PORLOCK PARISH COUNCIL
POLICY: TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Purpose
Porlock Parish Council recognises that effective training and development for councillors, employees and volunteers is essential to ensuring the council delivers high-quality services, fulfils its legal responsibilities, and achieves its strategic objectives. Training supports good governance, effective decision-making, financial management, service delivery and community engagement.

Policy Statement
Porlock Parish Council is committed to providing appropriate training and development opportunities for councillors, employees and volunteers to enable them to effectively undertake their roles and responsibilities.

The council recognises that investment in training contributes directly to improved council services, stronger governance arrangements, staff retention and better outcomes for the community.

Objectives of Training and Development
The objectives of the council's training and development programme are to:

- Support delivery of the council's strategic objectives.
- Improve service delivery to residents.
- Ensure compliance with legislation and regulations.
- Promote effective governance and financial management.
- Develop leadership and decision-making skills.
- Support succession planning.
- Encourage continuous professional development.

Councillor Training
New councillors will undertake induction training covering but not limited to:
Required

- Councillor Essentials 1 & 2.
- Code of Conduct
- Data Protection
- Audit and Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Desirable

- Council as an employer.
- HR Essentials.
- Cemetery and Memorial Management.
- Planning procedures.
- Community engagement.

Existing councillors will be encouraged to attend refresher and specialist training as required as part of the annual training programme.

Chair Training – a responsible role?
The Chair has a responsible role in leading meetings fairly, maintaining order, supporting lawful decision-making and ensuring all councillors can contribute appropriately.

Councillors appointed as Chair or Vice Chair or the council or of standing committees will be required to undertake training covering standing orders, meeting management, effective leadership, and working constructively with Officers.

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Employee Training
The council will support employees to maintain and develop professional knowledge through:

- Professional qualifications.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD).
- Specialist technical training.
- Conferences and seminars.
- Health and Safety training.

Professional qualifications such as CiLCA will be supported where they contribute to council objectives.

Volunteer Training
Volunteers undertaking activities on behalf of the council will receive appropriate guidance, information and training relevant to their role.

This may include but not limited to:

- Health and safety awareness.
- Risk assessments.
- Use of equipment.
- Environmental guidance.
- Safeguarding awareness where appropriate.
- Code of Conduct.

Training Budget
The council will include an annual training and development budget within its annual budget setting process.

The budget may be used for:

- Membership subscriptions.
- Training courses.
- Professional qualifications.
- Conferences and seminars.
- Reference materials.

Responsibilities
Full Council

- Approves the policy.
- Approves the annual training budget.
- Supports councillor development.

Finance & HR Committee

- Reviews staff training requirements.
- Monitors development plans.
- Oversees performance reviews.

Clerk

- Identifies training opportunities.
- Maintains training records.
- Advises the council on development needs.

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Triggers for Training
Training needs may be identified through:

- Annual appraisal outcomes and individual development plans.
- Internal or external audit reports identifying gaps in knowledge, controls or procedures.
- Accidents, incidents or near misses involving staff, councillors, volunteers or members of the public.
- Taking on new roles, responsibilities, projects or committee duties.
- Changes in legislation, regulation, guidance or sector good practice.
- Introduction of new systems, equipment, procedures or ways of working.
- Election, co-option or appointment of new councillors, staff or volunteers.
- Feedback from councillors, staff, volunteers, residents or partner organisations.

Evaluation
Training will be evaluated to ensure it is relevant, good value for money and supports improved confidence, competence and governance.

Evaluation may include feedback forms, appraisal discussions, committee reviews, observation of improved practice and reports to the Council on completed training. Outcomes will be used to identify whether the training need has been met and whether further development is required.

Policy Review
The policy will be monitored periodically by the Finance & HR Committee to judge its effectiveness and reviewed every three years or sooner if required by legislative, organisational or operational changes.

Dated: 11 November 2026

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Duncan McCanlis	Johnathan Jones
Chair	Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

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