

KNOWSLEY TOWN COUNCIL



TRAINING STATEMENT OF INTENT

INTRODUCTION

This document comprises Knowsley Town Council's Training Statement Of Intent. Training is crucial to the development of town councils and satisfying the increasing responsibilities that they will be expected to shoulder. Training is important to both elected members and staff of the Town Council. Training should not be viewed as an additional piece of work but absolutely integral to the successful delivery of the Town Council's aims and objectives.

Training is *"a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation"* (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development). As a planned process, training should be viewed as an overarching function responsible for maintaining the effective working practices of the Town Council.

This Training Statement Of Intent is divided into the following five sections:

1. **statement of commitment** to training.
2. outline of **who is included** and **types of training**.
3. **identification** of training **needs**.
4. **resource implications** in meeting those needs.
5. **measuring the impact** of the training attended.

COMMITMENT TO TRAINING

Knowsley Town Council is committed to the ongoing training and development of all elected members and employees. This will enable both elected members and employees achieve and maintain a high standard of performance. All will be given encouragement and support to achieve their full potential in order to provide the highest quality representation and services for the people of the township.

The provision of training will provide a number of benefits including:

- **enhanced performance** of trainees.
- **widened skills** and experience.
- opportunities to **network**.
- encourage **innovation**.

- improve the **quality of services** and facilities that the Town Council provides.
- demonstrates that both elected members and employees are **valued**.
- signifies that the Town Council is a **“learning organisation”** able to cope with the changing demands on local government.

INVOLVEMENT AND TYPES OF TRAINING

The commitment to training involves all elected members and employees. In isolated cases, the Town Council may also identify a training need for a voluntary organisation as part of the Community Engagement Strategy.

Training will initially focus on specific topics and areas of work relevant to local government and enhancing the skills and knowledge of elected members and employees.

Types of training include:

- formal training **courses**.
- **briefings, workshops** and **seminars**.
- **study leave**.
- **in house** training and **dissemination of information**.
- **conferences** (e.g. National Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks).
- **regional** and **local events**.
- **support** and **mentoring**.

The underlying principles in the type of training for both elected members and employees will focus upon:

- **equality of opportunity** in all aspects of development.
- **induction** programme into their new roles.
- **understanding what is expected** of them.

IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS

There will be a number of methods in which training needs may be recognised including:

- staff **appraisals**.
- **questionnaires**.
- **interview**.
- following **confirmation of appointment**.
- at **induction**.
- **discussions** (both formal and informal).

Other circumstances may present the need for training:

- **legislative requirements** (e.g. first aid, fire safety).

- **changes in legislation.**
- **changes in systems.**
- availability of **new/revised qualifications.**
- **accidents.**
- **professional error.**
- introduction of **new equipment.**
- **new working practices.**
- **complaints** to the Town Council.
- **request** from an elected member or employee.
- devolved/delivery of **new services.**

New elected members will be expected to undergo training in the role they are undertaking. This induction course will cover subjects such as the role of councillors, code of conduct, meetings, standing orders financial regulations, role of the Clerk etc.

Specialised training needs for **individual elected members** on subjects such as the code of conduct, chairmanship, planning, finance etc. may be identified by the methods above. Other needs may be addressed through Town Council Meetings and ascertaining from elected members which courses would be appropriate for them to attend. If the whole Council requires training on a particular subject, the Clerk of the Council would source the appropriate qualified person to deliver.

It is recognised that it may be difficult for some elected members to attend training days during the daytime because of work or caring commitments. Elected members will be encouraged to attend training provided by partner organisations (e.g. Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council) whenever possible. In-house training during an evening will be considered, wherever possible, to enable all elected members to attend.

The **Clerk of the Council and the Deputy Clerk of the Council** are expected to undertake a programme of continuing professional development in line with the requirements of their requisite professional bodies. Both are expected to keep updated on developments in the sector and undertake the training required to improve performance. Both are expected to attend all relevant conference/training days whenever possible. Both officers are expected to possess the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).

Caretaker/Handyman and Cleaning staff will require specialised training in their respective fields. In addition, generic training (e.g. first aid, fire wardening) will be essential for both sets of staff. Such training will be identified and carried out in-house or by specialised training providers as appropriate.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

An allocation is made every year in the budget to fund training activities. The amount allocated is reviewed on an annual basis.

All sponsored training must be appropriate to the needs of the Town Council, relevant to the individual's role and subject to the availability of financial resources.

In order to ensure cost effectiveness, elected members and employees will be required to attend the nearest venue offering the required course. Other considerations include the implication of employee training release on the operational effectiveness of the Town Council and the provision/availability of the training budget.

For approved courses, employees can expect the Town Council to sponsor course fees, examination fees and associated membership fees.

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF TRAINING ATTENDED

Records of training by all elected members and staff will be kept. As part of Knowsley Town Council's commitment to training and development, elected members and employees will be asked to provide feedback on the value and effectiveness of the training they have undertaken. Any lessons learnt will be incorporated into the Town Council's policies and procedures. Where training is considered to have failed to meet expectations, the Clerk of the Council will seek to resolve the issues with the training provider.

The ultimate impact of training will be measured through the Town Council's service delivery. Well trained elected members and staff will see the rewards of relevant and competent training through benefits such as:

- well run Town Council **meetings**.
- professional and relevant **responses to planning** applications.
- well documented **policies** and **reports**.
- well managed **projects**.
- well managed **finances**.
- well managed **facilities** (buildings and open spaces).
- heightened awareness of **health and safety** issues.
- improved awareness of **community engagement**.
- **professional conduct** of elected members and employees.