



Great Maplestead Parish Council

Training Strategy



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1. Introduction

1.1 Training yields a number of benefits for **Great Maplestead Parish Council**:

- It improves the quality of the services and facilities that the **Council** provides to the community.
- It enables the **Council** to achieve its aims and objectives.
- It improves the skill base, producing confident, qualified staff and **Councillors**, working as part of an effective and efficient team.

1.2 To ensure that **Councillors** and the **Parish Clerk** are suitably prepared to serve the Parish, the **Council** is committed to enabling all **Councillors** and the **Clerk** to receive appropriate training and support where necessary. A training budget is provided each year for this purpose.

1.3 All training records are maintained by the **Clerk** to enable the co-ordination of an appropriate and efficient training programme.

2. Identifying Members' Training Needs

2.1 The **Clerk** provides information to all new **Councillors** about the professional training offered by **EALC**.

2.2 An induction pack of relevant information and guidance is provided to new **Councillors** by the **Clerk**. The pack includes the **Council's**:

- Guide to Becoming A Good Councillor
- Standing Orders
- Code of Conduct.

2.3 New and existing members receive regular notifications, via the **Clerk**, of available training courses offered by local providers: **EALC**; **RCCE** and the **District Council**.

2.4 Existing **Councillors** share best practice and arrange ad-hoc group training sessions from local providers i.e. **District Planning Officers**.

2.5 The need for appropriate and cost effective training is discussed on a regular basis at full **Council** meetings.

3. Identifying Staff Training Needs

- 3.1 The **Clerk** is actively encouraged to attend appropriate training courses provided by the EALC.
- 3.2 Where a specialist need is identified (e.g. **Freedom of Information** or **Data Protection**) appropriate and cost effective training will be sought.
- 3.3 The **Clerk** is encouraged to join **Councillors** at **County/District Council** meetings/seminars to help improve their knowledge base.
- 3.4 The **Clerk** is directed towards sharing of best practice and information with other **Local Councils**.
- 3.5 **Councillors** work closely with the **Clerk** to enable early identification of any training requirements.
- 3.6 The need for appropriate and cost-effective training is discussed on a regular basis at full **Council** meetings.

4. Financing Training Needs

- 4.1 An annual budget is set for training of **Councillors** and the **Clerk**, paid for from the Precept.
- 4.2 Use of memberships, such as with the **RCCE** are fully utilised to take advantage of discounted training/information sessions.
- 4.3 Members, whilst not obliged to, sometimes cover the cost of training from personal resources to restrict the strain on the public purse.
- 4.4 Free training and guidance offered and provided by the **District Council** is accepted whenever appropriate (e.g. **New Code of Conduct Training**).
- 4.5 On-line training sources, when available, are used wherever possible.

5. Communication

- 5.1 The training page of the **Parish Council** website shows how the **Council** communicates its detailed training commitment with the wider community.
- 5.2 The **Council's Training Record** provides evidence of the ongoing commitment of members and staff to ensuring the highest standard of practice are maintained whilst keeping up to date with all new legislation and information.