

# Training and Development Policy



<b>Adopted by:</b>	Watton Town Council
<b>Date:</b>	April 2026
<b>Review date:</b>	April 2029

## 1. Purpose and Scope

**1.1** This policy explains how Watton Town Council approaches training and development for employees. Its purpose is to support employees in carrying out their roles effectively, maintain legal and operational compliance, and help the Council build skills and resilience over time.

**1.2** The Council recognises that training and development are important to service quality, employee confidence, succession planning and good governance. As a small employer, the Council will take a practical and proportionate approach, balancing development needs with operational requirements and available resources.

**1.3** The Council uses the NJC Green Book (2024) and the NALC Model Contract of Employment (2023) as guidance when determining employment terms and conditions. Not all provisions apply automatically. Where this policy, an employee's contract, or another adopted Council policy sets out a local arrangement, that local arrangement will apply.

**1.4** This policy applies to employees of Watton Town Council. It does not apply to councillors in their elected capacity, although councillors may undertake separate member training and may be involved in approving or overseeing employee training through the Council's staffing governance arrangements.

**1.5** This policy should be read alongside the Appraisal and Performance Review Policy, Capability Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Employment and Staffing Policy, Data Protection Policy and Employee Privacy Notice.

**1.6** This policy is non-contractual and may be amended by the Council from time to time, subject to any contractual rights that apply.

## 2. General Principles

**2.1** The Council aims to provide employees with the training, information and support reasonably needed to carry out their roles safely, lawfully and effectively.

**2.2** Training and development will be considered in a fair and consistent way, having regard to the employee's role, the needs of the service, legal requirements, available budget and the Council's operational priorities.

**2.3** The Council is not required to approve every training request. Decisions will be made case by case, and the Council may prioritise training that is essential for legal compliance, health and safety, service delivery, management development or business continuity.

**2.4** Where appropriate, the Council may exercise discretion in deciding whether training should be funded fully, funded in part, supported through paid time, supported through unpaid time, deferred, or declined.

### **3. Types of Training and Development**

**3.1** Training and development may include induction, statutory or mandatory training, health and safety training, role-specific skills training, management development, refresher learning, professional qualifications, networking events, conferences, e-learning, coaching, shadowing or supervised on-the-job learning.

**3.2** Some training will be essential because it is required by law, regulation, health and safety duties, good governance or the needs of the employee's role. Other training may be desirable but not essential. The Council may distinguish between the two when making decisions about funding and time off.

### **4. Identifying Training Needs**

**4.1** Training needs may be identified through induction, supervision, appraisal, legislative change, organisational change, health and safety review, audit findings, capability support, succession planning or employee request.

**4.2** Employees are encouraged to raise development needs with the Clerk or appropriate line manager. Managers should also consider whether an employee needs training when duties change or where additional support would help them perform confidently and effectively.

### **5. Approval and Funding**

**5.1** Training should normally be approved in advance. Approval will usually be given by the Clerk or appropriate line manager within the Council's delegated arrangements, subject to budget and operational requirements.

**5.2** The Council may pay course fees, examination fees, travel costs, materials or related expenses where it decides that the training is appropriate and affordable. Reimbursement will normally be dealt with under the Expenses and Allowances Policy.

**5.3** Where training involves significant cost or time commitment, the Council may confirm in writing any conditions attached to approval, including attendance expectations, study time, repayment arrangements or review points.

### **6. Time Off and Study Support**

**6.1** Where training is required by the Council or approved as necessary for the employee's role, the Council will normally allow reasonable paid time to attend.

**6.2** Where training is beneficial but not essential, the Council may decide whether attendance should be supported through paid time, unpaid time, TOIL, flexible working or another agreed arrangement.

**6.3** Requests for additional study time, exam leave or support for qualifications will be considered case by case. The Council may take account of relevance to the role, cost, service needs and any existing learning commitment.

## **7. Employee Responsibilities**

**7.1** Employees are expected to engage positively with approved training, attend as agreed, prepare appropriately and complete any required follow-up where reasonable.

**7.2** Where an employee cannot attend approved training, they should tell the Council as soon as reasonably possible so that alternative arrangements can be considered and avoidable cost is minimised.

**7.3** Employees should apply relevant learning in practice and share key learning points where this would assist the Council or colleagues.

## **8. Records and Review**

**8.1** The Council will keep reasonable records of training undertaken, including mandatory training and any significant qualifications or learning commitments relevant to the employee's role.

**8.2** Training records will be handled in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and Employee Privacy Notice.

**8.3** The Council may review whether approved training has met the intended need and whether further support, refresher learning or practical follow-up is required.

## **9. Equality and Fairness**

**9.1** Training and development opportunities will be considered fairly and without discrimination. The Council will take reasonable account of individual circumstances, including disability, caring responsibilities, working pattern and access needs.

**9.2** Where training is delivered internally or externally, the Council expects it to be conducted in a respectful and inclusive way consistent with the Council's standards of behaviour.

## **10. Monitoring and Review**

**10.1** The Council will keep this policy under review and may amend it where required by changes in law, guidance, budget, Council decision or operational practice.

**10.2** This policy will be applied in a way that is proportionate to the size, resources and developing management arrangements of Watton Town Council while supporting effective learning and service resilience.