

Staff Training and Development Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Abertay Housing Association's (the Association's) employees (staff) are its greatest asset. The Association is a dynamic and people-friendly organisation which strives to support its staff training and development, at the same time ensuring that such development is relevant and supports the Internal Management Plan.
- 1.2. Staff training and development is crucial to achieving successful delivery of the Association's Internal Management Plan. The Staff Training and Development Policy will encourage and support individual staff and teams in striving to deliver our Business Plan Strategic and Operational Objectives.
- 1.3. It is acknowledged that training and development should be self-driven by individuals, that said management have a significant responsibility and role to play in encouraging individuals to take the initiative in order to realise their full potential.

2. Policy Principles

- 2.1. The Association's Staff Training and Development Policy aims to:
 - Ensure fairness, clarity and consistency for all staff members.
 - Provide a framework for ensuring that the business as well as staff benefit from development activities undertaken.
 - Promote a culture of sharing knowledge and skills with work colleagues.
 - Assist the Association's staff members with their continuous professional development.
 - Assist a development discussion between staff and their line managers during appraisals.
 - Promote considering alternative methods of training to attending courses and conferences.

3. Policy Conditions – Training Parameters

- 3.1. This policy introduces clear parameters for staff and management to follow in terms of the expected and allowable levels of personal development.
- 3.2. **What counts towards training and self-development?**

All training and development activities, including conferences, courses, self-learning, job shadowing, and self-guided learning, attending sessions run by the Association, etc will count. Staff are encouraged to consider various methods of training, in light of their suitability for the purpose and to suit individual preferences.

4. Annual Training Budget

- 4.1. Applications for training / conference fees to be subsidised fully or partially by the Association will be subject to the Association's Strategic and Operational Objectives and the availability of funds in the Annual Training Budget.

5. The Role of the Line Manager

- 5.1. As mentioned above, it is acknowledged that personal development should be self-driven; however, we also recognise the motivational role of the line manager who should encourage staff to take the

initiative. Staff members are required to discuss with their line manager how the training event they wish to undertake would benefit the business. It may be that the training would benefit other colleagues by increasing their efficiency and thus making them more valuable to the business. The Training / Development Evaluation Form prompts employees to think in these terms when planning their development.

6. Sharing Knowledge with Work Colleagues

- 6.1. There is a lot of specialised knowledge held amongst the Association's staff that could better benefit colleagues and the business were it to be shared. This policy aims to encourage staff to share their knowledge and skills with each other.
- 6.2. Gaining diverse knowledge and skills from colleagues can also effectively help in enhancing people's career prospects and employability.

7. Annual Appraisals

- 7.1. In order for training to add value to the Association, the training and development needs of individuals and teams requires identification. The Association, through its managers, will carry out an Annual Appraisal for each member of staff, which will identify essential training needs and desirable training requests.

8. Annual Corporate Training Plan

- 8.1. The information collected during the Annual Appraisals will be assessed and used to assist with the compilation of the Annual Corporate Training Plan, which is part of the Internal Management Plan.
- 8.2. Essential Training Needs
Managers will need to be aware that the essential training needs of individuals must be linked to their Job Description, which by necessity will be linked to the Strategic and Operational Objectives.
- 8.3. Desirable Training
Desirable training need not be linked to the individual's Job Description but must be linked to the Strategic and Operational Objectives.

9. Training Methods

- 9.1. Induction
 - 9.1.1. An Induction and Training Plan will be discussed with all new employees during their first week of employment and delivered throughout their probationary period.
 - 9.1.2. New members of staff will also be provided with a copy of the Staff Handbook (in electronic form).
 - 9.1.3. Where employees change their job within the organisation then an appropriate Induction and Training Plan will be formulated and implemented to enable the individual to be properly trained for their new role.

9.2. In-house training

9.2.1. Managers will provide on-the-job training by giving instruction, coaching and work-based projects. In addition to this, the Chief Executive and Senior Managers will organise regular team briefing and information sessions with staff on current issues affecting the Association.

9.3. Reading and Self-Guided Learning

9.3.1. It is recognised that, to support their personal career development, staff are likely to engage in reading, and other forms of learning both at work and in their own time. The Association will provide access to technical literature, publications, etc that it holds and will consider buying further materials if there is a business need for them.

9.4. External Training

9.4.1. Where a training need cannot be met in house, the Association will send staff to training courses, conferences and seminars as required. Where there are a number of staff who would benefit from training in a particular area, it may be appropriate to bring an external trainer to the Association.

9.4.2. All external training must be booked through the Corporate Services Officer who will record the details / costs etc. All staff must complete an Evaluation Form after the event and pass this to their line manager. The line manager will review this with the staff member, to assess the value of the training, before passing the form and their comments to the Corporate Services Officer, for filing.

9.4.3. It is good practice to share the knowledge gained with other employees. Where relevant, a briefing note should be prepared or an update given at a team meeting and materials should be made available to other staff.

9.5. Further Education

9.5.1. The Association aims to encourage staff to undertake part-time vocational qualifications which are relevant to their career development at the Association. Assistance, both with the costs of training, and by providing some limited paid study time will therefore be considered, depending on the circumstances.

9.5.2. All applications from staff members for assistance in undertaking vocational qualifications will be assessed by the member of staff's departmental manager and the Chief Executive. Whether the application is supported, and the level of support granted, will be based on the following criteria:

- The extent to which the training will help the Association meet Strategic and Operational Objectives.
- Whether the course will assist the individual to meet identified learning needs and objectives relating to their present post.
- Whether the course will assist the individual in their longer term career development within the Association.
- The commitment shown by the individual to the course, and to developing their role within the Association.
- The cost of the course, in terms of course fees, study materials etc.
- The likely study time requirements for the course.
- Whether budget provision is available.

- Whether service levels within the Association could be maintained throughout the study absences, and whether additional staff costs would need to be incurred to cover these absences.

9.5.3. Based on these criteria, the Association may, at its discretion, grant assistance up to the following limits:

- Up to the full cost of course fees. Course fees paid may be repayable in certain circumstances for example, the person leaves the Association's employment within a specified period of time.
- Paid study time or time to attend college of up to a maximum of one day per week during term time.
- Up to a maximum of £100 per year for essential books and study materials. These will remain the property of the Association and will require to be returned at the end of the course, or if the employee leaves.

9.5.4. Assistance with Further Education:

- Requests from staff for unpaid study leave will be considered sympathetically.
- For courses outwith Dundee, actual travel costs, up to the equivalent of second class rail fare may be claimed.
- Provision of meals for employees on vocational training will remain the responsibility of the employee.

9.5.5. Staff must inform their manager of all exam / assessment results.

9.5.6. Staff must inform their manager if they leave the course or temporary cease study.

10. Evaluation / Recording Training

10.1. In order for the effectiveness of training and development activities to be evaluated a systematic approach will be used.

10.2. Evaluation Forms will be utilised by the individual and their manager in order to identify the training objective and whether it was achieved by the training.

10.3. Details of all training received by each employee will be maintained on their individual training record, held by Corporate Services.

10.4. All staff should keep their own simple record of Association supported training / development delivered throughout the year. Forms are provided to complement this policy / included in the appraisal document. This will also be used by the relevant appraiser in monitoring and approving requests for training throughout the course of the year. The Association's employees are encouraged to discuss their development with their line managers regularly throughout the year, rather than leaving such discussions to the appraisal meeting only.

11. The Appraisal Process

11.1. In order to prompt a meaningful discussion between the staff member and their line manager training and development activities have been incorporated into the Association's standard appraisal form. Appraisers and staff should work together in achieving this level of focussed development –

all of which should be driven by the staff appraisal system, which in turn should heavily reflect the Business Plan Strategic and Operational Objectives.

12. Risk Management

- 12.1. The risks associated with staff training and development are incorporated within the Association's Risk Management Framework.

13. Equal Opportunities

- 13.1. The protected characteristics enshrined in the Equality Act 2010 are respected when ensuring compliance with the Association's obligations in relation to staff training and development.

14. Policy Monitoring and Review

- 14.1. The Chief Executive and Corporate Services Director will monitor the implementation and operational effectiveness of the Staff Training and Development Policy.
- 14.2. The Staff Training and Development Policy will be reviewed every three years or as and when deemed necessary.