

Property and Housing Services Training Policy (2026)

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1. Introduction

Havering Council's Housing and Property services is committed to delivering the best possible service to its customers. Appropriate and effective staff training is essential to this commitment.

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 allocated appropriately and cost-effectively; monitored regularly and assessed thoroughly to evaluate its usefulness.

This policy sets out a range of measures to improve training benefits for our staff, partners and customers.

For each member of staff, we will conduct a Performance and Development Review (PDR) annually, with quarterly one-to-one sessions throughout the year to ensure the individual has the skills required to do their role effectively and are able to develop professionally.

2. Types of training courses

2.1 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>

2.2 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.

2.3 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.

2.4 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.

2.5 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.

2.6 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>

3. 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>

4. 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/team's 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 the Business Support manager (BSM) – Living Well.
- The BSM 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, the BSM 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.

5. Equal Opportunities Statement

5.1 The Public Sector Equalities Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;

- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

5.2 Protected Characteristics

'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

5.3 Our Commitments

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

5.4 EqHIA

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) has been carried out and accompanies this policy. The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations. The Council will seek to ensure that this policy is, at all times, implemented in a manner that is fair to all sections of the local community.

5.5 Translation, Interpretation and Use of Data

All applicants for housing or re-housing will be invited to indicate if they wish to make use of the Council's translation and interpretation services, or if they require additional services to enable them to access and understand the policy to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in any way.

They also will be invited to provide details of ethnic origin, sexuality, disability and other equalities information. Provision of this information is not obligatory or a requirement for acceptance of an application.

However, such information will help monitor the number and types of protected characteristics requiring hostel support and will help ensure that service improvement evolves in line with any changing local needs.

Equalities records will be kept and monitored to ensure hostel accommodations are offered and allocated fairly. This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is not operated in any way that could discriminate or disadvantage against any particular group of people. All information provided will be kept confidential and treated with respect at all times.

6. Data Protection statement

Havering Council takes personal privacy matters very seriously and will never share the individual'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 [Havering Council Data Protection policy](#).

7. Dissemination and communication of this policy

The BSM will consult with all affected stakeholders, directly or indirectly, to ensure this policy fulfils its purpose to be clear and transparent.

This policy will be made available internally and externally in hard copy and electronic versions, as well as various formats – such as easy read, multi-lingual, braille and audio - upon request.

8. Implementation of this policy

This policy will take effect from September 2026.

Responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy will be with Havering Council's Director of Living Well.

9. Monitoring and review of this policy

In the interests of continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure it remains relevant, up to date and fit for purpose for the Council and the residents of Havering.

10. Delegated authority to make minor changes to this policy

The Director of Living Well, in consultation with the Director of Housing and Property, will be able to approve minor amendments, i.e. amendments that do not significantly change this policy or associated procedures.