TRAINING AND DEVELOPEMENT POLICY

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

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1. Objectives of the Training and Development Policy

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Encourage Members and Officers to undertake appropriate training to ensure that they have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles.
- Equality of awarding training and development opportunities
- Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value
- Recognise that it is essential to develop the abilities of individuals and satisfy not only current needs but future needs of Yeovil Town Council.

2. Introduction

This document forms Yeovil Town Council's Training and Development Policy. It sets out:

- The Council's commitment to training and development
- The identification of training needs
- Compulsory training
- Training delivery
- Assistance to study (financial and time)
- Short courses/workshops
- Members training and development
- Evaluation of training
- Links with other policies
- Reporting on progress.

3. Commitment to Training

Yeovil Town Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Members and employees to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives. Yeovil Town Council recognises that the most important resources are its Members and Officers and its commitment to

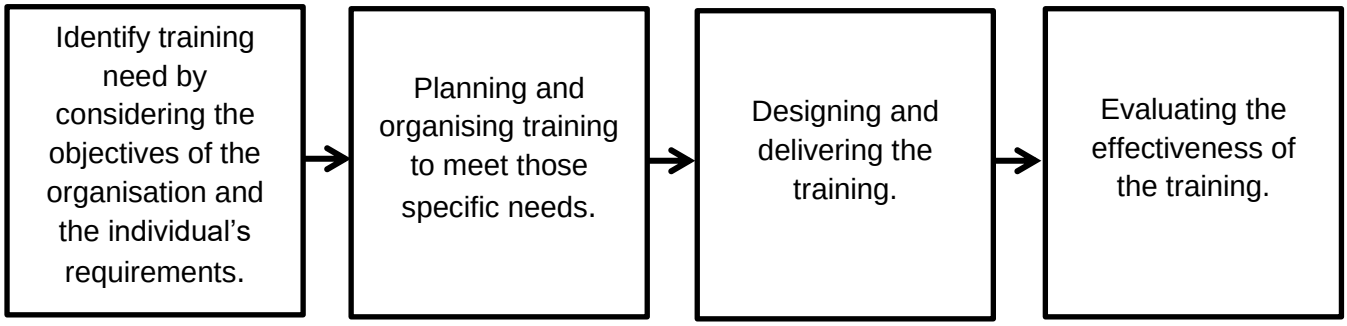
encouraging all to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with legal and statutory requirements.

Training provides the Council with many benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that Yeovil Town Council provides
- Enables the organisation to effectively achieve its corporate aims and objectives
- Improves the skill base of employees, producing confident, highly skilled Officers working as part of an effective and efficient team
- Provides resilience
- Demonstrates that employees are valued.

Yeovil Town Council has a dedicated budget to support the training and development of its Members and Officers, which is reviewed on an annual basis.

The process of training and development:



4. Identification of Training Needs

Employees will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from their line manager during their annual appraisal.

There are a number of additional ways that training needs of both Members and Officers may be recognised:

- Questionnaires (skills audit)
- During interview
- Following confirmation of appointment
- Formal and informal discussion.

Other circumstances may present the need for training:

- Statutory, legislative and Health & Safety requirements
- Service developments and delivery needs
- Personal development and continuous professional development.

5. Compulsory Training

Where statutory or legislative training needs are identified by the Council, it will be mandatory for Officers to attend and the Council will endeavour to accommodate this within normal working hour. Failure to attend may result in disciplinary action.

6. Training Delivery

Learning, training and development opportunities are available in many forms including:

- Formal training courses
- Conferences and network meetings
- Shadowing, coaching and mentoring
- Distance and E-learning
- Guided reading
- On the job training
- Continuous Professional Development
- Work experience and secondment

It is not necessary for Members to undertake formal Planning training before they can vote on planning applications at Planning Committee. Although it is essential that they undertake training from the clerk of the Planning Committee.

7. Financial Assistance

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.

Other considerations include the following:

- Implication of employee release for training courses on the operational capability of the council
- The most economic and effective means of training
- Provision and availability of training budget.

For approved courses Members and Officers can expect the following to be sponsored:

- The course fee
- Examination fees
- Associated Membership fees

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

Yeovil Town Council operates a Learning Agreement. Any employee undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave Yeovil Town Council employment within two years of completion of the qualification they will be required to repay costs associated with the undertaking of such training proportionate to the remaining time within this two-year period (eg 50% of costs after one year). If the employee takes up employment with another Local Authority this agreement may be waivered. Any challenge to repayment of costs will be heard by the Staffing Committee.

8. Study Leave

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, up to a maximum of three days

9. Short Courses/Workshops/Residential Weekends

Where attendance is required at a short course, a full day of paid leave will be granted

Members and Officers attending approved short courses/workshops/residential weekends can expect the following to be paid:

- The course fee
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Council's current policy
- Subsistence in accordance with the Council's current policy.

10. Members Training and Development

Members are responsible for their own personal development and are advised by the clerk after consulting with the Chairman of Policy, Resources and Finance Committee of the range of training opportunities. New Members are particularly encouraged to attend training as part of their induction and existing Members should attend courses as relevant to keep their knowledge up to date.

Training is regularly provided by NALC (National Association of Local Councils), SALC (Somerset Association of Local Councils). No Member of the Planning Committee is permitted to vote unless they have undertaken the relevant training delivered by SALC.

Member training relevant to their role will be paid for by the council and Members must book training through the clerk. If a Member fails to attend training paid for by the council, they may be asked to refund any costs incurred; those costs will be recovered from Members' Allowances.

For training outside Yeovil Town, Members are entitled to claim mileage, accommodation and subsistence expenses in the normal way.

11. Evaluation of Training

Records of all training undertaken by employees will be kept in the personnel files of each Officer. Records will be maintained all training undertaken by Members.

As part of Yeovil Town Council's continuing commitment to training and development, employees are asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training they undertake highlighting in particular the key implication of new legislation, guidance and/or best practice of the ongoing efficiency of the authority.

12. Links with other Council Policies

- Equality of opportunities in all aspects of Member and officer development
- Risk Strategy – a commitment to Training and Development greatly assists in achieving good governance and an effective system of Risk Management
- Health and Safety Policy – ongoing training and development is key to ensuring a positive approach to Health and Safety is embedded through the authority.

13. Reporting on Progress

A central record of all Member and officer training will be maintained by the Clerk. A report will be made annually to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee, detailing attendance at training over the year, as well as the inclusion of Member and Officers evaluation of courses attended.

14. Conclusion

The adoption of this training policy should achieve many benefits for the Council. It will assists in demonstrating that the Council is committed to continuing professional development and enhancing the skills of both Elected Members and Officers.

Yeovil Town Council
26th September 2023
To be reviewed: September 2028
(subject to changes in legislation, recommended practice, operations)