



MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

Statement:

Marden Parish Council is an organisation in which learning is valued. Parish Councillors and staff will be supported to undertake the training and development which they need to help them achieve and maintain a high standard of performance and all will be given encouragement and support to achieve their full potential. This will allow them to provide a proper level of service to the people of Marden. It is a requirement of the Local Council Award Scheme that training should be undertaken especially on financial management for which Cllrs are responsible.

Objectives:

Encourage Councillors and staff to undertake appropriate training and learning & development through in-house and external training.

Allocate training in a fair manner

Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value

Provide financial support to attend training

The Council expects the Clerk to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of their requisite professional body.

Benefits of Training/Learning & Development:

Providing training yields a number of benefits:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities that Marden Parish Council provides
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims and objectives
- Improves the skills base of the employees and Councillors
- Produces confident, highly qualified staff working as part of an effective and efficient team; and
- Demonstrates that the employees are valued

All are entitled to:

- Equality of opportunity in all aspects of their development
- An induction programme into their own roles as well as to the workings of Marden Parish Council.
- An understanding of the direction and objectives of the council
- An understanding of the contribution that is expected of them

Office Opening Times:

Mondays, Tuesdays & Fridays 10am - 12 noon

Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

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For staff:

- Clear and measurable objectives for their performance at work
- Six monthly performance reviews of their performance, role and training needs
- A personal development plan which addresses their development needs
- A Chairman, Parish Clerk and Deputy Parish Clerk who are committed to staff development.
- Paid release from work commitments in order to undertake relevant training.
- Training and certification in accordance with all legal and statutory requirements according to their role and equipment under their control.

For New Councillors:

- New Councillors be provided with a “New Councillor’s Pack” when joining the Council
- To attend in-house training by the Parish Clerk following elections.
- New Councillors are encouraged to attend courses for “new councillors” arranged by KALC

For Councillors continuing training needs:

- General training in Parish Council matters including Duties of a Councillor; Code of Conduct; Roles & Responsibilities
- Specialist/appropriate training according to need and role in the council and committees including Chairmanship; Planning; Finance
- Existing Councillors encouraged to attend refresher training courses
- Other needs will be addressed through meetings and ascertaining from Councillors which courses would be appropriate for them to attend.
- If the whole Council requires training on a particular subject the clerk will source the appropriate qualified person to attend

Resources

Appropriate sums will be made available in each budgetary period to allow required training to take place.

Main Providers

The main providers of training for MPC are:

- Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)
- Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)
- Maidstone Borough Council (MBC)
- Kent County Council (KCC)
- Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM)
- National Association of Local Councils (NALC)
- Peninsula (HR Support)
- Cloudy IT (IT Support)

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Identification of Training Needs

Employees will be asked to identify their development needs with advice from their line manager during their annual performance review. There are a number of additional ways that the training needs of staff, and Councillors, may be recognised including:

- Questionnaires
- During formal review
- During formal and informal discussions
- On receipt of notification of training available by outside bodies
- Following election/co-option (for Councillors)

Other circumstances may present the need for training:

- Legislative requirements (ie First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling, Child Protection, Food Hygiene)
- Changes in legislation
- Changes in systems
- New or revised qualifications becoming available
- Accidents
- Professional error
- Introduction of new equipment/software
- New working methods and practices
- Complaints to the Council
- A request from a member of staff
- Devolved services/delivery of new services

Corporate Training

Corporate training is necessary to ensure that employees are aware of their legal responsibilities or corporate standards eg Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equal Opportunities. Employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where suitable training is identified.

Keeping the Council Up to Date

The Council pays an annual subscription to Kent Association of Local Councils and also to SLCC for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk. Regular publications are received from both these organisations and the websites are continually viewed for any training being offered.

Support for the Council

The Council is supported by Kent Association of Local Councils. The Council is also a member of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium (ICCM). Specific training on legislative changes is provided by Maidstone Borough Council. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk are members of the Society of Local Council Clerks.

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Marden Parish Council also employs the service of Peninsula which offers HR support and guidance and Cloudy IT for IT support.

Measure the Impact of Training

Any Councillor or member of staff attending training provide feedback to the Council on their return - highlighting any relevant material to Councillors with regards to the working of the Parish Council.

Commitment to Officers and Councillors

Marden Parish Council makes the following commitment to Councillors:
That every new Parish Councillor, whether elected or co-opted, will be trained to an adequate standard as set out by the Council and reflecting prevailing acceptance standards within a year of taking office. In addition, skills audits will be acted upon to ensure specialist members receive additional training along with the bulk of the Council to take account of legislative changes and new initiatives.

Marden Parish Council makes the following commitment to its employees:
That they will be trained to an adequate standard as set out in prevailing legislation, Local Authority standards and reflecting the aspirations of the Council as soon as possible upon appointment and on an on-going and rolling programme reinforcing professional development.

A record of training undertaken by staff and Councillors will be recorded by the Clerk. Any training, workshops and seminars attended by Councillors during the course of their own employment, and which is relevant to Parish Council roles and responsibilities, will also be recorded.

Adopted by Marden Parish Council on: 2015

Reviewed/Amended on: 12th June 2018 / 11th June 2019 / 6th April 2021 / 8th March 2022 / 14th March 2023 / 12th March 2024 / 14th January 2025

Review date: March 2026

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