



## **Biggleswade Town Council**

### **Training and Development Policy for Councillors and Staff**

#### **Introduction**

Biggleswade Town Council recognises that its most important resource is its Members and officers and is committed to keeping them appraised of current issues and developing them to their potential. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

Training can be defined as “a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy current and future needs of the organisation” (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Encourage Members and staff to undertake appropriate training and development.
- Allocate training in a fair manner.
- Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value.

#### **Commitment to Training**

Biggleswade Town Council is committed to the 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 to the Town.

There are a number of benefits to training:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities provided by the Council.
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims & objectives.
- Demonstrates commitment to employees and acts as a motivator, attractor and retention aid.
- Improves the skill base of both Councillors and employees and aids team working.

#### **Councillors**

Members bring a vast range of skills and experience to the Council. However, both local government and the world around it are fast changing and it is a good investment to develop Councillors to their full potential. In addition, the Council is likely to have a number of a number of new functions over the next few years and it will be important that Councillors fully appreciate the implications.

The Council has established a comprehensive Development Programme for members, based on the following approach:

- Skills development for individual members or groups of members.
- Seminars, Briefings & Workshops to raise general awareness of topical issues.
- Briefings and awareness raising prior to making a key decision or policy.

The Programme is established following normal elections and is updated annually.

Certain training is identified as essential for all Councillors including Induction for new Councillors; General Power of Competence; Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework and Equality responsibilities.

Training needs are prioritised by the Personnel Committee following advice from the Town Clerk and completion of a questionnaire by Councillors.

## **Employees**

An annual training and development plan is also agreed by Personnel Committee for employees and volunteers. It is however flexible to accommodate new staff or newly identified needs.

Training needs are determined by the appraisal process and are set as targets for individual Staff members by the Town Clerk on a yearly basis. Training needs are also identified during the appointment process and by informal discussion. Although sometimes training does need to be prioritised, the Council do try to accommodate requests from staff which are reasonable and appropriate.

Certain staff are required to hold valid First Aider qualifications or be trained as fire wardens.

Training is prioritised on the following grounds:

- Legislative requirements e.g. health and safety.
- Changes in legislation.
- Changes in systems, new working methods or equipment.
- New or revised qualifications available.
- Unexpected need e.g. following a service failure or accident.
- Identified competence issue.

Corporate training is necessary for subjects including corporate objectives or working practices, equality, health and safety.

## **Funding**

Sufficient funds are allocated in the budget for Staff and Members for training purposes with a forecast of anticipated expenditure presented to Members for consideration each year as part of the Budget setting process. Separate budget headings are allocated for Members and Staff.

Where staff attend qualification courses they can expect support with course fees, examination fees, and associated membership fees. Failure to complete a course or sit an examination may result in Council funding being withdrawn. Each case will be considered on its merits. In appropriate cases study leave may be granted.

## **Delivery**

Members are offered a variety of training through Bedfordshire Association of Local Councils (BALC) and by inviting “guest speakers” to Council meetings. This is supplemented by internal briefings and external providers as necessary.

Corporate training is provided by BALC or other external providers. Most staff training needs are catered for by BALC or local colleges, again supplemented by specialist providers. Staff attending courses are encouraged to pass on what they have learned to colleagues where appropriate.

Some joint training with members is not only cost effective but often gives added value through a cross fertilisation of ideas.

## **Outcome**

All courses and seminars are evaluated by requesting staff and Councillors for feedback.

## **Policy Review**

This Policy was approved by Council on [date] following a recommendation by Personnel Committee.

The Policy will be reviewed 3 years after adoption to ensure it remains current and relevant.

The Training and Development Plan for Members and staff, will be reviewed and updated annually.

## Programme for Councillors 2016-19

This forms a rolling programme over the current and coming years. Priorities for the coming year are indicated. There has been a heavy frontload of training because of the needs of new Councillors and the changes which the Council are currently making.

Year	Priority for all	Training	Observations
<b>Skills Development for all Members or Groups of Members</b>			
2015/16	Yes	Equality Responsibilities	Delivered 03.03.16 by LCS
2016/17	Yes	Strategic Planning	Delivered 18.04.16 by LCS
2016/17	Yes	Etiquette at Meetings	Delivered 18.04.16 by LCS
2016/17	Yes	Localism Act & Public Services White Paper	Delivered 18.04.16 by LCS
2016/17	Yes	Medium Term Financial Planning & Concurrent Functions	Delivered 18.04.16 by LCS
2016/17	Yes	Delivering through a Quality approach	Delivered 18.04.16 by LCS
2016/17	Yes	The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations	Delivered 18.04.16 by LCS
2016/17	Yes	General Power of Competence	
2016/17	Yes	25 Things every Councillor should know-overview refresher	
2016/17	Yes	Ethical Framework & Code of Conduct	
2016/17	Yes	Neighbourhood Planning-current thinking	
2017/18	Yes	Health & Safety Responsibilities	
2017/18	Yes	Local Council Finances, budgets and accounts	
2017/18	Yes	Introduction to Planning System/development applications	
2017/18		Operating a Market	
2017/18	Yes	Freedom of Information Act	
2017/18	Yes	Data Protection Act	
2017/18		Operating Allotments	
2018/19		Urban design considerations for commenting on planning	
2018/19		Local Plan, Minerals Plan and Waste Plan	
2018/19	Yes	Audit Regulations	
2018/19		A local Council's role in the environment	
2018/19	Yes	Operating a CCTV service	
2018/19	Yes	A local Councils Role in the environment	
2019/20		Induction for new Councillors	
2019/20	Yes	Governance Documents inc. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	
2019/20	Yes	Etiquette at Meetings	
2019/20	Yes	25 Things every Councillor should know-overview refresher	
2019/20		Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults	
2019/20		Safety for volunteers	
2019/20		Working in the Community	
2019/20	Yes	Local Council Finances, budgets and accounts	
<b>Skills Development for individual Members- available if any Member requests them</b>			
2016/17	Yes	Use of tablets	
		Basic IT Skills	
		Using the Internet	
		Chairmanship skills	
		Mediation Skills	
		Social Media	
		Marketing & Communication skills	
		Report writing	
		Project Management	

<b>Seminars &amp; Workshops to raise general awareness of topical issues</b>			
		Roles of other public bodies influencing the area	
		Historical context of Biggleswade	
	Yes	Update on legislation affecting local Councils	
2016/17	Yes	Where is Localism going & effect of EU referendum	
		Government Departments and Quangos	
<b>Training or Awareness Raising, prior to making key decisions</b>			
2016/17	Yes	Picking priorities for the Corporate Strategy	Delivered 18.04.16 by LCS
2015/16	Yes	Emergency Planning	
2017/18	Yes	Taking on Devolved Services	
		Responsibilities for closed church yards	

### Programme for Staff 2016-20

Year	Training	Observations
<b>Rob McGregor</b>		
2016/17	Mentoring prior to taking CiLCA	Ongoing
2016/17	CiLCA	
2016/17	Equality responsibilities	Completed
2016/17	Strategic Planning	Completed
2016/17	Etiquette at Meetings	Completed
2016/17	Localism Act & Public Services White Paper	Completed
2016/17	Medium Term Financial Planning & Concurrent Functions	Completed
2016/17	Delivering through a Quality approach	Completed
2016/17	The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations	Completed
2016/17		
2016/17		
<b>Mike Thorn</b>		
2016/17	Strategic Planning	
2016/17	Etiquette at Meetings	
2016/17	Localism Act & Public Services White Paper	
2016/17	Medium Term Financial Planning & Concurrent Functions	
2016/17	Delivering through a Quality approach	
2016/17	The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations	
2016/17		
2017/18		
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