



**SHAVINGTON**  
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**Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council**  
Main Rd, Shavington, Crewe, CW2 5DP

**SHAVINGTON-CUM-GRESTY PARISH COUNCIL  
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY  
FOR COUNCILLORS AND STAFF**

Approved 6 March 2024

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Reviewed 2 April 2025



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## Introduction

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council recognises that its most important resources are its members and officers and it is committed to keeping them apprised of current issues and to developing them to their potential. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with legal and statutory requirements.

Training can be defined as “a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy current and future needs of the organisation” (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Encourage Members and staff to undertake appropriate training and development
- Allocate training in a fair manner
- Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value.
- Ensure that the Parish Council has the necessary skills to plan and deliver high quality services.

## Commitment to Training

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council is committed to the training and development of all councillors and staff to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives and to providing the highest quality representation and services to the Parish.

There are a number of benefits to training, it:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities provided by the Council.
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims & objectives.
- Demonstrates commitment to employees and acts as a motivator, attractor and retention aid.
- Enables members to undertake their duties to the best of their ability.
- Improves the skill base of both councillors and employees and aids team working.

## Councillors

Members bring a diverse range of skills and experience to the Council. However, both local government and the world around it, are fast changing and it is an essential investment to develop



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councillors to their full potential. In addition, the Council is likely to have a number of new functions over the coming years and it will be important for councillors fully appreciate the implications of the decisions they make.

The Council will establish a comprehensive Development Programme for members, based on the following approach:

- Skills development for individual members or groups of members.
- Seminars, Briefings & Workshops to raise general awareness of topical issues.
- Briefings and awareness raising prior to making a key decision or policy

A rolling programme will be established immediately following the adoption of this Policy and following normal elections and updated annually.

Certain training is identified as essential for all councillors including:

- Induction for new Councillors;
- General Power of Competence;
- Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework
- Equality responsibilities.
- Understanding the Planning System (for members of Planning Committee).

Some councillors may have undertaken relevant training at principal council level or in some cases as part of their employment.

Training needs are prioritised by the Staffing Committee following advice from the Parish Clerk and completion of a questionnaire by councillors.

## Employees

Training needs are determined by the appraisal process and are set as targets for individual staff members by the Parish Clerk on a yearly basis. Training needs are also identified during the appointment process and by informal discussion. Although sometimes training does need to be prioritised, the Council will try to accommodate requests from staff which are reasonable and appropriate.

Certain staff may be required to hold valid First Aider qualifications or be trained as fire wardens.

Training is prioritised on the following grounds (not in priority order):

- Legislative requirements e.g. health and safety
- Changes in relevant legislation
- Changes in systems, new working methods or equipment
- New or revised qualifications available
- The delivery of devolved or new services



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- Specialist need.
- Unexpected need e.g. following a service failure or accident
- Identified competence issue

Corporate training is necessary for subjects including corporate objectives or working practices, equality, health and safety.

Other considerations include:

- Implications of employee release for training courses upon the operational need and capacity of the Parish Council
- Economic and effective means of training the employee
- Provision and availability of the training budget
- Continued professional development in line with requisite professional bodies.

All new staff will receive induction training.

## Resourcing training

Sufficient funds are allocated in the budget for Staff and Members for training purposes with a forecast of anticipated expenditure presented to Members for consideration each year as part of the Budget setting process. Separate budget headings are allocated for Members and Staff.

### Qualifications

Employees may apply to take qualification training. These will be considered on an individual basis and will be dependent upon the need or priorities of the Parish Council

- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)-The Parish Council view these as accrediting existing knowledge and is greatly encouraged.
- Career Personal Development (CPD)-The Parish Council supports the Career Personal Development of all its employees.
- Employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where necessary relating to legal responsibilities and corporate standards

## Delivery

Members' training, learning and development opportunities will be arranged predominately by Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC) or SLCC. This will be supplemented as appropriate by in-house provision, the use of local training organisations and by inviting "guest speakers" to Council or committee meetings.



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Most staff training needs are catered for by ChALC, Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), or local colleges, again supplemented by specialist providers.

Some joint training for both members and officers is not only cost effective but often gives added value through a cross fertilisation of ideas.

Staff and Members attending courses are encouraged to pass on what they have learned to colleagues where appropriate.

## **Financial assistance**

The cost of training for Members will generally be paid for by the Council and reasonable associated costs such as travel and subsistence, reimbursed.

The Parish Council will generally pay and/ or assist with expenses incurred to cover the cost of tuition and examination fees for employees provided that the training is approved by the Parish Clerk.

Costs for travel to tuition, courses or examination will generally be paid. This will include such expenses as:

- Course fees
- Examination fees
- Associated membership fees
- The purchase of resources to complete a course or examination

## **Training Cost Agreement**

From time to time the Council may agree to finance training and development opportunities that exceed the requirements for a post. This may be training to obtain qualifications at a higher level than the staff members current job role, for instance, or training that is particularly expensive. In certain scenarios that are detailed in this policy the Council may in consideration of this, ask the staff member to agree to incur liability by way of a training cost agreement, should your employment terminate within a certain timeframe of the training being completed. This policy outlines example scenarios and processes that the Council will follow when agreeing to pay for employee training. The policy does not form part of any individual training cost agreement.

### **What is a training cost agreement?**

A training cost agreement is a written agreement between an employer and employee setting out the conditions of any training the employer pays for. It will detail the cost of the training, the training provider and who is responsible for paying for it in the first instance.

### **When will training cost agreements be required:**

#### **Scenario 1**

You may be asked to enter into a training agreement if you are requesting training or are being asked to attend training that will give you a higher level of qualification than your current job role



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entails. For instance you may want the council to sponsor you to obtain a degree (level 6) in your field of work, but the job role merely requires you to be educated to A-level (level 3) standard.

### Scenario 2

The qualification or training you would like to attend is at the same level you are already working to but it would enhance your knowledge and understanding. The training, however, exceeds the budget set aside for training.

The above scenarios are merely examples. There may be many more scenarios in which the council may ask you to enter into a training agreement before committing to fund the training. You will always be advised whether an agreement will be required before your training is approved.

### **The procedure for training cost agreements:**

All training cost agreements need to be signed prior to the training and you must complete individual agreements for each piece of training. You cannot list more than one.

### **Recovery of Training Costs:**

The full terms & conditions will be listed in an individual training cost agreement but in summary the standard repayment amounts will usually be:

- a. if you cease employment during the training course or within 6 months of completing the training course, 100% of the costs shall be repaid;
- b. if you cease employment more than 6 months but no more than 12 months after completion of the training course, 50% of the costs shall be repaid;
- c. if you cease employment more than 12 months but no more than 18 months after completion of the training course, 25% of the costs shall be repaid;
- d. thereafter, no repayment shall be required.

The Council reserve the right in exceptional circumstances to amend the repayment terms. Should you have any questions in relation to this policy please do not hesitate to raise these with the Parish Clerk.

If an employee fails to sit an examination within a reasonable period of time, fails to satisfyingly progress or discontinues the course, the Parish Council may withdraw its support and may request reimbursement of the financial assistance the employee has received to that date.

Should a councillor or staff member fail to attend a training session, this should be reported immediately to the Parish Clerk. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken. If the cost of the training cannot be refunded, the Council will not be able to offer the same course again unless the councillor or staff member pays for it. However, exemptions may be granted by the Parish Clerk in cases of exceptional circumstances or health issues, subject to this being reported to the full council.

### **Study leave**

Employees who are given approval to undertake external qualifications will be granted



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- Time to attend day release courses
- Time to sit examinations
- Study time (to be discussed and agreed with the Parish Clerk in advance)
- Paid leave for courses, studying and examinations

### **Training evaluation**

Records of all employee training will be kept on individual personnel files and all Member training will be recorded.

All courses and seminars are evaluated by requesting staff and councillors for feedback.

### **Policy Review**

The Annual Training and Development Plan for Members and staff, will be reviewed and updated every two years.

Policy reviewed, updated and agreed 2 April 2025



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## Template Training Cost Agreement

Training Cost Agreement	
Name of Employee	
Course Title	
Course Dates	
Fees and other costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fees</li><li>• Travel</li><li>• Professional Memberships</li><li>• Exam Fees</li><li>• Books and materials</li></ul>	
Outcomes/ Benefits	
Employee Signature	
Date	
Employer Signature	
Date	
<p><b>By signing this agreement I confirm that I will be liable for the costs stated above, in line with the schedule below.</b></p> <p><b>Recovery of Training Costs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• if you cease employment during the training course or within 6 months of completing the training course, 100% of the costs shall be repaid;</li><li>• if you cease employment more than 6 months but no more than 12 months after completion of the training course, 50% of the costs shall be repaid;</li></ul>	



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- if you cease employment more than 12 months but no more than 18 months after completion of the training course, 25% of the costs shall be repaid;
- thereafter, no repayment shall be required.