



# HOLYBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

## Training and Development Policy

### 1 Introduction

1.1 Holybrook Parish Council is committed to ensuring our councillors, staff and volunteers are trained to the highest standard and kept up-to-date with all new legislation. To support this, funds are allocated to a training budget each year to enable staff and councillors to attend training and conferences relevant to their office. Prospective councillors and applicants for the post of Clerk will be made aware of the content of this policy and the expectations placed upon them.

For clarity when 'staff' are referenced in the body of this document the term is to include volunteers <sup>1</sup> to the council.

### 2 Policy statement

2.1 Holybrook Parish Council is committed to ensure that it continues to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to residents professionally. To that end, the Council's intention is that Councillors, the Clerk and all other staff members of the Council are suitably equipped with the correct knowledge and skills to carry out their roles and maintain effective working practises.

2.2 The Council will procure or provide such training and development opportunities as it deems necessary and relevant for the delivery of its work.

2.3 It is essential that Councillors and staff are given equal opportunity to develop their knowledge of local government and the law relating to parish councils and to learn new skills to promote partnership working and community engagement. Councillor and staff development should be regarded as an integral part of the Council's business.

2.4 It is Holybrook Parish Council's intention is to:

- a) Support and encourage the training and development of knowledge of councillors and staff to help achieve the objectives of the council and that the council can lead a modern and progressive Parish Council of the future;
- b) Regularly review the needs of councillors and employees;
- c) Plan training and development opportunities and budget accordingly.

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<sup>1</sup> At the present time Holybrook does not have any volunteers.

### 3 Training and development for councillors

3.1 Councillors will be encouraged to attend training to help them operate and develop as a councillor. Training and development for each of the Councillors will be reviewed regularly but will contain, as a minimum requirement:

- a) **Within 7-days of the date the councillor is elected:** Provision of a Councillor Information Pack which includes: 'The Good Councillor Guide', copies of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and a list of the policies of the council and any other information deemed relevant;
- b) **Within 2-months of becoming a Councillor:** attendance at induction session explaining the role of the Council, councillors and the Clerk. This training will be conducted by The Clerk;
- c) **Within 6-months of becoming a Councillor:** review the training session provided by Wellers Headley: 'Core Councillor Training Workshop';
- d) **On becoming elected Chairman (including committees)<sup>2</sup>:** attend training session provided by Wellers Headley: Chairman's Training Workshop.
- e) **When training need arises/identified:** Access to relevant courses provided by bodies such as The Society for Local Council Clerk's;
- f) **Ad hoc:** Circulation of relevant briefings, newsletters and magazines.

3.2 The council will reimburse travel expenses<sup>3</sup> incurred for attending briefings, consultations and other general meetings for councillors (other than those provided with in the Parish).

### 4 Training and development for the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer<sup>4</sup>

4.1 The Clerk will be encouraged to attend training to help them operate and develop as a Clerk. Training and development for the Clerk will be reviewed regularly but will contain, as a minimum requirement:

- a) **On the first day of employment:** provision of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, policies of the council and any other information deemed relevant;
- b) **Within three months of employment:** attendance at an induction training course explaining the role of the council, councillors, Clerk and other staff;

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<sup>2</sup> Unless the councillor has already attended the training as vice-chairman or chairman of a committee previously.

<sup>3</sup> Paid at the rate set by HMRC (currently £0.45 per mile). It is not expected that any councillor will exceed the 10,000 mile threshold.

<sup>4</sup> At the present time, at Holybrook Parish Council, the Responsible Financial Officer and Clerk is the same employee and will, therefore, for the continuation of this document be referred to as Clerk.

- c) **Within 12-months of employment:** Commencement the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA<sup>5</sup>).
- d) Provision of suitable mentoring if required (this may be via telephone, email, online meeting or in-house).
- e) Provision of any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as information technology, legal powers, finance and understanding the planning system;

4.1 The council will reimburse travel expenses <sup>6</sup> incurred for attending briefings, consultations and other general meetings for councillors (other than those provided with in the Parish).

4.2 The Council will ensure that the Clerk has access to support documentation/information/groups including:

- a) Subscriptions to relevant publications, advice services and membership of the SLCC;
- b) Provision of Local Council Administration by Arnold-Baker and Claydon, and other relevant publications, which will remain the property of the council;
- c) Participation in local clerks' forums and events.

4.3 The council will endeavour to support the Clerk's professional development, which might include:

- a) Financial assistance towards the cost of tuition, examinations and resource materials;
- b) Allocated study leave;
- c) Time-off for any relevant learning courses or examinations.

4.4 Such support is entirely at the discretion of the council or as delegated to the appropriate committees (see Terms of Reference for Committees: Finance and Human Resources)

## 5 Ways of Identifying training and development needs

New councillors, member of staff/Clerk will automatically trigger a need for training (reference paragraphs 3 & 4 above and 5.5 below)

5.1 Training requirements for established Councillors will on-going and usually identified by themselves, the Chairman and Clerk (see paragraph 3 for training for new councillors or becoming a chairman) or on a change of role within the council i.e. joining a new committee. Opportunities to attend courses will be investigated by the Clerk and brought to the attention of the full council.

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<sup>5</sup> Holybrook Parish Council does not currently meet the criteria for the General Power of Competence. However, it is anticipated that all criteria will be met after the elections in 2023 and it will, therefore, after this time, become an employment condition.

<sup>6</sup> Paid at the rate set by HMRC (currently £0.45 per mile). It is not expected that any councillor will exceed the 10,000 mile threshold.

5.2 Training needs for the Clerk will be identified, initially, through the recruitment process for new Clerks, including the application form and interview, and then through formal and informal discussions and annual staff appraisals.

5.3 The Clerk is expected to keep up-to-date with developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training required (for both staff members, themselves and the council/councillors).

5.4 Annually the Council will formally review the training needs of Councillors and the Clerk at a meeting of the Parish Council.

5.5 Training needs for staff (other than the Clerk) will be identified from:

- a) Induction and probationary periods;
- b) One-to-ones;
- c) Appraisals;
- d) Annual strategic planning.

5.6 Training requirements may also be identified through accidents, changes in legislation and changes to the services offered by the council.

## 6 Budget for training

6.1 An allocation will be made in the budget each year as needed for training and development, based on a review of needed for training and development needs.

6.2 Purchases of relevant memberships, subscription and training and resources such as publications will be considered on an ongoing basis.

6.3 The Council will pay the entirety of the course fees for all training needs formally identified and agreed;

6.4 Where applicable, the Council will reimburse travel mileage for courses that have been formally identified and agreed<sup>6</sup>.

## 7 Evaluation of training efficacy

7.1 All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the Clerk to gauge its relevance and effectiveness. Training will be reviewed in light of changes to legislation or any quality systems relevant to the council, its services, new qualifications, new equipment, from complaints received, incidents which highlight training needs and requests councillors and staff.

7.2 All Councillors and staff attending training courses will be asked to complete a 'Training Course Evaluation Form' which will be used in assessing the effectiveness of the training provided.

7.3 Training effectiveness reviews will take place with staff/clerk within six-months of the training being provided and/or ideally aligned with standard appraisals.

7.4 The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by all councillors and staff.

## 8 Policy Review

8.1 This policy shall be reviewed by the Human Resources committee at least annually and any recommendations for alterations shall be presented for full council approval.

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| <b>Date Policy Adopted:</b> | Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> November 2022 |
| <b>Date of Next Review:</b> | November 2023                        |