



SAFFRON WALDEN
TOWN COUNCIL

Training Policy

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Introduction to Training

Saffron Walden Town Council is committed to achieving high standards throughout the Council. SWTC recognises the need for staff, Councillors and volunteers to receive adequate and appropriate training so that they may perform their duties and functions with skill, knowledge, competency and to the best of their ability.

The Town Council further notes that appropriate training will equip staff, Councillors and volunteers with appropriate competencies, skills, knowledge and experience to meet the requirements of the Saffron Walden Town Council and to offer a first-class service to the town and residents of Saffron Walden.

Saffron Walden Town Council will support staff, Councillors and volunteers on training programmes and will commit to providing access to training and personal development on a fair and equitable basis and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.¹ Training needs will be based upon the requirements of the Town Council and its core objectives and investment in training will have due regard to the Council's needs as well as the personal development and needs of the individual.

The Town Council commits to setting a training budget on an annual basis to allow continued personal development for both staff and Councillors alike. This Training Policy does not however, seek to prescribe the sums required for the budget and this will be a decision of Full Town Council as part of the budget and precept setting process on an annual basis.

¹ Equality Act 2010, c. 15 Part 6 Chapter 2

Employee Training

All employees will be provided with appropriate training and development necessary to perform their duties to the required standards working within a safe environment and in accordance with any over-riding legislation or Town Council policies.

The Town Council will support training opportunities and prospects for all employees which encourage or improve the standards of their work. The Town Council recognises that training will lead to:

- Qualified and competent staff
- High standards of performance
- Improvement in staff morale
- Professional development
- Effective and efficient use of resources
- Job satisfaction
- Increased motivation for staff

Training will be identified through the Council's appraisal process and will be recorded in the Personal Development Plan for all employees. Training may further be identified through information provided to the Town Council via advertisements (eg from County Association) and details of these will be circulated to staff, ordinarily via their Line Managers.

In determining the suitability and appropriateness of training, the following steps will be taken:

1. Line manager / employee identifies a course of interest.
2. Line managers liaises with the Responsible Financial Officer to analyse the benefit of the course versus the costs involved and if it is within the training budget.

The Line Manager (who may consult with others), will determine the request and advise the employee accordingly of any decision made as follows:

3. Training request is refused:
 - a. Line manager informs the employee and explains why (i.e., outside the employee's job role, not within budget)
4. Training request is approved:
 - a. Line manager informs the employee
 - b. RFO purchase orders the training
 - c. Employee signs onto course and informs administrator to update training record

The effectiveness of training will be evaluated and employees will be required to complete a post-training evaluation form to monitor the effectiveness of the training received and how new information or skills learnt may be implemented within the workplace.

In completing any training provided by SWTC, employees will:

- d. Confirm attendance with their Line Manager and provide a copy of any attendance certification, competency certificate, CPD rewards or similar;
- e. An Administrator will update centrally held employee training records to ensure a formal recording of training attended;
- f. The employee will complete an internal post-training evaluation form (provided by Line Manager)
- g. The employee and Line Manager will jointly review the completed evaluation form, assessing the cost/benefit of the training and these details will be further recorded with internal training records.

An example of questions posed in the post training evaluation form as follows:

<i>Date and name of course</i>	
<i>Who delivered the course</i>	
<i>Why did you attend the course</i>	
<i>Did the course meet your expectations and please explain your response</i>	
<i>Did you learn anything new, if so what.</i>	
<i>Did you find the course valuable if so, please give an example why.</i>	
<i>Would you recommend the course to a colleague</i>	
<i>Any other comments</i>	

Please return to your line manager

Core Training for Employees

Induction Training: Saffron Walden Town Council has an induction programme and training which will be provided to all new employees. The induction training seeks to provide an overview of the Town Council and its services, including an introduction to all other staff, Councillors and 3rd party partners and organisations. The Induction programme helps to settle new staff into the work place as well as providing opportunities for early training to be identified.

Health and Safety Training: All employees will receive training relating to the Council's Health and Safety policy and obligations. All employees will receive a copy of the Council's Health and Safety booklet and copies of those Risk Assessments pertinent to their role.

Town Council Policies: All employees will be provided with an overview of the Council's policies with specific reference to those most pertinent to the role which they perform. A copy of the Council's corporate aims and objectives will be supplied to all employees.

Information Technology: The level of competency and skills required by an individual will be noted within their job description and person specification. The Town Council is committed to the use of IT and technology and all employees are encouraged to undertake IT training appropriate to their needs. All new employees will be provided with staff log-ins and access to the appropriate software (where this is needed for the furtherance of their work); specific training to any in-house software will be provided as part of the induction programme.

To note when training volunteers a specific training programme will be provided with inclusion of the above to ensure it is relevant to their role, this will be in line with the separately adopted SWTC Volunteer policy.

Performance Management: All personnel involved in the delivery of appraisals will undertake training on Performance Management to ensure that the post holder is sufficiently competent and knowledgeable to assist in the setting of key aims and objectives for the Town Council and further to conduct staff appraisals. Such training may be sourced from external bodies including (but not limited to) SLCC, NALC, ACAS or any provider which the Town Council may employ in its furtherance in improving the overall performance and service delivery of the Council.

Repayment of Fees (Professional or Academic Qualification)

The Town Council will support training leading to a professional or academic qualification, where the qualification is directly related to the employee's role and responsibility. Applications for funding will be considered by the Council's Personnel Committee and with reference to the individual's employment performance and appraisal, the Council's aims and objectives and the Council's training budget. All applications will be considered in accordance with the Council's Equality Policy.

In the event that an employee does not complete the course, they will be required to reimburse the Town Council for 100% of any registration, course fees or exam fees. Exceptions may be granted only in extreme circumstances, for example due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances.

If an employee leaves the employment of the Town Council they will be liable to repay the Town Council the following:

100% of the fees if the employee leaves whilst still undertaking the course

75% of the fees if the employee leaves within one year of completing the course

50% of the fees if the employee leaves within two years of completing the course

Councillor Training

Training for Councillors will be identified through a number of forums and processes including (but not limited to):

- Upon election or co-option to the Council
- Upon election to the position of Chair or Committee Chair of the Council
- Upon appointment to a Town Council Committee for which specific training would be advantageous (ie appointment to the Planning or Finance Committee)
- Upon appointment to the Appraisal Panel (for the appraisal of the Clerk)
- Upon introduction of legislation or new procedures at SWTC
- Upon the request of an individual Councillor
- Upon review of training courses and opportunities offered by the County Association

Induction Training for Councillors

Saffron Walden Town Council has an induction programme and training which will be provided to all new Councillors. The induction training seeks to provide an overview of the Town Council and its services, including an introduction to staff, Councillors and 3rd party partners and organisations. The Induction programme helps to settle Councillors into their role as a Councillor and provides opportunities for early training to be identified.

The Induction Training will incorporate an introduction to the following elements of Town Council life and business and may be delivered by a range of personnel including, the Clerk, Monitoring Officer from Principle Authority, Local County Association, NALC, SLCC or other known sources and training providers.

- **Council's Aims and Objectives** – an overview of the Council's aims and objectives
- **Budget** for the current year – an overview of the set budget, expenditure to date, committed expenditure to year end
- **Finances** – an introduction to the financial management reports, as presented on a monthly basis to the Finance Committee
- **Projects** – an introduction to key projects of Saffron Walden Council
- **Powers and authority of:** The Town Council as a body, Councillors, staff
- **Standing Orders** – an introduction to Standing Orders and the use and operation of same at Saffron Walden Council
- **Financial Regulations** – an introduction to Financial Regulations and the use and operation of same at Saffron Walden Town Council
- **Committee Terms of Reference** – noting the delegated powers and responsibilities of Committee and those matters for consideration by Council
- **Councillor Code of Conduct** – an introduction to the Code of Conduct for SWTC and the Nolan Principles, the role of the Monitoring Officer at the Principle Authority
- **Town Council Policies** - Councillors will be provided with an overview of the Council's policies and provided with a copy of all current policies

- **Health and Safety** - All Councillors will receive training relating to the Council's Health and Safety policy and obligations. Councillors will receive a copy of the Council's Health and Safety booklet.

Documents: The following documents will be provided (either in paper or electronic copy) to all Councillors:

- Contact details for all staff and Councillors (in accordance with GDPR ²)
- Staff Structure and outline of staff roles and responsibilities
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Committee Terms of Reference
- Code of Conduct
- The Good Councillor's Guide (NALC)
- The Good Councillor's Guide to Finance and Transparency (NALC)
- The Good Councillor's Guide to Being a Good Employer (NALC)

² GDPR effective from 25th May 2018, as part of the Data Protection Act 2018

Other Training Opportunities for Councillors

Planning: Planning training will be offered to all Councillors and is particularly relevant to Members of the Council's Planning Committee. Training will include a review of the National Planning Policy Framework, a review of the Local Plan and policies and how these can be used in the Council's response to planning applications

Information Technology: The Town Council is committed to the use of IT and technology and Councillors are encouraged to undertake IT training pertinent to their needs which will assist and support them in the furtherance of their duties as a Councillor

Performance Management: All personnel involved in the delivery of appraisals will undertake training on Performance Management to ensure that the post holder is sufficiently competent and knowledgeable to assist in the setting of key aims and objectives for the Town Council and further to conduct staff appraisals. Such training may be sourced from external bodies including (but not limited to) SLCC, NALC, ACAS or any provider which the Town Council may employ in its furtherance in improving the overall performance and service delivery of the Council or training may be delivered in house. Two Councillors will be involved in the appraisal of the Clerk and it is a requirement that those carrying out this function on behalf of the Council, undertake Performance Management training may be delivered in house.

Training offered by the County Association: The County Association has a calendar of annual training events which aid and support Councillors in their role and duties. Councillors will be provided with regular updates and details of these opportunities.

Saffron Walden Town Council further commits to ensuring that its Councillors are trained and equipped in the furtherance of their duties. Training will be provided to Councillors to meet needs as and when required and will be sourced from the most appropriate trainer.

If a Councillor wishes to attend third party appropriate training, the administration of this should be conducted through SWTC Officers to ensure records are maintained and the cost is within the scope of the Town Council's budget. Councillors will also be asked to complete a post training evaluation form.