



The Langstane Group

Training and Development Policy

SMT approval date	13 January 2020
Board Approval date	20 January 2020
Implementation date	1 February 2020
Review date	February 2023
Version	V1

Version	Date of approval	Changes
Version 1	20/01/2020	New Policy

1. Introduction

Formed in 1977, Langstane Housing Association is a Co-operative and Community Benefit Society, and a registered social landlord with charitable status.

The Langstane Group (Langstane / the Group) consists of Langstane Housing Association Limited and its wholly owned subsidiaries.

This policy applies to all entities of the Langstane Group.

The Group is committed to promoting an environment of training, learning and continuous development for all those involved with the activities of the Group. The Group recognises that effective development is not only vital to meeting future goals and ambitions but also makes an essential contribution to the development of a responsive, supportive and well managed organisation.

The Group recognises this is essential in order to provide a high quality service which meets the needs and expectations of our tenants and other customer, stakeholders and members of the public. This policy has been developed in line with our business plan with a strategic aim of developing and implementing training to support and encourage our people to reach their potential by providing the necessary resources.

2. Policy Statement - Aims

The policy applies to all employees and governing body members of the Group and its Board of Management and is linked to the Group's aim to recruit, develop and retain people who are skilled, motivated and committed to achieving the Group's Mission, Vision and Values and "be the best we can be".

Implementation of this policy will pay due regard to the Group's commitment to equality of opportunity for everyone and putting people at the heart of our decision making.

It is intended to allow individuals to identify and discuss training and development which would assist them in performing their current role more effectively, prepare them for future roles and make good use of their talents and aptitudes.

It will ensure training is planned and directed towards achieving the objectives of the Group in the most effective manner.

It will meet employee and governing body training and development needs in the most effective way by using a variety of internal and external training methods.

3. Links to other policies

This policy links to a number of policies and corporate documents including but not limited to:

- Equality and Diversity Strategy and Policy
- Staff Handbook
- Health and Safety Policy

- Information Security Policy
- Stress and Mental Wellbeing at Work Policy
- Strategic risk register

4. Policy Statement

Identifying training and development needs

The Group has a structured approach to identifying the development needs of individuals and particular groups.

Staffs Skills Audit was completed in mid 2017 which identified existing skills within the current workforce at that time. New employees who join the Group subsequently provide relevant information on their application form which is used to update a Skills database.

The annual Personal Development Framework (PDF) process, supplemented by regular follow-up meetings, allow individuals to discuss relevant training and development needs with their Line Manager.

5. Responsibilities

Responsibility for staff development is shared between:

- a) the individual member of staff
- b) the Line Manager, and
- c) the Departmental Director.

Responsibility for Board development is shared between:

- a) the individual Board member, and
- b) the Board Chair.

Individual members of staff have responsibility for:

- Ensuring they undertake regular reviews of the evolving nature of their work and for discussing their development needs with their Line Manager
- Participating actively in staff development which has been identified and agreed and applying newly acquired knowledge and skills in their work as appropriate
- Undertaking any mandatory training that is required of them by the Group

Line Managers have responsibility for:

- Ensuring staff receive appropriate initial training and induction
- Ensuring regular one to one discussions take place, including annual review (PDF), with each individual member of staff in order to identify development and training needs
- Progressing the needs agreed in personal development plans and ensuring subsequent actions are monitored and evaluated
- Encouraging staff to develop in their role

- Looking for potential and finding ways for staff to demonstrate potential.

Directors have responsibility for:

- Ensuring adequate resources are available for training and development
- Monitoring budget expenditure to ensure maximum benefit is achieved (Director of Finance and Corporate Services as the budget holder)
- Ensuring all section staff have access to training and development activities as required
- Providing a coherent framework for identifying, planning and evaluating training and development in their section
- Ensuring all training and development activities are linked to business planning and are fed into the Group's corporate plan
- Linking training and development to business needs
- Promoting a climate, and providing space and resources, to ensure continuing learning and individual development is recognised as an imperative to meet the future plans of the Group.

Board Members have responsibility for:

- Ensuring they receive appropriate Board induction
- Ensuring they undertake regular reviews of the evolving nature of their role and for discussing their development needs with the Board Chair
- Participating actively in board training and development which has been identified and agreed and applying newly acquired knowledge and skills in their role as appropriate in furtherance of good governance
- Undertaking any mandatory training that is required of them by the Group
- Ensuring an appropriate level of resource is made available to match training plans and support the training and development of staff.

6. Training policy – types of training

There are different areas of training that form the basis of the policy which are:

- Induction
- Statutory
- Health and Safety – Annual Review / specific to role
- Operational
- Staff personal development CPD – mandatory and non mandatory

Identifying training and development needs, and helping individuals to improve their performance are key responsibilities for line managers and the Chair. In conjunction with the Human Resources (HR) Manager, line managers are also responsible for measuring the effectiveness of any training and development undertaken by their staff.

7. Sources of training

Various methods of training will be considered:

- In-house, using either an internal or external trainer

- online – webinars, modules
- self directed
- external third party
- seminars and conferences
- on the job
- mentoring
- job shadowing
- reading

As part of induction and on-going development, line managers and supervisors recognise their responsibility for providing work-based on the job training where this is the most suitable development option. This policy aims to encourage colleagues to share their knowledge and skills with each other.

All staff and governing body members are encouraged to take advantage of the development opportunities offered by Virtual College which provides a range of short online courses covering topics such as management development, health and safety, interpersonal and communications skills and various other relevant housing courses.

8. Applying for professional courses

It is expected the annual Personal Development Framework (or Annual Reviews for Board members) will identify those who want to study for a degree or those who wish to obtain an occupational qualification, e.g. finance or housing qualifications such as courses offered by the Chartered Institute of Housing. For staff, the course will be relevant to the work objectives of the employee's current post and career aspirations and will contribute to the delivery of the Group's mission. In the case of Board members it will enhance their skill set and contribute to enhanced Board performance.

A training application form will be completed by the applicant prior to any training and development activity being undertaken. The learning outcomes will be agreed through discussion with the Line Manager. The completed form is then passed to the HR Manager for recording and presented to Senior Management Team or Board Chair to establish suitability of the training and if appropriate to the applicant's role. All requests should be made by 31 August for courses commencing from the following April.

Where support for a professional course is supported, payment of the full applicable course fees or partial financial support will be considered. This will be considered against how the professional course relates to the individual's role, and the availability of sufficient funding for all the training programmed.

Financial support for the course is conditional on the employee / Board member remaining within the Group and successfully completing the course in full.

If the employee / Board member does not complete the course, any financial contributions made by the Group will be due to be repaid in full. The only exemptions to this will be due to maternity leave, longer term illness or disability.

Where agreement is reached that a substantial contribution is made towards course fees, or if fees are paid in full, the employee / Board member will be

required to enter into a training/development contract, the conditions of which will be specified together with any penalties for failing to complete.

Where an employee / Board member undertakes a qualification at the request of the Group no repayment will be required.

9. Professional Fees

The Group will reimburse one set of annual professional fees paid by employees for membership of a professional institution where it is a requirement of the job specification in order to fulfil the duties of the role.

Training and Development Procedures

Procedures for requesting and booking training courses will be maintained by the HR Manager. Line Managers are responsible for ensuring they authorise training and understand the content and value of the courses being attended by their staff.

Whilst it is expected that most training requirements will be identified through the PDF process, staff and Board Members may make specific requests which should be in writing to the HR Manager. Upon receipt of a written application, normally within 28 days, the HR Manager will either, following consultation with the appropriate Line Manager:

- provide written agreement to the request, or
- hold a meeting to discuss the request.

The meeting will provide an opportunity to explore the desired training in depth, and to discuss its appropriateness to the individual's job and the needs of the Group. It will also provide an opportunity to consider any possible alternative arrangements that might meet the individual's training needs.

After the meeting the HR manager will write to the member of staff, normally within 14 days, to either:

- accept the request, clearly setting out the details including whether the member of staff will receive pay during any time off to undertake training, any adjustment to their working hours and how the cost of the training will be met; or
- confirm details of any compromise arrangement agreed at the meeting; or
- reject the request, providing a business reason and an explanation.

The time limits stated above may be extended by agreement.

Each request will be dealt with individually, taking into account the nature of the request and any likely effects of granting it. Agreeing to a request from one member of staff will not set a precedent or create a right for others to have their requests granted. Although the Group will endeavour, where possible, to accommodate requests it will not always be possible to grant them in relation to study or training.

Once an individual has experienced a training and development activity or course, they should measure its impact and effectiveness in terms of performance and contribution to the Group as well as evaluating the training agency in respect of value for money. The HR Manager will issue a short survey every time a training activity is undertaken and the results will be recorded in the Training Database along with any certificates issued.

Managers and the Chair, with support from the HR Manager, will develop the means of assessing how effective any training and development undertaken has been in improving performance. This will take place at a post training and development de-briefing and more generally within the PDF or annual review process.

As part of the annual planning cycle, individuals and Managers will review the value of any training and development initiatives they have put in place, and update their training plans in the light of revisions to business plans.

Signing-in records will be recorded for all in-house training completed within the Group.

All training will be recorded on an individual's personnel records and also on the HR software application.

The training plan will be updated and circulated to the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis to show training currently on-going and completed, spend against budget and quality evaluation.

Monitoring and Review

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services has responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed in February 2023 or where a change of legislation or best practice necessitates an earlier review.

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