GISLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

TRAINING POLICY

Introduction

Gislingham Parish Council is committed to the provision of training and development for all Councillors, Employees and Volunteers to ensure that they are trained to the highest standard and kept up to date with all new legislation.

All training and development will be aligned to the Council's overall performance and will be compatible with the Council's overall strategy and objectives whilst also having regard to the personal development needs of individuals.

Requests for Training for Councillors, the Clerk and RFO need to be approved at a Full Council Meeting prior to the Training being booked to ensure there are sufficient funding in the Training Budget.

To support this requirement, funds are allocated to a training budget each year to enable Councillors, Employees and Volunteers to attend training and conferences relevant to their office.

Policy Statement

The Council is committed to ensure that it continues to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to residents professionally. To that end the Council's intention is that Councillors, Employees and Volunteers Clerk of the Council are suitably equipped with knowledge and skills to carry out their roles and maintain effective working practices.

The Council will procure or provide such training courses, induction programmes and development opportunities as it deems necessary and relevant for the delivery of its work.

Training and Development Activity

The Council consists of nine elected Councillors and employs one part-time Parish Clerk/RFO. Training and development for all will be regularly reviewed but will contain as a minimum requirement:

For Councillors:

- Attendance at induction sessions explaining the role of Councillors.
- Provision of a Councillor Information Folder containing copies of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, Policies and Protocols adopted by the Council and other information deemed relevant at the time.
- Access to relevant courses provided by bodies such as the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC)

- All courses undertaken (including those at no cost) must be approved by Full Council.
- Circulation of documentation such as The Local Councillor;

For the Clerk:

- Induction session explaining the role of the Clerk
- Provision of copies of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, Policies and Protocols of the Council; Budget for current and previous year; Terms of References for all Committees and Sub-Committees and other information deemed relevant.
- All courses undertaken (including those at no cost) must be approved by Full Council. Any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as IT, Legal Powers, Finance and understanding of the planning system, identified through regular training needs assessments.
- Attendance at relevant local meetings of bodies such as the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and Information and Networking briefings provided by SALC. Subscription to relevant publications and advice services and other relevant publications, which will remain the property of the Council.

***If new in post**:*

Gaining the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) in order to retain the General Power of Competence and retain the Quality Status of the Local Council Award Scheme (SALC advise being in the position for a minimum of 12 months before starting the CiLCA process).

For Volunteers on Parish Council activities the following as a minimum will be provided:

- Briefings on relevant health and safety matters and the scope of their work prior to starting.
- Assessment of their skill, knowledge and capacity to complete the task in hand.
- Briefing on the safe use of any equipment provided by the Council.

Identification of Training Needs:

Training requirements for Councillors will usually be identified by themselves in conjunction with the Council's Parish Clerk and brought to the attention of the Full Council. Annually (usually in June) the Council will formally review the training needs of Councillors and the Clerk at a meeting of the Parish Council.

Training needs for the Clerk will either be identified through the recruitment process for new clerks, including application form and interview, or formal and informal discussions and annual staff appraisal for existing Clerks. The Clerk is expected to keep up to date with developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training required.

A record of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities undertaken by the Clerk will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Resourcing Training:

Annually, an allocation will be made in the budget each year as required to enable reasonable training and development. Annually, the Council will consider an allocation in the budget for the payment of a subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks and SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils)
The Clerk shall keep up to date with training courses and conferences advertised by SALC. The purchases of relevant resources such as publications will be considered on an ongoing basis.

Evaluation and review of training

All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the Council to ensure that it is relevant to needs, cost effective and that the quality of training is consistent.

Training will be reviewed in the light of changes to legislation or any quality systems relevant to the Council; new qualifications; new equipment; complaints received or incidents which highlight training needs and requests from Councillors, Employees and Volunteers.

The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by Councillors, Employees and Volunteers.

Prospective Councillors, Employees and Volunteers should be made aware of the content of this policy and the expectations placed upon them contained within it

Signed: *CFell* **Chair**

Approved by Gislingham Parish Council on 20th July 2026

Date of next review July 2028