



Barrowby Parish Council

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Training and Development Policy

Document control

- **Owner:** Full Council
- **Responsible officer:** Clerk / Proper Officer
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- **Next review due:** January-March 2027 at Full Council for formal adoption at Parish Council May 2027

1. Purpose of this policy

Barrowby Parish Council is committed to ensuring that councillors and employees have the knowledge, skills and support needed to carry out their roles effectively, lawfully and professionally.

The Council recognises that training and development are essential to:

- good governance and lawful decision-making;
- effective service delivery;
- sound financial management;
- high standards of conduct and accountability;
- health, safety and wellbeing;
- keeping up to date with changes in legislation, guidance and best practice; and
- supporting continuous improvement across the Council.

This policy applies to all councillors and employees of the Council.

2. Scope

For the purposes of this policy, training and development may include:

- induction training;
- formal training courses, seminars and conferences;
- online training and webinars;
- briefings from professional bodies or advisers;
- networking events relevant to council business;
- mentoring and peer support;
- in-house training sessions;
- private study, professional reading and research relevant to council duties; and
- continuing professional development.

3. Principles

The Council will:

- make reasonable budget provision each year for training and development;
- encourage a positive learning culture;
- support training which is relevant to a person's role and council business;

- seek to ensure that training opportunities are allocated fairly and appropriately;
- keep a record of training undertaken;
- review training needs regularly; and
- make reasonable adjustments where needed to support attendance and participation.

Training should be relevant, proportionate and provide value to the Council.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Full Council

Full Council is responsible for:

- approving this policy;
- setting an annual training budget;
- considering and approving training expenditure in accordance with the Council's financial arrangements;
- supporting induction and ongoing development for councillors and staff; and
- promoting a culture of good governance and continuous improvement.

4.2 Clerk

The Clerk will, so far as is appropriate to the role:

- identify training needs arising from changes in law, procedure, service delivery or council priorities;
- bring relevant training opportunities to the attention of councillors and employees;
- maintain or arrange the maintenance of a central training record;
- report significant training undertaken where relevant to council business; and
- help share learning, updates and guidance across the Council.

Where the training request relates to the Clerk, approval should be given by the Council or by the committee/person authorised to manage staffing matters, rather than by the Clerk acting alone.

4.3 Employees

Employees are expected to:

- undertake training relevant to their role when reasonably required or approved;
- identify development needs through appraisal or at other appropriate times;
- apply learning in their work where appropriate; and
- share key learning points, updates or materials where useful to the Council.

4.4 Councillors

Councillors are expected to:

- undertake appropriate induction and ongoing training relevant to their role;
- attend training identified by the Council as essential or strongly recommended;
- keep themselves informed about their responsibilities, including standards and governance requirements; and
- share relevant learning where appropriate for the benefit of the wider Council.

5. Induction

5.1 Employees

New employees should receive induction appropriate to their role. This may include:

- the Council's structure, services and decision-making processes;
- the employee's role and responsibilities;
- key policies and procedures;
- health and safety;
- data protection, information governance and records management;
- council systems, equipment and working arrangements;
- homeworking, lone working and IT/cyber security requirements, where relevant; and
- introductions to relevant contacts, advisers and professional bodies.

5.2 Councillors

New councillors should be offered induction as soon as reasonably practicable after election or co-option. This may include:

- the role of the parish council and councillor responsibilities;
- the Code of Conduct and standards regime;
- declaration of interests and meeting procedure;
- governance, finance and accountability;
- planning, where relevant;
- data protection and information handling;
- equality, inclusion and civility/respect expectations; and
- the Council's key policies and current priorities.

As good practice, councillors should complete core induction and standards-related training early in their term of office. Sector guidance continues to stress the importance of councillor conduct, governance and ongoing development.

6. Training needs

Training needs may be identified through:

- staff appraisal or supervision;
- induction;
- legislative or regulatory change;
- changes to council services, projects or responsibilities;
- audit recommendations;
- new committee or lead roles;
- incidents, complaints or governance lessons learned; and
- requests from councillors or employees.

The Council may also identify certain training as essential for particular roles.

7. Core and role-specific training

The Council may from time to time identify core training areas for councillors and employees.

These may include:

- Code of Conduct and standards;
- data protection and information governance;
- finance and audit;
- health and safety;
- equality, dignity and respectful behaviour;
- planning;
- employment or staffing matters;
- procurement and contracts;
- community engagement and communications; and
- safeguarding awareness where relevant to council functions.

Additional role-specific training may be approved where a councillor or employee has particular duties or is appointed to a specific area of work.

8. Approval of training

Training should normally be approved in advance in accordance with the Council's budget and financial procedures.

Approval may take account of:

- relevance to the individual's role;
- benefit to the Council;
- cost and available budget;
- whether the training is essential, desirable or optional;

- availability of suitable alternatives; and
- any urgency arising from legal or operational need.

Where urgent training is needed between meetings, it may be approved in accordance with the Council's delegated arrangements and reported back to Council as appropriate.

9. Payment of fees, expenses and time

9.1 Employees

Where employee training is required or approved by the Council, the Council will normally meet the agreed reasonable costs, which may include course fees and any authorised associated expenses.

Attendance at approved training which forms part of an employee's duties will normally be treated as working time, subject to the employee's contract and any relevant council policies or procedures.

9.2 Councillors

The Council may pay the reasonable cost of approved councillor training and associated expenses, subject to budget provision and the Council's rules on authorisation and reimbursement.

10. Professional membership and CPD

The Council recognises the value of relevant professional membership and continuing professional development.

Where approved by the Council, the Council may pay for relevant professional membership or subscription fees where these support the employee's or councillor's role and benefit the Council.

Where the Clerk is a member of the Society of Local Council Clerks or another appropriate professional body, the Council may support this membership and related CPD activity where approved.

11. Sharing learning

Anyone attending externally funded or Council-funded training may be asked to provide a short verbal or written update on key points relevant to council business.

Useful learning materials, legal updates and examples of best practice should be shared, where appropriate, with councillors and relevant employees.

The purpose of feedback is to support organisational learning, not to create an unnecessary administrative burden.

12. Training records

The Council will maintain a record of training undertaken by councillors and employees.

The record may include:

- name;
- role;
- date of training;
- provider;
- subject;
- whether the training was induction, refresher or specialist; and
- any follow-up action identified.

Training records should be retained in accordance with the Council's data protection and records management arrangements.

13. Equality and accessibility

The Council will seek to ensure that training opportunities are accessible and that no councillor or employee is unfairly disadvantaged in access to training.
Reasonable adjustments will be considered where required.