baker and other relevant publications, which will remain the property of the Council.
- i. Arranging mentoring opportunities with suitably qualified Clerks from neighbouring parishes.
- j. Regular feedback from the Chairman of the Council in their performance.

3.3 For Volunteers on Parish Council activities

- a. Briefings on relevant health and safety matters and the scope of their work prior to starting.
- b. Assessment of their skill, knowledge and capacity to complete the task in hand.
- c. Briefing on the safe use of any equipment provided by the Council.
- d. Training for volunteers will not be beyond that which is necessary for their role.

4. Training needs identification

- 4.1 Training requirements for Councillors will usually be identified by themselves, the Chairman or by the Clerk. Opportunities to attend courses will be investigated by the Clerk and brought to the attention of the Full Council.
- 4.2 Annually, the Council will formally review the training needs of Councillors and the Clerk at a meeting of the Parish Council.
- 4.3 Training needs for the Clerk will be identified through the recruitment process for new clerks, including application form and interview, formal and informal discussions and annual staff appraisal. The Clerk is expected to keep up-to-date with developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training required.

5. Resourcing Training

- 5.1 Annually, an allocation will be made in the budget as required to enable reasonable training and development.
- 5.2 Annually and in accordance with the Contract of Employment, the Council will consider an allocation in the budget for the payment of a subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks, Institute of Local Council Management and Devon Association of Local Councils to enable the Clerk and Councillors to take advantage of their training courses, conferences and legal and relevant legislative updates.
- 5.3 Purchases of relevant resources such as publications will be considered on an ongoing basis.

6. Evaluation and review of training

- 6.1 All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the Council to gauge its relevance, content and appropriateness. Any additional training needs highlighted as a result will be brought into the training identification process in section 4 above.
- 6.2 Training will be reviewed in the light of changes to legislation or any quality systems relevant to the Council; new qualifications; new equipment; complaints received or incidents which highlight training needs and requests from Councillors, the Clerk or volunteers.
- 6.3 The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by themselves and Councillors.