



North Hykeham Town Council

Councillors' Training and Development Policy

Introduction

As a Council striving for Quality Council status, North Hykeham Town Council is committed to ongoing training and development for its' Councillors for effectiveness and in carrying out their roles.

All Councillors are elected officers of the Council and represent the whole electorate. Councillors must actively take part in Council meetings and help make Council decisions. Council business must be run effectively, efficiently and legally. In order to achieve this, it is desirable for all Councillors to receive training so that they can fully understand what is expected of them and can demonstrate to the electorate that they carry out their duties to a high standard and to the best of their ability.

This policy outlines the responsibilities of the Council towards its Councillors and the training and development that will be provided, as well as the responsibilities of Councillors to undertake training and development. Individual circumstances vary and it is possible that not all training needs will be met by this policy.

The Council maintains records of all training undertaken, including training provided by the Council (in whole or in part) and, wherever possible, training undertaken independently. This helps the Council to identify all the skills available within the Council, and when a training update may be required.

COUNCILLOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

New Councillor Induction

All new Councillors will be expected to complete an in-house induction training session. The induction programme aims to develop knowledge with an understanding of:

- the Council and the general day-to-day systems that are in place;
- procedures specific to the role of the new employer;
- the Code of Conduct for Councillors;
- essential health and safety requirements, including the procedures for foreseeable emergencies;
- the confidentiality of company information; and
- other formal policies.

The induction programme is reviewed regularly and updated in line with current requirements.

Identifying Training Needs

Individual and Council wide training needs are identified and assessed on a continual basis. Training may be required to meet the specific needs of an individual, for a group of individuals or for the Council.

In order to establish each Councillors' training needs, each Councillor must complete a Training Request Form at the start of each Council year listing the areas they would like training on and preferred method

of training. The Town Clerk will endeavour to match the training available to the training requests. The submitted training requests for each Councillor should be reviewed every six months.

Each Councillor will have a Record of Training which will record all training received. These will be maintained by the Town Clerk. Copies will be available to each Councillor on request.

Training should improve or update knowledge and skills. Councillors participating in training must do so fully and make their best effort to complete the training successfully.

External Courses

The Council may consider a Councillor's request for formal qualifications, in line with the role of the Councillor and/or the needs of the Council.

LALC Opportunities

LALC offers courses specific to Councillors such as:

- New Councillor – an introductory session for new Councillors explaining the role of local Council, powers and duties, policies and procedures or a refresher for more experienced Councillors.
- Councillor Training – in-depth courses for Councillors covering such topics as powers & duties, policy and procedure, financial management, employment, meeting procedures and planning.
- Chairman & Clerk - working together and how to create a good agenda, take notes effectively and produce clear and concise minutes, followed by successful meetings and correct Council procedures. This is for current and future Chairpersons.

Councillors may undertake more specific training courses as the need arises and dependent on any specific responsibilities that are associated with certain roles e.g., Mayoral / Deputy Mayor, Chairmanship etc.

LALC provides other courses e.g., Health & Safety and Fire Safety which are open to all Councillors as well.

Similar to employees, external training can be pursued for Councillors based on the requirements of Council in order that they may fulfil their objectives.

Training Fees

At the annual budget meeting, provision to be made to ensure there is sufficient funds budgeted to meet training requirements.

In-house training provided by other members of the Council or professional bodies, i.e., Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC), may not incur any costs to the Council.

The Council will cover the cost of Councillor training if a request is approved. The amount paid by the Council may be recovered from the Councillor if the Councillor fails to complete the training course.

Personal Development

Councillors may identify other training in which they wish to participate and can request support from the Council. Each request will be considered on its merits. Where training is identified by the Councillor but is not regarded by the Council as essential to the requirements of the Councillor's role, the Council may, at its discretion, contribute towards fees but is under no obligation to do so. All requests for non-essential training will be considered on an individual basis by the Town Council.

Use of Council Equipment / Resources

Councillors are granted permission to utilise the Council provided laptop for training purposes.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Training

After attending a training session, the Councillor and the Town Clerk should have an informal discussion about the course content to highlight any changes and/or improvements to Council procedures as a result of the training. Benefits of the training should also be shared with other Councillors.

REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis or as legislation or best practice dictates.