Mary Tavy Parish Council

Training and Development Policy

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Purpose and scope

The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's position on the provision of training and development opportunities for staff and councillors. It applies to all staff whether full or part time, temporary or fixed term. It also applies to all councillors.

Mary Tavy Parish Council recognises that the provision of adequate training and development opportunities for staff and councillors is important and will have an impact on the council's ability to meet its objectives.

Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs

Training and development needs will be identified from a variety of sources:

- Induction and probationary periods
- One-to-ones
- Appraisals
- Workforce planning
- Team meetings
- Annual plans
- Change processes

In addition, the council will encourage staff and councillors to identify their own learning styles and will seek to provide a wide variety of learning and training methods, including:

- Attendance at conferences, seminars and short courses
- Online training
- Internal coaching
- Shared in-house learning resources (books, journals, DVDs etc.)
- In-house training
- Work shadowing
- Time for self-directed research and learning

Consideration

A number of factors will be taken into account when assessing a training request from an individual. This policy provides one element of the decision-making process. Other factors will include availability of finance and the individual's employment record.

Mary Tavy Parish Council will budget an amount for the training and development of its employees and councillors every year. The budgeted amount will vary depending on a number of factors, including whether the financial year is an election year. New councillors, elected and co-opted, will ideally be provided with the opportunity to attend a 'Good Councillor' training course (or equivalent).

In order to ensure that the council is able to consistently evaluate requests, training and development opportunities have been organised into the three categories according to the degree of importance each intervention has for different roles.

Categorising training and personal development

The three categories are as follows:

1. Mandatory

Mandatory training is legally required for the post-holder, or a qualification deemed to be so fundamental to the role, that the council makes it a mandatory requirement. Any mandatory training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description. For mandatory qualifications, it is unlikely that an applicant would be recruited without having previously attained the qualification. Where a qualification becomes mandatory for the role, the council will provide reasonable assistance for the employee to attain the qualification (see the section on 'Guidance for Support' and 'Study Leave' below).

Some mandatory training may be specific to a particular job role whilst other training may be a generic requirement.

Examples of mandatory qualifications may include:

<u>Job specific</u>

- GCSE (or equivalent) English grade C (or equivalent) or above (clerk)
- GCSE (or equivalent) Mathematics grade C (or equivalent) or above (Responsible Financial Officer)

2. Desirable

Desirable training is not legally required for the post, but it is directly relevant to the individual's job or councillor role. Any desirable training or qualifications are to be stated on the job description.

For desirable qualifications or training, an individual may be recruited without having previously attained the qualification or undergone the training but may be expected to attain the qualification within a defined period of time. The need for training may also be identified through one-to-one meetings or annual appraisals. A desirable qualification is likely to enhance the skills and reputation of the council. Examples of desirable qualifications and training courses may include:

<u>Job/councillor role specific</u>

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) (clerk)
- 'Good Councillor' course or equivalent (for councillors)
- Responding to planning applications course (for councillors)

- Chairing local council meetings course (for councillors)

3. Optional

An optional qualification or optional training may not be directly linked to the individual's current job. Optional training or development is generally more beneficial to the individual's career than it is for the council.

Personal development aimed at developing the skills or knowledge of an individual in order to provide a successor for an existing job is deemed to be optional. However, depending on the circumstances, training for succession may be 'desirable'. An example of optional training might include:

Job specific

- Community Governance degree (clerk)

Guidance for support

Support for qualifications, training and personal development can include financial assistance towards the cost of tuition, examinations and resource materials in addition to time off for study leave and taking any examinations. Any financial and non-financial support to training and development is entirely at the discretion of the council.

The council reserves the right to reclaim financial support where the employee:

- Fails to complete the training
- Fails to attend training without good reason.

Study leave

Where employees require study leave to undertake mandatory training, they will be able to take all the leave within normal working hours.

Where employees require study leave to undertake study which is not mandatory but part of the individual's formal continuous professional development, the council may contribute up to 50% of study leave time. This is entirely at the discretion of the council.

Where employees require study leave to undertake training which is not mandatory but part of the individual's desire for career development, the council may contribute up to three days study leave per annum for courses which are directly related to the individual's role. This is entirely at the discretion of the council.

Time off for study leave must be approved in advance. To make a request, the employee is asked to write to the Chairman of the HR committee, setting out the details of the course of study, how it relates to their work, and the time being requested. The Chairman of the HR committee will refer the request on to the full council for its consideration and a decision.

No study leave will be granted where individuals undertake study which is not required for their role, or not directly related to their role. However, the council will consider requests for

flexible working to allow the study to take place, as long as the needs of the council can be met.

This training and development policy was reviewed and readopted by Mary Tavy Parish Council at the full council meeting held on 13th April 2026.

Next review due: April 2027