

BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL
TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Introduction

Blisworth Parish Council is committed to the training and development of its councillors and staff, in order to assist Blisworth Parish Council in achieving its aims, objectives, priorities and vision, as well as ensuring Blisworth Parish Council is kept up to date with all new legislation. To support this; funds are allocated to a training and development budget annually to enable councillors and staff to attend training and conferences relevant to their office. Staff and councillors are expected to share this commitment to training and development and will be expected to undertake training appropriate to their role and take up development opportunities as appropriate. Prospective Councillors and applicants for the post of clerk should be made aware of the content of this policy and the expectations placed upon them.

Policy statement

Blisworth Parish Council is committed to ensure that it continues to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to residents professionally. To that end, the Council's intention is that councillors, and any other staff are suitably equipped with the correct knowledge and skills to carry out their roles and maintain effective working practises. Blisworth Parish Council will procure or provide such training and development opportunities as it deems necessary and relevant for the delivery of its work. It is essential that councillors and staff are given equal opportunity to develop their knowledge of local government and the law relating to parish councils and to learn new skills to promote partnership working and community engagement in order to become effective councillors and lead a modern and progressive parish council of the future. Councillor and staff development should be regarded as an integral part of Blisworth Parish Council's business.

Training and Development Needs

Blisworth Parish Council acknowledges that it is important to train and develop staff and councillors in order to operate in an efficient, effective and professional manner. Training will primarily focus on specific topics relevant to local government, but other relevant training that will improve service delivery will also be offered, e.g. training on a new piece of software. Training and development may include:

- Formal training courses
- Briefings and seminars
- Local, regional and national conferences

Training and Development available for New Councillors

a) Attendance at induction sessions explaining the role of a councillor, such as NCALC's 'Off to a Flying Start' training course for new councillors – within six months of the date on which they are elected or co-opted.

b) Access to 'The Good Councillor's Guide,' Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and a link to the policies of Blisworth Parish Council (available on Blisworth Parish Council's website), together with any other information deemed relevant. This information is to be provided within 2 weeks of the date on which they are elected or co-opted.

c) Development opportunities, such as attending events or taking up mentoring or coaching opportunities, should also be considered.

Training and development for Clerk

a) Training needs for the clerk will be identified initially through the recruitment process including the application form and interview, and then through formal and informal discussions and annual staff appraisals.

b) Where applicable, the clerk should begin training for the Certificate of Local Council Administration (CiLCA) within twenty-four months of appointment, subject to a satisfactory probationary period. New clerks may already hold this qualification or an equivalent qualification.

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

Identifying Training and Development Needs

Training and Development requirements for councillors will be ongoing but will usually be identified by the councillors, and/or the clerk with opportunities to attend courses being investigated by the clerk and brought to the attention at a full Blisworth Parish Council meeting.

Training and development needs may be triggered in several ways; the list below is indicative, but not exhaustive:

- Staff appraisals (although staff may identify their own training needs at any time)
- A change in working practices (as a result of, for example, a complaint, accident or new policy)
- The introduction of new equipment
- Changes in legislation
- New councillors joining council
- New chairman of the Blisworth Parish Council or committees

Resourcing Training

Blisworth Parish Council will make enough provision in its budget to ensure that staff and councillors are suitably trained to carry out their functions and duties. There will also be enough funds set aside for appropriate technical literature and other publications.

Annually an allocation will be made in the budget, each year as required and as identified as providing value for money, to enable necessary training and development.

Annually Blisworth Parish Council will consider an allocation in the budget for the payment of a subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks and Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils to enable the clerk and councillors to take advantage of their training courses and conferences.

Purchase of relevant resources such as publications will be considered on an ongoing basis.

The clerk will maintain a record of training attended by themselves, all staff and councillors.

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