

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Members' Learning and Development Policy & Procedures

First Adopted: 01 April 2019 (Min 1755).

Last Reviewed: 8th June 2020 (Min 1838)

Next Review: July 2021

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Adopted by Staplehurst Parish Council on 01 April 2019 (Min 1755).

Reviewed without amendment on 08/06/20 (Min 1838).

1. INTRODUCTION

Staplehurst Parish Council is an organisation in which learning is valued. Parish Councillors will be supported to undertake the training and development which they need to help them achieve and maintain high standards of knowledge and performance.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. Encourage Councillors to undertake appropriate training, learning and development whether in-house and or externally;
- 2.2. Allocate training in a fair manner;
- 2.3. Evaluate all training for utility and value for money; and
- 2.4. Provide financial support to attend training.

3. ENTITLEMENTS

The Council shall:

- i. Pay the reasonable costs of external training and development courses; and
- ii. Provide induction courses for all new Councillors, usually in-house and tailored to each individual's requirements to allow understanding of the role and the Council's objectives.

4. NEW COUNCILLORS

- 4.1. New Councillors will be provided with a "New Councillors' Pack" when joining the Council.
- 4.2. New Councillors will be invited to in-house training by the Parish Clerk, as soon as practicable, following election (or co-option). All new councillors should be provided with an introduction programme into their own roles as well as the workings of the Council and how it fits into the Government structure.
- 4.3. New Councillors are encouraged to attend suitable courses for "new councillors".

5. ALL COUNCILLORS

- 5.1. All Councillors will be afforded the opportunity to engage in training and development in Parish Council matters including duties of a Councillor, Code of Conduct, Roles & Responsibilities, etc.
- 5.2. All Councillors will be afforded training opportunities in appropriate courses, in relation to their role in the Council, including Chairmanship, Planning, Finance, etc.
- 5.3. Councillors are encouraged to attend refresher training courses.
- 5.4. Training needs will be addressed through meetings and ascertaining from Councillors which courses would be appropriate for them to attend, this should be reviewed annually by the Finance & Strategy Group and the Parish Clerk.
- 5.5. If the whole Council requires training on a particular subject, the Parish Clerk will source the appropriate qualified person to attend.

6. TRAINING NEEDS

Training may be required to cover, inter alia, the following:

- i. Legislative requirements
- ii. Changes in legislation
- iii. Changes in systems
- iv. New or revised qualifications becoming available
- v. Accidents
- vi. Professional error
- vii. Introduction of new equipment/software
- viii. New working methods and practices
- ix. Complaints to the Council
- x. Devolved services/delivery of new services

7. CORPORATE TRAINING

Corporate training may be required as appropriate to ensure that Councillors are aware of the legal responsibilities or corporate standards (i.e. Health and Safety, Risk Management and Employment).

8. KEEPING THE COUNCIL UP TO DATE / SUPPORT FOR THE COUNCIL

The Council pays an annual subscription to Kent Association of Local Councils and also to Society of Local Council Clerks for the Parish Clerk and Deputy Clerk & Finance Officer. Regular publications are received from both organisations and the websites are monitored for training opportunities.

9. RECORD KEEPING

A record of training by Councillors will be kept by the Parish Clerk. If in another capacity a Councillor attends training which is relevant to the role as a Parish Councillor, he/she may ask for this event to be recorded by the Parish Clerk.

10. RESOURCES & FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- 10.1. The Council will make appropriate provision and development in its annual budget.
- 10.2. Councillors will be entitled to claim for travel and subsistence expenses occurred when traveling to a training course outside the Parish of Staplehurst. This will be from their home address to the address of the training venue. The rates and allowances for travel and subsistence expenses can be found in the Council's Members Allowance Policy.
- 10.3. Councillors will be entitled to claim for subsistence which relates to activities within this policy where they are kept from their normal place of residence for significant periods of time at certain times of the day. Subsistence will only be paid upon the production of a receipt for the purchase of the required meal.
- 10.4. Should the Parish Office arrange accommodation, the Council will settle invoices directly.
- 10.5. For the case of childcare arrangements, the Council's Members Allowance Policy should be referred to.