

Canvey Island Town Council

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Introduction

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

- The Council's commitment to training
- The identification of training needs
- Financial assistance and budget process
- Study leave
- Short courses/workshops
- Evaluation of training

The objectives of this policy are to:

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

Commitment to Training

Canvey Island Town Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors and employees 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 residents of the town.

The Town Council recognises that its most important resource is its members and officers and is committed to encouraging both members and officers to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

Providing training yields a number of benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that the Town Council provides;
- Enables the organisation to achieve its aims and objectives;
- Improves the skill base of the employees, producing confident, highly qualified staff working as part of an effective and efficient team; and
- Demonstrates that the employees are valued.

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.

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. Informing the Policy & Finance committee of the training, providing details of the costs and any available budget.
3. Planning and organising training to meet those specific needs.
4. Evaluating the effectiveness of training.

The Identification of Training Needs

Employees will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from the Clerk/Council during their annual appraisal or regular meetings with the Clerk/Council. There are a number of additional ways that the training needs of both members and staff may be recognised:

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

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

Employees who wish to be nominated for a training course should discuss this in the first with the Clerk; where it will be determined whether the training is relevant to the authority's needs and/or service delivery.

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.

In order to best ensure cost effectiveness, members and employees will be required to attend the nearest college/venue offering the required course, unless an alternative is authorised by the Policy & Finance Committee in the interest of operational effectiveness.

Other considerations include the following:

- Implication of employee 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

For approved courses members and employees can expect the following to be sponsored:

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

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

Members and officers will provide 100% reimbursement to the Council of costs incurred if:

- He/she voluntarily withdraws from or terminates a course early without prior written consent from the Council;
- He/she is dismissed or compulsorily discharged from a course, unless the discharge is due to the course being discontinued

Failure to sit an examination or attend a course may result in the Council withdrawing future course funding.

In the event that a member of staff resigns or leaves the employment of the Council and:

- a course has been funded with no opportunity of a cancellation or the ability of the course being used/attended by another employee, the member of staff will be required to reimburse 100% of the costs incurred;
- a course has been started by the member of staff, the member of staff will be required to reimburse 100% of the costs incurred;

In the event that a member of staff resigns following the completion of a funded course, qualification or membership fees, the following reimbursement will be required:

- if the members of staff ceases employment within 12 months, 100% of the costs will be repayable;
- if the members of staff ceases employment more than 12 months but less than 24 months, 50% of the costs will be repayable;
- if the members of staff ceases employment more than 24 months but less than 36 months, 25% of the costs will be repayable;

Costs repayable as detailed within this policy will be deducted from the member of staff's final salary (as defined in Section 27 of the Employment Rights Act 1996) or from any other allowances, expenses or other payments due to the member or member of staff.

Study Leave

Employees who are given approval to undertake qualifications are granted the following:

- Study time to attend day-release courses
- Time to sit examinations
- Study time (to be discussed and agreed by the Clerk in advance)

Short Courses/Workshops

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

- The course fee (usually invoiced prior to the event)
- Travelling expenses in accordance with the Council's current policy

Evaluation of Training

Records of all training undertaken by employees will be kept in a central training file. As part of the 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 implications of new legislation, guidance and/or best practice for the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of the authority.