

Bridgewater Housing Association Ltd Policy

Approved by committee on: May 2005
May 2009
September 2019

Review Date: 2022

Ref:
Training & Development

1. INTRODUCTION

Bridgewater Housing Association recognises the importance of ensuring that our people have the required skills and abilities to undertake their work to the highest possible standards. As much of the Association's working environment is subject to constantly changing legislation and regulatory standards, it is vital that our skills and knowledge are continually updated and improved.

2. SHR STANDARDS OF GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This policy is intended to provide additional assurance to the Board of Bridgewater Housing Association that it is complying with STANDARD 6:-

The governing body and senior officers have the necessary skills and knowledge they need to be effective.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to the training and development of all staff and board members.

4. PRINCIPLES

This policy aims to:

- Ensure staff and board members are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to enable them to provide high quality services
- Ensure fairness, clarity and consistency for all staff and board members in the provision of training and development opportunities
- Provide a framework for ensuring the business as well as its people benefit from training and development activities undertaken
- Promote a culture of sharing knowledge and skills with work colleagues
- Assist staff members with their continuous professional development
- Assist developmental discussion between staff/managers/board members during Employee Development Scheme (EDS) meetings.
- Promote a wide range of training methods linked to EDS outcomes
- Ensure all parties undertake responsibility and contribute effectively to training and development within the organisation

5. TRAINING BUDGET

The Association allocates appropriate resources through separate annual budgets for both staff and board member training. These budgets are managed by the Office Administrator and should not be exceeded without approval of the Chief Executive.

The Association recognises that unforeseen or enforced legislative or procedural changes can create additional training requirements which have not been included in the annual budget. These will be considered on an ad hoc basis.

6. PARAMETERS

Many activities can be considered as training and development;

- Induction (new, transferred or promoted staff)
- formal courses or events
- conferences
- self-learning
- job shadowing
- internal sessions
- coaching
- tool talks
- forum meetings
- Board/staff away days

7. VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Association will support staff to undertake further education courses where these are deemed to be relevant to the Association and where desired outcomes are directly linked to the Association's business objectives. There must also be a mutual benefit when support, particularly financial, is provided.

An example would be where a Housing Assistant is competent and suitably qualified to carry out the functions of his/her post, but is keen to develop skills in other areas with a view to becoming a Housing Officer. This is straightforward if say, an existing Housing Officer is intending to retire next year and the Association believes the Assistant has the potential to fulfil the role. However, this is rarely the norm.

In many cases financial support may be provided with the understanding that the Association benefits from the employee's increased skills without necessarily creating an enhanced job, or indeed salary. This may ultimately result in the staff member moving job to fulfil their ambitions, but in the interim this creates a short term mutual benefit to both parties.

However the Association may be faced with multiple financial applications from staff members in different departments and could not, despite a willingness for employee development, in all good faith support some or all requests. Although many factors need to be taken into account, the Association will consider all applications for financial assistance in a fair and consistent manner. The final decision will be made by the Chief Executive.

8. PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

The Association will pay annual professional fees for membership of one institution directly relevant to the staff member's job. These need to be paid directly by staff and if appropriate, will be refunded by the Association.

NOTE: Details on the rules and payment of vocational training and professional fees are included in EVH Statement of terms and conditions of contract.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board and Leadership Team are responsible for the Association's strategic development and must ensure that the skills and knowledge of the staff are developed in line with organisational objectives. To ensure this, all managers and staff have individual responsibilities:

Chief Executive

- Identify broad development needs in relation to organisational aims and objectives
- Ensure the allocation of adequate financial resources for staff development
- Evaluate the effectiveness of training and development outcomes
- Undertake annual EDS meetings with Senior Managers and other relevant staff

Senior Managers

- Identify and support the development needs of their team in accordance with individual, departmental and organisational requirements
- Undertake annual EDS meetings with team members
- Plan and co-ordinate departmental training needs and evaluate effectiveness
- Circulate relevant information on training opportunities and encourage attendance/participation as appropriate
- Plan and arrange induction programmes for new staff

All Staff

- Play an active and positive part in self development
- Identify training opportunities agreed in EDS objectives
- Share knowledge gained with team members eg toolbox talks
- Maintain records of attendance/participation in all forms of development (as per section 5). An optional form is included at Appendix 2 which staff are free to use if it is helpful.

10. BOARD MEMBERS

Board members will be provided with regular training opportunities. Attendance is not mandatory however members should be mindful of an expectation to update their skills and knowledge throughout their term of office. Development opportunities will be identified through the Annual Development Meeting process. These opportunities will include:

- Individual training/coaching
- Management Committee Training
- Attendance at conferences and seminars
- Joint training sessions with other Housing Associations
- Visits to other organisations or projects
- Board and Leadership Team strategic away days

Should a Board Member wish to take up an opportunity to enrol in a further education course which would lead to a qualification, they should make an application in writing to the Chief Executive explaining why they believe that the course would benefit the Association using the Training and Evaluation Form. They should include the costs of the course. The Chief Executive will have delegated authority to decide whether the Association will support the Board Member and to what level, taking account of the relevance of the course to the Board Member's role on the governing body.

11. EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

All staff will have an annual Employee Development interview with their line manager. The exact format of the documents may be regularly updated or changed, by the Chief Executive,

to ensure it is effective and promotes a discussion which is relevant to the current working environment. However, the process remains a periodic and systematic assessment of individual job performance and productivity in relation to organisational objectives. The process also aims to jointly identify areas for improvement and career enhancement as the basis to form a personal development plan for the forthcoming year.

Regular one to one discussions on progression of the plan should also be carried out during the course of the year.

12. BOOKING TRAINING & EVALUATION

Once a training activity has been identified staff members should complete the pre-training objectives section of the Training Evaluation Form (appendix 1) and submit it to their line manager for approval and authorisation by the Chief Executive.

If approved, the form will be passed to the Office Administrator who will book the training and forward confirmation/joining details to the staff member. If staff are arranging to attend sessions directly, the Office Administrator should be made aware of these. If an event has been booked and paid for and the staff member is unable to attend, without valid reason, the staff member will be required to reimburse the Association for the full cost of the event.

On completion of the training, the Office Administrator will issue the staff training evaluation form for completion of the post evaluation section. This should be discussed and completed in conjunction with your line manager. Managers should return the forms to the Office Administrator for filing. The Leadership Team will use the information for assessment and updating of EDS development plans.

13. CONSULTATION

This policy was circulated to all staff for comment.

14. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed in 2022.



TRAINING & EVALUATION FORM

Name		Activity	
Date		Venue	
Duration		Cost	

PRE TRAINING DISCUSSION OBJECTIVES

What skill or knowledge is the training activity expected to deliver?

What performance improvements are expected as a result of the training?

What objective or personal development area will the activity support?

Manager's signature		Date	
Chief Exec's Signature		Date	

Authorised		Refused		Booked	
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POST TRAINING DISCUSSION EVALUATION (To be completed with your line manager)

What knowledge or skills did you gain as a result of the training activity?

How are you applying your learning in your job?

How has this helped improve you, your team or the organisation's performance?

Is further training required on this topic to meet your objectives?

Manager's signature		Date	
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