

Adopted: 8/4/24

Review Date: January 2026



# WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk to the Parish Council: Mrs Claire Christmas

## TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY

West Malling Parish Council (the Council) is committed to the ongoing training and development of its Councillors, Clerks, staff and volunteers so as to enable them to undertake their duties to the best of their ability and to ensure the highest standard of representation and services for the residents of the Parish. The Council understands that training is also an important factor in personal development and should therefore be encouraged.

This policy sets out:

- the council's commitment to training and development
- the identification of training and development needs
- financial assistance
- study leave
- the monitoring of the policy

### Commitment

WMPC recognises that its most important resource is its staff and Councillors and is committed to encouraging the enhancement of their knowledge and qualifications through appropriate training and development.

WMPC will support and encourage the training and development of Councillors, Clerks, other staff and volunteers to help achieve the objectives of the council.

WMPC recognises that training may be required to ensure that both Clerks, Councillors, other staff and volunteers are aware of their legal responsibilities or the Council's requirements, e.g. in the areas of health and safety, risk management, employment law and equal opportunities; essential due to the nature of the work that the Council undertakes, managing assets, carrying out projects etc.

WMPC will regularly review the needs of councillors and employees/volunteers and will plan training and development opportunities and budget accordingly. The Council budgets annually for Councillor, Clerk, staff and volunteer training.

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### **The identification of training and development needs**

Councillors:

Councillors training needs will be identified upon election and during their term of office. Training needs for councillors may be identified by the individual councillor, Chair or Clerk.

On becoming a Councillor, the Clerk will provide a welcome pack containing the following:

- copies of the Standing Orders & Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct
- policies of the council
- an electronic copy of the Good Councillor Guides (hard copies are also available)
- contact details of Chair and other councillors
- meetings calendar and any other information deemed relevant

All Councillors will be provided access to relevant training courses, these courses are provided by bodies such as Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC). Councillors are encouraged to attend introductory training (provided by KALC) as soon as is practicable after joining the Council. Councillors should seek permission from the Clerk and Chair to attend courses.

Email and paper briefings, newsletters and magazines will be circulated to all members and available from the parish office.

Clerks:

Training needs for Clerks will initially be identified through the recruitment process including application form and interview. Moving forward, the Clerk will be asked to identify their own development needs during formal and informal discussions, meetings of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and annual staff appraisals. The Clerk is expected to keep up-to-date with developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training required.

The Clerk / RFO will be:

- provided with a contract of employment setting out clear objectives and expectations;
- receive an employment appraisal and salary review annually from the Council;
- encouraged to attend all relevant County Association (KALC) and SLCC clerks' training courses including the Roles and Responsibilities Course;
- encouraged to gain ILCA (Introduction to Local Council Administration) (Level 2), and
- encouraged to gain the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) (Level 3);
- undertake any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as IT, legal powers, finance and planning which is identified through regular training needs assessments;
- encouraged to attend relevant local meetings such as Clerk's forums and briefings;
- able to subscribe to relevant publications and advice services including the SLCC and NALC;
- provided with all relevant publications such as the Local Council Administration reference book and the SLCC Clerks' Manual;
- given regular feedback from the Chair or Vice Chair of the Council on their performance;

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- entitled to paid study leave in order to work towards the qualifications, this is subject to the agreement of Council.

Other employees (non-clerks) and volunteers:

Training needs will be identified by the Clerk at the start of the contract or volunteering and monitored moving forward. Members of staff will have regular one-to one meetings with their line manager (Clerk) as well as an annual appraisal\*, the Clerk meets with volunteers on a regular basis, ensuring that their training needs are met.

\*Our litter picker has educational needs and is accompanied by an appropriate adult (parent) when completing his duties. It would not be appropriate for him to take part in an appraisal, the parent is aware of all Health & Safety / risk assessment guidance as Assistant Parish Clerk to WMPC.

In addition to the above, the need for training may be triggered by:

- changes in legislation
- introduction of new equipment / changes in office systems such as accounts package.
- new working methods and practices
- new or revised qualifications become available
- accidents
- professional error
- complaints to the Council
- a request from a member of staff, at appraisal or otherwise.
- Delivery of new services and overseeing events – First Aid courses etc.

#### **Membership of County Association / SLCC and other organisations.**

The Council will retain membership of KALC and SLCC in order that all training opportunities can be accessed. The Council is also currently a member of the Town & Country Planning Association, CPRE and Open Spaces Society – all of which provide training and updates.

#### **Financing**

Each request will be considered on an individual basis and the benefits to the individual and the council will be identified.

Where possible, all training courses will be attended locally in the interest of operational effectiveness and obtaining best value.

Other considerations include the following:

- implication of employee release for training course(s) on the operational capability of the Council
- the most economic and effective means of training
- provision and availability of training budget

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For approved courses employees can expect the following to be sponsored:

- the course fee
- examination fees
- associated membership fees
- one payment to re-take a failed examination

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.

Any employee undertaking post-entry qualifications funded by the Council must be aware that should they leave West Malling Parish Council employment within two years of completion of the qualification they will be required to repay all costs associated with the undertaking of such training. In addition, all costs must be repaid if the employee leaves before completion of the qualification or fails to complete it. If the employee takes up employment with another Local Authority an exemption to this clause may be granted.

### **Study Leave**

Councillors will not be eligible for study leave as they do not have a paid role. Study leave for the parish Clerks will be at the discretion of the Council.

### **Monitoring of the Policy**

The Clerk and Chair will be responsible for monitoring and management of the budget for this policy.

It is asked that Councillors provide feedback on training undertaken to the relevant committee or to Full Council.

All employee and councillor training each year will be recorded by the clerk for monitoring purposes – see Appendix 1

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Appendix 1

## Training Records

### Councillor Training Record

Councillor	Date	Details	Training Provider

### Clerk Training Record

Date	Training Undertaken	Training Provider
12/2/22	ILCA	SLCC
20.3.23	ILCA to CiLCA	SLCC
Current	CiLCA	SLCC

Adopted: 8/4/24

Minute number: 24/238.5

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