

Marlborough Town Council

Training, Development, and Appraisal Policy

Author: Town Clerk

Date Adopted: 8 11 22

Review Date: November 2025



Policy Statement

Marlborough Town Council recognises that its services are reliant on both its employees and councillors. It recognises there are a range of relevant competencies key to their roles. The Council is committed to ensuring its staff and councillors receive suitable, needs led training.

The Council also recognises the need to enable staff and councillors to learn and develop within the workplace environment, and as such supports an overall organisational approach that emphasises experiential learning equally alongside accountability.

The Council aims to ensure its staff and councillors are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their duties and ensure an effective Council operation and positive service outcomes.

The Council encourages and expects all staff to receive adequate appraisal, supervision, and training and to support their personal development.

The Council is committed to considering the training and development needs of its staff and councillors as an integral part of the Council's annual budgeting considerations and will endeavour to commit an adequate amount of resources to ensure these needs can be met. The Council also recognises the need to ensure time is allowed either within the operational framework, or otherwise as the need requires.

The Council recognises the responsibility and effectiveness of this policy rests on the Council corporately, and the individual's willingness to participate; and that this requires all parties to positively contribute to the positive learning environment within the organisation.

The Council also acknowledges appropriate training is necessary to ensure compliance with all legal or statutory requirements.

Introduction

1. This policy sets out the ways in which the staff training and development needs will be met. It covers a number of aspects which combine to create this Policy. Some areas concern themselves with the value base of the Council, whilst others outline policies and procedures.
2. The areas covered are:
 - Experiential learning in the workplace
 - Scope of Training Need
 - Framework for Development and Capability
 - One to one supervision
 - Staff Appraisal process
 - Resource and Constraints
 - Delegated authority
 - Approval for attending training
 - Training log
 - Equality
 - Policy review and effectiveness

Experiential Learning in the Council environment

3. With the right approach and supervisory framework, the Council workplace experience can be a highly effective environment to enable learning and the development of staff. There is a significant cost benefit inherent in this approach, as well as a positive inward reinforcement of organisational capability already held within the Council. E.g. Succession planning could be supported by encouraging and enabling staff in different staff roles to swap duties and functions for time limited periods.

4. Maximizing the benefits and outcomes of this approach requires the positive recognition, participation, adoption, and management of an experiential learning methodology by everyone. In order to implement this approach effectively a developmental management approach is required, coupled with three simple steps;
 1. Planning (what am I going to do?)
 2. Action (do it)
 3. Review (reflection)
5. All of the three steps contribute to good practice. The Council recognises the inherent benefits of this methodology and encourages both staff and councillors to utilise this approach, and the three steps outlined above.
6. Critical to ensuring this methodology achieves continuous improvement, the review and reflection stage should have two focusses;
 1. What went well?
 2. What could I/we do better?
7. The Council recognises the adoption of this approach, as an inherent aspect to all council business activities will, contribute to the positive continuous development of the Council and its services.

Scope of Training Need

8. Staff members will need a range of training to ensure the right level of collective competence is held within the Council. Staff training should be needs led and serve to ensure the business needs of the Council are effectively met. This should be monitored and recorded by the Town Clerk. The training could come in different ways and be relevant in such a way that reduces any identified skill or knowledge gap.
9. The Council recognises that Councillors also may need support when meeting challenges of their role. New Councillors need to understand the parameters of the role, and to build up their knowledge and skills. Equally experienced Councillors may need to refresh their skills and knowledge in order to remain current with evolving policies.
10. The training required should be delivered within the limits of the allocated training budget unless there is an extra ordinary and urgent need to safeguard the Council's interests.
11. Training requests should be made using a '*training request form*' submitted to the Town Clerk.
12. To make effective use of public funds, Where possible training should be undertaken in groups of staff or councillors unless there is a specific reason to support individual training.

Framework for Development and Capability

13. The Council's capability will to be developed via an operational framework that in addition to training includes;
 - **One to one staff supervision** every 6-8weeks, or as needed.
 - **Staff Team meetings** to enable contextual communication, briefings, and collaborative thinking; these can be extended to include Councillors.
 - **Staff Annual Appraisals** regarding performance of the staff member's role.
 - **One to one support** for individual Councillors upon request in relation to their responsibilities or skills, for example chairing meetings or planning.

One to one Supervision

14. The supervisory process has two aspects; scheduled and informal one to one times, to help monitor the employee's performance, capability, and wellbeing within the workplace experience.
15. One to one supervision should be a positive two-way reflective process between line manager and employee, with clear items for discussion via an agenda set at the time of supervision by either party. Both parties should come prepared to enable matters raised to be discussed productively.
16. The supervision time should be seen as a safe place that enables two-way communication and on work matters. Where relevant actions are agreed and noted.
17. Supervision should be treated with confidentiality by both parties. The exception to this is where the integrity of the Council is threatened or compromised, or where an issue, highlighted via the supervisory process, that presents a safeguarding risk.

Staff Annual Appraisal Process

18. A Staff Performance and Development Appraisal will be completed annually by the Town Clerk or other relevant officer. It should take account of the role and functions. The purpose of the staff appraisal process is to appraise current work performance, set objectives for the next year, and assess learning needs. The annual appraisal process should be seen as a developmental exercise, and not confused with the procedures of the Council.
19. Where significant training and development need is identified that exceeds the available budget, a clear business case for should be presented to the Finance and Policy Committee for consideration.

Delegated Authority

20. The Council delegates responsibility to the Town Clerk to lead on the overall implementation of this policy, including use of the Training Budget.

Approval for attending Training

21. All training requests must be approved by the Town Clerk prior to attending, who may seek approval by the Finance and Policy Committee.
22. Where cost implication is minimal, staff and councillors should make the Town Clerk aware prior to attending.
23. All Staff and Councillors will be kept informed by the Town Clerk of relevant training courses and conferences particularly those offered by Wiltshire Association of Local Councils and the National Association of Local Councils.

Training Log

24. The Town Clerk will keep a record of all training attended by both staff and councillors.

Council Funded Courses

25. Councillors and employees attending courses are expected to inform the Town Clerk immediately of any absences. Failure to sit an examination may result in the Council withdrawing future course funding and / or requesting the refunding of financial assistance. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.
26. The Council operates a Training Costs Agreement. Any employee undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave the Council within two years of completion of the qualification they may be required to repay all or part of the costs associated with the undertaking of such training. Each case will be reviewed and determined by the Town Clerk and confirmed in writing with the staff member before funds are committed.

Equality

The Equality Act 2010, s149 places a duty on public authorities to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act, and requires it to;

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant Protected characteristics and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This Act underpins employment practice and should be reflected in the Council's Employment Policies and Procedures.

27. Marlborough Town Council is committed to equal opportunities and will not discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, religion, marital status, or disability in its considerations within the scope outlined in this report.

References

28. Local Government Act 1972, the Localism Act 2011, the Nolan principles, and the Employee Rights Act 1996, Equalities Act 2010

Policy review and effectiveness

29. This Policy will be reviewed every three years, or as needed, by the Finance and Policy Committee, in conjunction with the Town Clerk.

