

# **EMBSAY WITH EASTBY PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MEMBERS AND STAFF TRAINING POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Increasingly, training is being seen as vital to the development of the parish council tier of local government not only for clerks but also, increasingly, for councillors (members).

1.2 Training can be viewed as a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation.

1.3 In viewing training as a “planned process,” Embsay with Eastby Parish Council regards it as an essential function of its work like many other functions such as finance, legal powers or planning. The Parish Council therefore views training as an overarching function essential for maintaining effective working procedures and practices in all areas of its work.

### **2. Statement of Intent**

2.1 Embsay with Eastby Parish Council regards training as a vital activity to its success and effectiveness. It therefore gives a high level of commitment to the personal development of members and staff and the commitment and responsibility it wishes them to have for their own learning.

2.2 It is the Council’s aim to create and engender a culture of learning and training and to ensure that progress is made, staff and members at the very least are set the target of achieving basic abilities in core training areas. The Parish Council will seek to strengthen training and development by the continuous professional development of its staff and members.

2.3 It is only by developing members and staff and equipping them with the skills and knowledge they need that the Parish Council will be able to meet the challenges it faces.

### **3. Key Elements in Training**

3.1 Training can be divided into a number of different elements. Each may be carried out at different levels and different stages in the process of development. These elements are:

- Identifying training needs – in the light of the overall objectives of the Parish Council and the requirements of its members and staff.
- Planning and organising training to meet those needs
- Designing and delivery training
- Evaluating the effectiveness of training

## 4. Identifying Training Needs

4.1 Training needs will be identified through a number of methods. For staff (i.e. Parish Clerk), training needs will be identified through the annual staff appraisal process (an informal interview) which is based on the Clerk's own assessment of his training needs as set out on the appraisal form. The Clerk and his/her Assessor will agree training needs for the forthcoming year and present these to the Parish Council for confirmation. The types of training covered should include: -

- Basic Clerk's orientation on legal, financial and administrative roles and responsibilities which should include the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) but, if not, specialist training on:
  - Powers and functions of local councils
  - Report/letter writing, production of publicity material
  - The town and country planning process
  - Professional development
  - Employment issues
  - Community activity
  - Accounting and budgeting
  - Changes in legislation
  - New processes/working methods

4.2 For members, training needs will be identified by individual members in consultation with "The Clerk" This may be accomplished through formal or informal discussions. The Clerk will hold membership of Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC). This organisation brings together the interests of parish and town councils in the three counties of Yorkshire and exists to represent the specific interests of member councils, to provide relevant legal information and to promote good local government. Along with YLCA offering specialist advice and information to parish and town councils including regular support for councils and their members. The YLCA promotes SLCC member training, conducts a programme of annual training sessions and seminars for members (at subsidised and therefore highly competitive rates) and keeps elected representatives well informed about member training matters.

## **5. Planning and Organising Training**

5.1 The types and general areas of training for members of the Parish Council should include: -

- Basic training for new councillors (i.e. powers and duties and meeting procedures).
- Councillors skills for more experienced councillors (i.e. procedures and powers of councils, the responsibilities of councillors, council finance, etc.)
- The Parish Council (general orientation, functions, services)
- Council administration (agendas, minutes, important documents, etc)
- Finance for smaller councils (i.e. internal and external audit, the budget, precept, etc.)
- Employment issues for smaller councils (i.e. recruitment, grievance and discipline, tax and NI, etc)
- Chairing meetings (for Chairmen)
- Code of Conduct
- Annual meetings, Standing Orders
- Town and Country Planning

5.2 As a minimum training requirement, the Parish Council expects all newly elected members to have undergone/undergo a formal orientation on the roles, duties and responsibilities of a local councillor as presented by the YLCA in their seminar on basic training for new councillors. The Parish Council also expects all newly elected chairmen to undergo/have undergone training on chairing a parish/town council meeting and on parish/town council finances. It also expects those members who undertake specialist responsibilities for such matters as planning, public relations/publicity, employment/staff, etc. to undertake relevant training from Yorkshire Local Councils Associations.

5.3 Due consideration will be given to the training component of regional and national conferences of the National Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks and Yorkshire Local Councils Associations. Many of these conferences contain important training sessions or learning experiences and funding for these conferences and general support from the Parish Council will be encouraged.

## **6. Designing and Delivering Training**

6.1 The Parish Clerk and the lead training member will regularly contact the YLCA to seek relevant training support and information including their annual Training and Development Programme. The YLCA should also be approached about accessing national initiatives such as the good councillor guide and associated training packs. In a similar way, the Society of Local Council Clerks should be contacted about the costs of training seminars, conferences, etc.

6.2 The Parish Clerk and the lead training member will consult annually about the training needs of the Parish Council and ensure that there is an adequate sum in the annual budget to fund essential training requirements. The YLCA should be contacted to confirm the estimated fees for whole council training, day long seminars, whole new council training, evening seminars and specialist day sessions and incorporate these fees into an adequate and appropriate annual budget for training.

**Reviewed and reconfirmed by the Parish Council on 13 March 2014**

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