Hartlip Parish Council

Clerk to the Council:
Mr C Henley
2 Alfriston Grove, West Malling, Kent ME19 4SR
e-mail: clerk@hartlippc.gov.uk

Document Control

Title	Training and Development Policy
Document Type	Advisory
Author	Clerk / Full Council
Owner	Hartlip Parish Council
Subject	Training
Created	August 2023
Approved by	Full Council
Date Approved	14 May 2025
Minute Reference	358.FCM/05/25
Review Date	March 2026

TRAINING and DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1 Introduction

1.1 This document forms the Council's Training and Development Policy. It sets out:

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

1.2 The objectives of this strategy are to:

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

2 Commitment to Training

2.1 Hartlip Parish Council is committed to the on-going training and development of all Members and officer 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/village.

2.2 According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2007), 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." Learning and development describes the formal, on-going efforts that are made within organizations to improve the performance and self-fulfilment of their officer and Members through a variety of educational methods and programs.

2.3 Hartlip Parish Council recognises that its most important resource is its Members and officer and is committed to encouraging both Members and officer to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

2.4 The Council expects officer to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their requisite professional bodies.

2.5 Providing training yields a number of benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that Hartlip Parish Council provides;
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives;
- Improves the skills base of the officer and Members;
- Produces confident, highly qualified officer working as part of an effective and efficient team; and
- Demonstrates that the officer and Members are valued.

2.6 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.

2.7 The process of development is as follows:

1. Training needs should be identified by considering the overall objectives of the organisation, as well as individual requirements.
2. Planning and organising training to meet those specific needs.
3. Evaluating the effectiveness of training.

3 The Identification of Training Needs

3.1 Officer 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. There are number of additional ways that the training needs of officer may be recognised:

- Questionnaires
- During formal interview/review
- Following confirmation of appointment.
- Formal and informal discussion

3.1 Members will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from the appropriate body or person: i.e. committee or nominated Leaning & Development Officer during their periodic development review or regular meetings with the L & D officer. There are a number of additional ways that the training needs of Members may be recognised:

- Questionnaires
- During review
- Following election/co-option
- Formal and informal discussion

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 systems
- New or revised qualifications become available
- Accidents
- Professional error
- Introduction of new equipment
- New working methods and practices
- Complaints to the Council
- A request from a member of staff
- Devolved services / delivery of new services

3.3 Officer who wish to be nominated for a training course should discuss this in the first instance during their appraisal; where it will be determined whether the training is relevant to the Council's needs and/or service delivery.

4 Corporate Training

4.1 Corporate training is necessary to ensure that officer are aware of their legal responsibilities or corporate standards e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equal Opportunities. Officer will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where suitable training is identified.

5 Financial Assistance

5.1 It is important to note that all supported 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.

In order to best ensure cost effectiveness, Members and officer will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required course, unless an alternative is authorised by the Full Council in the interest of operational effectiveness or Best Value.

5.2 Other considerations include the following:

- Implication of officer 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 which provide a recognised national qualification Members and officer can expect the following to be sponsored:

- The course fee
- Examination fees
- Associated membership fees
- One payment to re-take a failed examination

5.4 Members and officer attending assisted courses are required to inform the Clerk immediately of any absences, giving reasons.

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 Hartlip Parish Council operates a Return of Service agreement. Any officer undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave the Council's employment within two years of completion of the qualification they will be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training.

5.7 If the officer takes up employment with another Local Council an exemption to this clause may be granted.

6 Study Leave

6.1 Officer 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 Evaluation of Training

7.1 Records of all training undertaken by officer will be kept in their personnel file.

7.2 As part of Hartlip Parish Council's continuing commitment to training and development, officer are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training they undertake highlighting in particular the key implications of new legislation, guidance and/or best practice for the on-going efficiency and effectiveness of the Council.

8 Linking with other Council Policies

8.1 Relationship with other Council policies:

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of Member and officer development;
- A training policy and training record for both Members and officer is a requirement for the accreditation of the national Local Council Award Scheme;
- 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;
- Undertaking training is a clear indication of Continuing Professional Development.

If a councillor attends a training course they will share the knowledge with other councillors and officer.

9 **Reporting on Progress** – The Clerk as appropriate will report annually to the Full Council, detailing attendance at training over the year, as well as the inclusion of the Member and officer evaluation of courses attended.

10 Conclusion

10.1 The adoption of a training or learning and development policy should achieve many benefits for

the Council. It will assist in demonstrating that the Council is committed to continuing professional development and enhancing the skills of both Members and officer.

10.2 The adoption of a training or learning and development policy has a practical implication for Hartlip Parish Council's budget and ensures that the Council is aware of the implication of its commitments and allocates adequate and appropriate funding in a long term and sustainable platform that supports these aspirations and commitments.

Appendix 1:

11 Commitment to Officer and Members

11.1 Hartlip Parish Council has a fully integrated policy in the field of training and Learning and Development based in this document and the commitment to funding in its regular budget. Hartlip Parish Council supports the concept of investing in life-long Learning and Development for members and officer and will commit part of its budget on a regular sustainable basis. The Council will work closely with the Kent Association of Local Councils and avail itself of the resources of the SLCC and other bodies as appropriate to ensure high quality Learning and Development programmes.

11.2 Hartlip Parish Council makes the following commitment to its members: that every new Member of the Council whether elected or co-opted will be trained to an adequate standard as set out by the Council and reflecting prevailing accepted standards within a year of taking office. In addition skills audits will be acted upon to ensure specialist members receive additional training along with the bulk of the Council to take account of legislative changes and new initiatives.

11.3 Hartlip Parish Council makes the following commitment to its officer of the Council that they will be trained to an adequate standard as set out in prevailing legislation, Local Authority standards and reflecting the aspirations of the Council as soon as possible upon appointment and on an on-going and rolling programme reinforcing professional development.

TEMPLATE TRAINING PLAN

Name	Course	Provider	Date	No. of hours	Budget Cost