

# Malmesbury Town Council



## Training, Development, and Appraisal Policy

Author: Town Clerk

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## **Policy Statement**

Malmesbury 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.

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 Councils 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 set 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 procedural requirements.
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.
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. 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 also recognises that Councillors also may need support when meeting challenges of their role and status. 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.
10. The training delivered should be delivered within the limits of the allocated training budget, except where there may be an extra ordinary and urgent need in the interests of safeguarding the Council's interests.
11. Where the training and development needs present a cost implication for the Council beyond the allocated budget, these will be prioritised with in relation to the business priorities at the time.
12. To make effective use of public funds, where individual training is required this should have a specific correlation to key Council priorities or matters. Where possible other training responses should cater for groups or staff or Councillors (or both).

### **Framework for Development and Capability**

13. The Staff s capability aims to be developed via an operational framework that includes;
  - **One to one staff supervision** every 6-8weeks, or as needed.
  - **Staff Team meetings** to enable contextual communication, briefings, and collaborative thinking between staff role; these can be extended to the participation of Councillors where the business need suggest better collaboration between role and functions.
  - **Needs led training** appropriate and relevant to the needs of the staff member and Councillor/s in relation to the business and services of the Council.
  - **Staff Annual Appraisals** in relation to the role and functions required of their staff members role.
  - **One to one support** for individual Councillors upon request in relation to the responsibilities of the role of councillor and any additional responsibilities, for

example chairing meetings or being engaged in areas requiring specialist knowledge, such as planning.

### **One to one Supervision**

14. The supervisory process has two aspects; scheduled and informal one to one times, and the general engagement and monitoring of the employee's performance, capability, and wellbeing as an integral aspect to 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 that form a workplace agenda. The agenda should be set at the time of supervision by either party. Both parties should come prepared when necessary to enable matters raised to be discussed productively.
16. The supervision time should be seen as a safe place that enables communication and where work matters can be explored. Where relevant actions should be 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 there is 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 Deputy Town Clerk. 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. The Appraisal process should be done within the budgetary and supervisory parameters available. Where there may be significant identified training and development outcomes resulting from the appraisal process, that fall beyond these parameters but present a clear business case for the benefit of the Council, these should be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

### **Delegated Authority**

20. The Council delegates responsibility to the Town Clerk to lead on the overall implementation of this policy. Where staff and members training, and development needs are identified the Council delegates the authority for the Training Budget to the Town Clerk.

### **Approval for attending Training**

21. Where there is a financial implication any staff member or Councillor must seek approval from the Town Clerk prior to attending. Where the cost presents a significant draw on the training budget this will need to be approved by the Policy and Resource Committee prior to attending.
22. Where there is no cost implication or it is minimal, staff and councillors should make the Town Clerk aware prior to attending.
23. All Staff and Councillors will be kept informed 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.

### **Resources and Constraints**

25. Training and learning resources are constrained by service pressures making it difficult for managers to release staff for training and learning and this is further constrained by finite training budgets. Consequently, staff training, and education must be agreed, prioritised and planned.

### **Council Funded Courses**

26. Councillors and employees attending assisted 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.
27. 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 costs associated with the undertaking of such training. Each case to be reviewed and determined by the Town Clerk, and to be confirmed in writing with the staff member at the time and confirmed in writing by the staff member before funds are committed.

### **Equality**

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

(b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant Protected characteristics and persons who do not share it;

(c) 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 Employers Employment Policies and Procedures.

29. Malmesbury 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.

### **Legal Implications**

30. Local Government Act 1972, the Localism Act 2011, the Nolan principles, and the Employee Rights Act 1996.

### **Policy review and effectiveness**

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