

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to set out Berryfields Parish Council's position on the provision of training and development opportunities for staff. It applies to all staff, whether full-time, part-time, temporary, fixed-term, or zero-hours.

Identifying, Meeting and Evaluating Training and Development Needs

Training and development needs will be identified from a variety of sources, including:

- induction and probationary periods
- one-to-ones
- appraisal
- workforce planning
- team meetings
- the annual plan
- change processes

Berryfields Parish Council will also encourage staff to identify their own learning styles and will seek to provide a wide variety of learning and training methods, including:

- attendance at conferences, seminars and short courses
- online training
- internal coaching
- shared in-house learning resources (books, journals, DVDs etc.)
- in-house training
- work shadowing
- time for self-directed research and learning

Consideration

A number of factors will be taken into account when assessing a request from an individual. This policy provides one element of the decision-making process. Other factors will include the availability of finance and the individual's employment record.

To ensure consistency, training and development opportunities are organised into three categories according to the degree of importance each intervention has for different roles.

Categorising Training and Personal Development

1. Mandatory

Mandatory training is legally required for the post-holder, or is deemed so fundamental to the role that it is a condition of employment.

- Any mandatory training or qualifications will be stated in the job description and contract.

- For mandatory qualifications, applicants are normally required to hold the qualification before appointment.
- Where a qualification becomes mandatory during employment, the Council will provide reasonable assistance for the employee to attain it.

Failure to complete mandatory training or qualifications without good reason may be treated as a performance or conduct issue and dealt with under Berryfields Parish Council's *Disciplinary Policy*.

Examples of mandatory training include:

- Health and Safety (personal safety, manual handling, display screen equipment)
- Food hygiene
- Data protection

2. Desirable

Desirable training is not legally required but is directly relevant to the role and enhances the skills and reputation of the Council.

- These may be identified in the job description, at appraisal, or through one-to-one meetings.
- The employee may be required to attain a desirable qualification within a set timeframe.

Examples of include:

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA)
- Allotment legal compliance
- Microsoft Excel

3. Optional

Optional training or qualifications may not be directly linked to the individual's current role. They are more beneficial to the individual's career than to the Council, though may sometimes form part of succession planning.

Examples include:

- Community Governance
- Town Planning Technical Support (Level 3 Diploma)

Guidance for Support

Since 2020, new contracts must reference any training provided by the employer, including:

- whether a qualification must be attained within a certain timeframe
- whether the qualification must be maintained
- whether employment could be ended if the qualification is not gained

Support for qualifications, training, and personal development may include:

- financial assistance for tuition, examinations, and resource materials
- day release or study leave
- time off for examinations

Any financial or non-financial support is at the discretion of Berryfields Parish Council.

Any financial support (including loans) will be conditional on the employee's agreement to full or partial repayment if they:

- leave the Council during the course or within one year of completion
- fail to complete the training
- fail to attend training without good reason.

Any concerns or disputes about training opportunities, financial support, or study leave may be raised under Berryfields Parish Council's *Grievance Policy*.

Study Leave

- Employees undertaking mandatory training will be granted study leave during normal working hours.
- For continuous professional development (non-mandatory but relevant to the role), the Council may contribute up to 50% of study leave time, to a maximum of 3 days per year.
- For career development (non-mandatory but related to the role), the Council may grant up to 3 days per year.
- Study leave requests must be approved in advance. Requests should be made in writing to the Clerk (or Chairman of the Council), setting out details of the course, relevance to the role, and time required.

No study leave will be granted for training unrelated to the role. However, the Clerk (or Chairman) may consider requests for flexible working to allow study, provided Council needs are met.

Policy Status

This is a **non-contractual policy** and will be reviewed from time to time.

Document History

Approved by Parish Council

October 2025

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