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Statement of Training Intent for members and employees

This document demonstrates that Ashingdon Parish Council is committed to training, takes a proactive approach to training, identifies training needs of members and employees and identifies resources.

Commitment to training

Ashingdon Parish Council is committed to training both its employees and members to ensure that the Parish Council is knowledgeable and acts in a professional and appropriate manner.

The Parish Council supports the Clerk in her continuous professional development.

Ashingdon Parish Council considers the training of members essential to maintain effective working practices. The Parish Council maintains a training log to record the training undertaken by its members; copies of attendance certificates are included in the log.

Identifying training needs

The Parish Clerk is appraised on an annual basis and areas for improvement/greater knowledge are identified at this appraisal.

Details of training courses are added to the agenda for Parish Council meetings to ensure that all members are aware of training available.

Members are encouraged to attend the basic courses which relate to the work of a Parish Councillor and that of the Council.

Members partake in a tailored in-house training session provided by the Essex Association of Local Councils on annual basis. This ensures that members who may be unable to attend training courses during the day can be trained in-house at a time which suits them.

Resources

The Parish Council sets a training budget every year as part of the budget and precept process to ensure sufficient resources are available to employees and members for the upcoming year.

Impact of Training

Members and employees of the Parish Council are asked to complete a training evaluation when attending training courses which enables the member to reflect on what has been learnt and to advise the Parish Council of any areas that need addressing.

Needs of members

All members are provided with and are expected to familiarise themselves with the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Complaints Procedure, Code of Conduct, committee terms of reference and “The Good Councillor Guide”.

Upcoming training courses are published on the Parish Council agendas and members are asked at the meeting if they are interested in attending any courses to further their knowledge and understanding of the Parish Council.

Any new elected or co-opted members are given a welcome pack which includes the policies and procedures, previous minutes, contact details of relevant individuals, meeting schedule and “The Good Councillor Guide”. The Clerk keeps in regular contact with all members and particularly the newer, less experienced members to ensure any queries or problems are resolved early on.

New members are particularly urged to attend the Councillor training days 1 and 2 provided by the Essex Association of Local Councils and also any other training provided by the Association or District Council. In the cases where the new member works, the Parish Council arranges an annual in house training session which covers the basic areas of the Parish Council such as powers and duties and roles and responsibilities. Once the basics have been covered, the subsequent annual in house training consists of training modules that members would like further training/refresher training on. All members are advised of the training modules available when the session is booked and have the opportunity to ‘tailor’ the session to their individual needs.

Keeping current

Having membership to the Essex Association of Local Councils as well as other organisations including the Rural Community Council of Essex and the Campaign to Protect Rural England ensures that the Parish Council are kept up to date with legislation and areas of interest.

Rochford District Council are in constant contact with the Parish Councils in its district to ensure that district matters are publicised and acted upon if required. A similar approach is undertaken with Essex County Council with regular newsletters as to what is happening at County level.

Support

The Parish Council is supported through its membership to the Essex Association of Local Councils which provides advice as well as training courses specifically tailored to the first tier of local government.