



Training and Development Policy

1 Introduction

Scarning Parish Council is committed to pursuing a Training and Development Policy which ensures that its Clerk, members and volunteers are trained to the highest standard, and are capable of making an effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives in providing the highest quality representation and services to its electorate.

The Council will achieve this aim by meeting the following objectives:-

- a. By encouraging its Clerk, members and volunteers to improve their skills through relevant training.
- b. By identifying a need for training and providing the facilities to satisfy that need.
- c. By budgeting an annual sum to cover the cost of training and development.

2 Identifying Training and Development Needs

The need for training and development can be identified in a number of ways. These include:-

- a. Changes in legislation.
- b. Proposals from councillors, or the Clerk.
- c. The Clerk's annual appraisal.
- d. Questionnaires.
- e. Professional errors or omissions.
- f. The introduction of new processes or working methods.
- g. Council resolutions.
- h. Community consultation.
- i. Complaints to the Council.
- j. Delivery of new services.

3 Implementation

The Council's Training and Development Policy covers three distinct groups; councillors, the Clerk and volunteers.

a. Councillors:-

Training and Development is part of a planned process that satisfies the current and future needs of the Council. A fully trained council is essential in order to convey confidence in its abilities and to give the public reassurance that the Council is looking after the interests of the electorate.

Training and Development includes all councillors, whether new or long established.

All new members will receive training and will be encouraged to attend a new councillor course. Full details will be sent to them by the Clerk.

Whilst it is expected that councillors attend training sessions it is not compulsory.

The Council should evaluate the need for training in any specific task, particularly those which directly effect the Council's activities. If the whole Council requires training on a particular subject the Clerk will source the appropriate qualified person to attend.

At any time a councillor can ask the Clerk to investigate training of either a standard or specific nature and to provide details of dates, venues, costs and subject matter content. The Council will consider all requests for training.

The Council will reimburse travel expenses associated with attending training courses. Any expenses incurred other than normal travel expenses must be approved in advance of the course where appropriate.

b. The Clerk

The Clerk is expected to attend all relevant training in the pursuance of his/her duties.

The Clerk may identify his/her own training needs through his/her appraisal or informal/formal discussion with Council members.

The Clerk's appraisal may be used by the Council to identify the need for training in any particular aspect of the Clerk's work.

The Council will reimburse travel expenses associated with attending training courses. Any expenses incurred other than normal travel expenses must be approved in advance of the course where appropriate.

c. Volunteers

The Parish Council uses volunteers to run and maintain Scarning Playing Field (Scarning Playing Field Committee). The Playing Field Committee is a separate entity and is not a committee of the Parish Council. The Parish Council and the Playing Field Committee have agreed a Terms of Reference document, which outlines the responsibilities of all parties.

Members of the Playing Field Committee are actively encouraged to attend training courses, particularly on Health & Safety issues, the monitoring and safety of play areas and the safe use of relevant equipment such as chainsaws.

The Parish Council uses volunteers to carry out periodic litter picking in the parish. A volunteer coordinates the litter picks. The Clerk provides the lead volunteer with the relevant documentation that needs to be carried out for Health and Safety purposes and for insurance purposes. The lead volunteer is provided with a Guidance document from Breckland Council and forms to be completed by volunteers taking part in the Litter Pick.

4 Cost and Budgeting

The training and development budget is set annually and the year to date figures are reported through the monthly financial reports presented at Council meetings. As not all training can be identified at the time the budget is set, a contingency figure must be built into the final budgeted figure, which includes this 'unidentifiable' amount. The budget must also include travel expenses.

5 Evaluation

As part of the Council's commitment to training and development, the Council will evaluate training and development activities on an ongoing basis to ensure their relevance, added value and best practice. Councillors and the Clerk are expected to inform the Council of the effectiveness of all training given at the next available council meeting and to bring to the Council's attention any new legislation changes covered by the training course. Volunteers attending courses at the Council's expense are asked to attend a Council meeting to discuss the training given and to assess the value of the course.

Reviewed without amendment: January 2026.

Next review: January 2028.