

Housing Services

**Training Strategy
(2025-2026)**

Document Control

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1. Introduction

Havering Council's Housing Services is committed to delivering the best possible service to all customers.

Housing Services considers basic (mandatory), relevant and continuous professional development training for all staff is vital in order to deliver that excellent service.

There are currently approximately 250 staff in Housing Services, each of whom have undertaken mandatory training in areas such as Equality and Diversity, H&S and Data Protection, with opportunities to improve their professional skillset through a range of additional optional courses.

It is important however, that our investment in training is spent cost-effectively, allocated fairly, monitored regularly and assessed thoroughly to evaluate its usefulness.

This strategy sets out to introduce a range of improved measures to ensure that all training is relevant, cost-effective and delivers real benefits to staff, Housing Services and its customers.

Each member of staff will have a performance and development review annually with updates throughout the year. Training and development will form part of that PDR process to identify the training needs to ensure the individual has the skills required to do their role effectively and are able to develop professionally.

2. Key objectives and action points of this strategy

2.1 Objective 1:

To raise awareness of mandatory training and optional professional development courses currently available to all staff on LXP (Learning Experience Platform)

- Remind managers to include as a topic in AOB section at team meetings.

2.2 Objective 2:

To provide a robust process that will help ensure all training not only supports the professional development/career aspirations of the individual, but also delivers demonstrable effective, value-for-money benefits to the Council and the residents of Havering.

- Develop a training delivery process
- Produce protocol (step-by-step instructions)
- An approved Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) is secured

2.3 Objective 3:

To ensure that individual training needs are regularly reviewed and discussed with the trainee.

- Line manager to confirm that this process is already in place

2.4 Objective 4:

To ensure that central records are securely kept and maintained for use at future personal performance reviews.

- Develop a performance monitoring, review and success evaluation process

3. Types of training courses

3.1 Mandatory training courses

All managers and staff are required to undertake the Council's mandatory training courses as soon as possible upon joining the Council, and refresher training as required. Examples of topics covered by mandatory training courses include Health & Safety, Data Protection and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion.

Mandatory courses are available on LXP:

<https://onesourceict.sharepoint.com/sites/HRIntranet/SitePages/Mandatory-Training.aspx>

3.2 Other in-house training courses (non-mandatory)

The Council offers staff a diverse range of training courses that are not mandatory and are intended to help the individual's career progression. These comprise a variety of self-development and business skills courses.

This training is free to the service and can be accessed through the LXP link above under 'Course Categories'.

Managers are asked to ensure that staff are regularly reminded about these in-house training opportunities and encourage staff to undertake appropriate courses. There is a cost to the council in terms of time away from work so the

training should only be undertaken following agreement that it is appropriate with the line-manager.

As part of the annual PDR review the manager and the member of staff will discuss the training they have received, and their training needs for the coming years. This will be reviewed and updated throughout the year.

3.3 External training courses

The Council is committed in helping to support the professional development of all staff and provides opportunities for them to attend externally organised training courses. As part of the annual PDR review the manager and the member of staff will discuss the training they have received, and their training needs for the coming years. This will be reviewed and updated throughout the year.

There is a limited budget for the external training courses. Each year, following the PDR reviews, managers should draw together the required training for the year into a Training and Development Plan for their team and prioritise the training based on the following criteria:

- a. Training required to meet statutory requirements
- b. Training required to meet changes to services through changes in legislation or policy
- c. Training required to improve service delivery and customer care.
- d. Management development.
- e. Training designed for personal development for staff.

Where there is insufficient budget then either alternative training methods may be considered or the timing of the training moved to different years.

Managers should send their Training and Development Plan to Lisa Buttery who will feed this into the over-arching plan for the whole of Housing.

3.4 Qualification training

There is a role for qualification training. They are expensive both in terms of the time and money commitment. A number of issues should be considered in deciding whether this is the best option for the individual:

- Have they been considered as part of a PDR review and the training need identified?
- Have other training & learning options been considered?
- Is there a budget for the course – if over two years is the budget in the second year available and agreed?
- What outcomes will the course deliver?
- Has the individual already attained a qualification?
- Are there others within the team/service that could benefit from the qualification?
- Consider the impact on the service area.

3.5 Apprenticeship training courses

The Council regularly throughout the year carry out apprenticeship campaigns offering staff the opportunity to apply for a funded apprenticeship.

Managers can follow the link below to seek information on how to access apprenticeship funding, develop careers and/or help on how to build new skills:

<https://onesourceict.sharepoint.com/sites/HRIntranet/SitePages/Apprenticeships.aspx>

Alternatively, managers can contact Lisa Buttery who can assist with finding suitable apprenticeships, training suppliers and the drawing down of appropriate funding.

3.6 10 Days of Learning

'My 10 Days of Learning' is the Council's commitment to staff to offer 10 days of learning and development to all colleagues.

Most of the 'My 10 Days of Learning' is likely to be on the job experiences such as work shadowing, projects, placements or informal learning from others, mentoring etc.

Details of this learning and development initiative and the approach used to support staff can be found by following this link:

<https://onesourceict.sharepoint.com/sites/HRIntranet/SitePages/10-Days-of-Learning.aspx?web=1>

4. Inductions

The induction training of each new employee shall include general and specific safety instruction and it is the responsibility of the Manager to ensure that each new employee is familiar with the safety aspects of their job.

New starter information and induction details are also listed here:

<https://onesourceict.sharepoint.com/sites/HRIntranet/SitePages/Induction%20and%20New%20Starters.aspx>

5. External training application protocol

The purpose of this protocol is to help ensure that:

- Managers maintain a consistent approach with regard to the training of their staff, in line with corporate guidelines;
- Central records detailing external courses carried out, budget spend and feedback are kept up-to-date.

Training requests can be made at any time, however the following protocol applies and must be adhered to for all such requests:

- Once a staff member has identified an external training course they wish to attend, they should seek approval from their manager to undertake the training.
- The manager should consider:
 - Is the training suitable/appropriate to the role?
 - Will the training enhance the staff/teams knowledge or assist with their development or career progress?
 - Does the training provide value for money?
- Provided the manager has approved the training request, the manager should send full details of the training course with details of the staff member or team wishing to attend to Lisa Buttery.
- Lisa Buttery will book the training, process invoices using the central training budget and send confirmation to the staff member/team confirming training has been booked.
- Once training has taken place, Lisa Buttery will contact the staff member/team to obtain feedback on the training.

The above process will ensure that central training records are kept up-to-date including budget spend with feedback should other staff wish to book the same training course(s) in the future.

6. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this strategy

This one-year strategy and accompanying action plan are intended to commence in July 2025.

The officer responsible for the implementation and delivery of this strategy is Lisa Buttery, Business Support manager of Housing Services.

The action plan will be reviewed quarterly to ensure it remains relevant, up-to-date and fit-for-purpose. Accordingly, any necessary adjustments to ensure it is on track for delivery will be made at those times.

An evaluation of this strategy will be undertaken at its conclusion and will be duly reported to SMT.

For any advice or assistance concerning this strategy, please contact [Lisa Buttery](#).

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Housing Services will seek to ensure that this strategy is, at all times, fairly and consistently applied to all employees of the directorate.

All Housing Services employees are invited to indicate if they wish to make use of the Council's translation and interpretation services, or if they require additional support to access or understand the strategy.

Additionally, they are invited to provide details of their ethnicity, sexuality, disability and other equalities information. Provision of this information is not obligatory, but will help the Council to monitor the number and types of protected characteristics affected by this strategy, as well as identify evolving requirements.

All equalities records will be securely kept to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout. An approved Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) will be made available to view, upon request.

8. Data Protection (GDPR)

Havering Council takes personal privacy very seriously and will never share an applicant's personal data without their prior knowledge, unless required to do so by law.

For full details about how the Council protects personal data, please visit the Council's intranet page