

EAST GOSCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY



Approved by: Full Council

Date: 16th March 2026

Last reviewed: 24th July 2023

Next review due: March 2028

Training and Development Policy

1. Introduction

East Goscote Parish Council is committed to ensuring that all councillors and staff have access to appropriate, effective training and development. High-quality training enables the Council to understand community needs, deliver services efficiently, and work confidently with partners. The Council values the time and commitment given by members and aims to ensure that everyone is equipped to carry out their role effectively, lawfully, and with confidence.

Training includes, but is not limited to:

- attendance at formal courses and conferences
- online learning
- mentoring and peer support
- informal networking, including national and local e-forums
- reading and private study

The Council expects all councillors and staff to embrace continuous learning and to remain aware of current issues affecting the local government sector and the local community.

A training budget will be allocated annually to support councillor and staff development.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to:

- all employees, whether full-time, part-time, temporary or fixed-term
- all councillors, including newly elected or co-opted members

It covers induction, ongoing training, professional development, qualifications, financial support, study leave, and evaluation.

3. Training Principles

The Council will:

- allocate an annual training budget
- maintain membership of LRALC, NALC and SLCC to access sector-specific training
- encourage participation in training from all appropriate providers
- ensure training materials and learning are shared across the organisation
- take note of any matters arising from training that should be pursued or implemented
- implement best practice procedures where training identifies improvements

Anyone attending training must report back to the Council on the relevance, value and effectiveness of the training. Training outcomes will inform future development needs.

3.1 Responsibility for Procuring and Providing Training

The Clerk is responsible for procuring, coordinating, and where appropriate delivering training to ensure councillors and staff are suitably equipped with the skills and knowledge required to fulfil their duties.

3.2 Contractual Requirements for Training and Qualifications

All employment contracts issued or updated after 2020 will specify:

- any mandatory qualifications required for the role
- the timeframe for achieving such qualifications
- who is responsible for funding
- any requirement to maintain the qualification
- potential implications if a mandatory qualification is not achieved

Where a qualification becomes mandatory after employment has commenced, the Council will provide reasonable support to enable the employee to achieve it.

4. Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS)

Where the Council seeks accreditation under LCAS, training activity will support compliance with the scheme and evidence will be retained.

5. Identifying Training Needs

Training needs will be identified through:

- induction and probation
- one-to-one discussions and annual appraisals
- workforce planning
- team meetings
- changes in legislation or best practice
- councillor self-identification
- recommendations from the Clerk or Chair
- the Council's annual plan
- individual learning styles and preferred training methods

The Clerk will keep up to date with sector developments and highlight training needs to the Council.

6. Categories of Training

6.1 Mandatory Training

Training legally required or fundamental to the role, including:

- Health & Safety
- Data Protection
- Display Screen Equipment
- Manual Handling
- Any qualification specified as essential in a job description or contract

6.2 Desirable Training

Training directly relevant to the role but not legally required, including:

- CiLCA (where not mandatory)

- job-specific skills

6.3 Optional Training

Training supporting personal development or succession planning. Where optional training enhances Council capacity or resilience, it may be reclassified as desirable.

6.4 Consideration of Training Requests

When assessing requests, the Council will consider:

- relevance to the role
- budget availability
- operational requirements
- attendance and performance record
- consistency of decision-making

7. Staff Training and Development

7.1 General Approach

Staff are fundamental to service delivery and must be trained to carry out their duties effectively. Annual appraisals will identify training needs, and staff may raise training requests at any time. The Council may require staff to undertake training where necessary.

7.2 Clerk Qualifications and Professional Development

The Clerk will:

- be a member of SLCC (subscription paid by the Council)
- hold CiLCA or work towards it with full Council support
- use Council documents as evidence for the CiLCA portfolio
- undertake CPD in line with the National Training Strategy
- attend LRALC/SLCC branch meetings, conferences, forums and briefings
- attend relevant local clerk forums and networking groups
- maintain an up-to-date CPD record

Assistant or Deputy Clerks are encouraged to follow the same pathway.

7.3 Support and Financial Assistance

Support may include:

- payment of course fees
- paid time to attend training
- paid study leave
- payment for additional hours worked while completing CiLCA
- provision of learning materials, including the *Local Council Administration* reference book and SLCC Clerks' Manual
- mentoring or coaching
- contribution to regional or national conference costs

Where financial support exceeds a defined threshold, a repayment agreement may be required if the employee:

- leaves during the course or within one year of completion
- fails to complete the training
- fails to attend without good reason

7.4 Study Leave

Study leave will be granted for mandatory training during normal working hours.

For non-mandatory training linked to CPD or career development, the Council may grant a defined amount of study leave per year, subject to approval and operational needs.

Requests must be submitted in writing to the Clerk or Chair.

7.5 Training Methods and Learning Styles

The Council recognises different learning styles and will provide a variety of training methods, including:

- internal coaching or mentoring
- shared learning resources
- work shadowing
- time for self-directed learning
- in-house training sessions

8. Councillor Training and Development

8.1 Induction

New councillors will receive an induction pack including:

- governance documents
- policies
- the Good Councillor Guide
- a link to an electronic folder containing Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and other key documents
- a list of recommended training courses

8.2 Core Training

All councillors should receive training within their first six months on:

- roles and responsibilities
- the council as a corporate body
- the role of the Chairman and Clerk
- local council law
- standing orders and procedures
- financial rules and management
- the planning system
- community engagement

8.3 Ongoing Development

Councillors will be encouraged to attend:

- LRALC Roles & Responsibilities training
- Chairmanship training (Chair and Vice-Chair upon election and acceptance of office)
- specialist courses linked to committee roles
- sector conferences and briefings

The Clerk will circulate relevant training opportunities, may deliver in-house sessions and will email councillors relevant updates and newsletters received from sector bodies.

All council policies will reflect the requirement for member training and updating.

9. Resourcing Training

The Council will review training needs annually during the budget process and allocate funds for:

- training courses
- subscriptions
- publications
- conferences
- CPD activities

This review will include identifying weaknesses or areas for improvement that training could address.

10. Evaluation and Record-Keeping

The Clerk will maintain training records for councillors and staff.

After attending training, individuals must report back to the Council on its relevance and effectiveness. Feedback will inform future training decisions.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if legislation or best practice changes.

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date.....