

# Lane End Parish Councils Training and Development Policy

## Introduction

Lane End Parish Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all Councillors, staff and volunteers to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services for the local community within the Parish.

Lane End Parish Council recognises that its most important resource is its Councillors, staff and volunteers and is therefore committed to encouraging the development of their knowledge and qualifications through further training. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.

Training needs should be identified by considering the overall objectives of the Council, as well as individual requirements. By providing training, Lane End Parish Council aims to improve the quality of Council services and facilities, the skill base of staff and demonstrate that staff are valued and develop Councillors knowledge. This should enable Council to achieve its objectives, which are as follows:-

1. To engage, whenever possible, in an open dialogue with residents, to understand their needs, and to explain how the Council will address these needs within the resources and powers available.
2. To understand the issues and aspirations of residents and promote these ideals for the future.
3. To provide high standard cost-effective services.
4. To enable, assist and encourage other local organisations and agencies to provide services.
5. To promote and represent the best interests of the village for the betterment of the local community.
6. To encourage and promote the economic and commercial vitality of the village through partnerships and other means.
7. To encourage and promote social and community values in the village by working in co-operation and supporting, where practicable, local organisations and groups.
8. To embrace progress, improve the quality of life and healthy living.

The Council pays an annual subscription to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (BMKALC), to enable staff and councillors to take advantage of their training courses and conferences. Details of any training undertaken by Councillors, staff and volunteers will be recorded.

## Responsibilities

Training requirements for Councillors will usually be identified by themselves, the Chair and Clerk. Opportunities to attend courses will be investigated by the Clerk and brought to the attention of the full council.

Training needs for the Clerk will be identified through the recruitment process for new clerks, including application form and interview, formal and informal discussions, annual appraisals and changes in legislation.

Training needs for employees will be identified through the recruitment process. Thereafter, employees are responsible for identifying their own training needs, which should be relevant to their role and in agreement with the Clerk, who will arrange for the training to be delivered. The clerk may recommend suitable training courses. Appraisals will also identify training needs.

Ultimately, all Councillors and staff have a responsibility to ensure they are fully and suitably equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil the Council's objectives.

The clerk is expected to keep up to date with developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training required.

The Clerk is responsible for identifying the training needs of volunteers.

Staff, Councillors and Volunteers understand that the training fee and travelling expenses will be paid for by the Council provided that the Clerk has given authorisation and receipts/invoices are supplied. Staff, Councillors and volunteers attending training events are required to inform the Clerk immediately if there is a possibility of non-attendance, stating the reason, e.g. sickness.

#### **The Clerk/RFO will be:**

- Provided with a contract of employment,
- Receive an employment and salary review annually from the council,
- Encouraged to attend relevant BMKALC and SLCC clerks training courses,
- Encouraged to gain the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) & higher qualifications,
- Undertake any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as IT, legal powers, finance and planning which is identified through their Personal Development Plan (PDP),
- Encouraged to attend relevant local meetings such as Clerks forum and briefings; able to subscribe to relevant publications and advice services including the SLCC and NALC,
- Provided with all relevant publications such as the Local Council Administration reference book and the SLCC Clerks Manual,
- Entitled to paid study leave in order to work towards the qualifications.

#### **Training for Staff**

Staff will be expected to undertake training which is relevant to their role. Where attendance is required at a training event or conference, paid leave will be granted to staff.

Due to the variation in roles, staff training needs will cover many different areas and impose additional training responsibilities on the Council in managing the health, safety and welfare of its staff.

Staff of Lane End Parish Council report directly to the Clerk.

Each member of staff should have a personal development plan (PDP), this is an action plan that can be used to identify:

- individual goals and what you want to achieve,
- strengths and weaknesses,
- the areas you need to improve and develop to meet your goals,
- what you need to do to achieve your goals,
- anything that could hinder your progress.

#### **Training for Councillors**

- Attendance at induction sessions explaining the role of a councillor, such as BMKALC training course for new councillors – within six months of the date on which they are elected or co-opted.
- Councillors with primary responsibility for specific areas of work will receive relevant training within six months of the date on which they take on the specific role. For instance, those responsible for finance will receive basic finance training, those responsible for planning will receive planning training, including how to respond to planning applications.
- The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Council shall receive Chairmanship skills training as soon as possible but within six months of the date on which they are elected as Chairman.
- Attendance at relevant courses provided by external bodies or online courses, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (BMKALC) related to the Council's aims and objectives, as and when required and within three months of a training need being identified.
- New Councillors, upon appointment will receive the following documents and information (other policies are available on the Council website or by request):
  - Declaration of Acceptance to Office
  - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests
  - Contact Details
  - Standing Orders
  - Financial Regulations
  - Code of Conduct
  - Dignity at Work Policy
  - Equality and Diversity Policy

- Training and Development Policy
- Good Councillor's Guide
- The Good Employer Guide
- Working Group Terms of Reference.

### **Data protection training**

Lane End Parish Council ensures that those with day-to-day responsibility for enabling the demonstration of compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and can demonstrate competence in their understanding of the GDPR and good practice, and how this should be implemented within Lane End Parish Council.

The Clerk keeps records of the relevant training undertaken by each person who has this level of responsibility.

Lane End Parish Council also ensures that these staff members remain informed about issues related to the management of personal information, where appropriate, by contact with external bodies.

Lane End Parish Council maintains a list of relevant external bodies, the most important of which is the Information Commissioner's Office - <https://ico.org.uk/>

Lane End Parish Council ensures that all staff understand their responsibility to ensure that personal information is protected and processed in accordance with the Parish Council's procedures, considering any related security requirements.

### **Volunteer Training**

Lane End Parish Council recognises the vital role and contribution of volunteers. The Parish Council aims to ensure that all volunteers can work with us in a safe and supported environment.

- Volunteers must be adequately trained, skilled and equipped to enable them to carry out the role and tasks required. The exact nature of the training, skills and equipment will depend on the role and the findings from the Risk Assessment.
- A Risk Assessment will be undertaken to identify any risks that might be faced and how they will be managed. The Parish Clerk will provide a template Risk Assessment to the lead organiser of the volunteering activity and a completed copy must be returned and approved by the Parish Clerk before any volunteering activity may be undertaken. A visual inspection of the work area must also be carried out and relevant information/ photos recorded in or attached to the Risk Assessment prior to work commencing.
- The risk assessment should include as a minimum:
  - A full description of the volunteering activity,
  - The date, time and specific location (including postcode) where the activity is taking place,
  - An assessment of the site detailing any risks and how they will be managed,
  - How First Aid will be accessed,
  - The minimum competency/ capability required from volunteers,
  - The circumstances of the work e.g. the degree of supervision required,
  - Details of any tools and/or equipment being used,
  - Training/ skills requirements.
- The training standard must be sufficient to ensure the Health and Safety of volunteers and any people who might be affected by the work.
- All volunteers must be over 16 years of age unless being supervised by an adult parent/ carer who is also a registered Parish Council volunteer.
- Where appropriate, volunteers will be provided with any necessary PPE, tools and training to enable them to carry out agreed tasks. If volunteers provide their own tools, they do so at their own risk. Lane End Parish Council cannot be held liable for any injury caused by inappropriate use of any equipment/tools, or through the use of faulty equipment/tools provided by volunteers.
- Where appropriate, volunteers will receive an induction into Lane End Parish Council and their own area of work. Training will be provided where appropriate.
- Volunteers must be informed about the task and its purpose, health, safety and supervision arrangements.

## **Budget & resources**

Relevant budgetary headings of suitable amounts will be included within the Council's overall Annual Budget to cover training and development, annual subscriptions and the purchase of related publications.

Expenses for essential items and travel carried out on behalf of the Parish Council will be met providing this is agreed in advance with the Parish Clerk.

An expenses Form must be completed and submitted to the Parish Clerk within 30 days of the first item of expenditure.

Volunteers must not purchase any items or incur travel that they intend to claim expenses for without prior approval of the Parish Clerk.

## **Evaluation and review of training**

All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the Council to gauge its relevance, content and appropriateness. Any additional training needs highlighted as a result will be brought into the training identification process.

Training will be reviewed in the light of changes to legislation or any applicable regulations relevant to the Council: This will include requirements for new qualifications; new equipment; complaints received; incidents which highlight training needs; requests from the Clerk, Councillors or volunteers.

The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by themselves and Councillors.

**Status** - This policy was adopted by Lane End Parish Council on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024.

To be reviewed in two years, or sooner should legislation dictate.