

LIFELONG
LEARNING
AGREEMENT

CITY OF LINCOLN
COUNCIL

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1 Introduction

This Lifelong Learning Agreement is made between the named Unions and City of Lincoln Council. It is the intention of all parties that this Agreement defines the principles and objectives to support the growth of Lifelong Learning opportunities for all employees of the City Council.

2 Objectives

- To build and maintain a culture where learning is seen as an integral part of the lifestyle of the employees of the City Council
- To recognise and support the role of Union Learning Representatives (ULR) and Lifelong Learning Advisers
- To encourage the employees of the City Council to participate in Lifelong Learning
- To build upon the Government's current Lifelong Learning initiatives
- To work with learning organisations and providers to ensure that Lifelong Learning opportunities are available to all employees
- To establish a City Council Learning Centre
- To identify and support employees with learning needs including basic skills needs and basic IT
- To provide opportunities for basic skills development within working time

3 Scope

- 3.1 This lifelong Learning Agreement covers all employees of the City of Lincoln Council
- 3.2 The City Council undertakes to ensure that this Lifelong Learning Agreement is not used as an alternative to collective bargaining with the named trade unions and agrees to maintain and use existing negotiation procedures and arrangements, other than those specified in this Agreement.
- 3.3 The Partners agree that issues arising from any educational or learning initiatives should be raised through the Learning Committee in the first instance and then through the usual Council procedures

4 Lifelong Learning

- 4.1 This Lifelong Learning Agreement refers specifically to the growth and development of Lifelong Learning opportunities at the City Council, Lifelong Learning being the learning needs of employees which are potentially not a

requirement of their job role but which are a requirement for their own personal development.

- 4.2 Learning needs, which are job related, will be addressed through the Council's Appraisal systems and the Lifelong Learning Committee

5 The Lifelong Learning Committee

- 5.1 The Partners agree to establish a joint Union/Council Lifelong Learning Committee that will be responsible for introducing, implementing and monitoring Lifelong Learning initiatives.

- 5.2 The main responsibilities of the Lifelong Learning Committee will include the:-

- Identification of Lifelong Learning needs of employees.
- Identification of groups and individuals who should benefit from particular Lifelong Learning initiatives
- Development of a realistic Lifelong Learning Plan, setting goals and targets for the Lifelong Learning provision within the City Council, including the establishment of a Learning Centre.
- Review and evaluation of all Lifelong Learning activities
- Maintenance of contacts / links with outside education and training providers
- Effective implementation and monitoring of the Lifelong Learning Plan

- 5.3 The Partners will ensure that the Committee members are provided with all relevant information concerning Lifelong Learning at the City Council and their duties / responsibilities as members of the Committee

- 5.4 The Committee have the responsibility of ensuring that all information on matters relating to Lifelong learning in the City Council is communicated to all employees and managers as appropriate, specifically the availability of Lifelong Learning opportunities

- 5.5 The Lifelong Learning Committee will meet once a month or as agreed to carry out the tasks as identified by this Lifelong Learning Agreement.

6 Membership of the Lifelong Learning Committee

- 6.1 The Partners agree to ensure that all employees are represented on the Lifelong Learning Committee. Therefore the Lifelong Learning Committee will comprise:-

- 2 Union Learning Representatives from each named union

- Head of Human Resources
- Workforce Development Manager
- Training Adviser
- Other Union Officials as and when required
- All other learning Partners will attend as and when required

No quorum shall be required in order for a meeting to take place. However, where decisions are required, at least 7 members including 1 person from each of the named Trade Unions, the Chair or Vice Chair, and either the Workforce Development Manager or the Training Adviser must be present for the decision to be confirmed.

- 6.2 ULRs will hold their position for a period of 2 years at which time they will be eligible for re-election. Any vacancies arising as a result of a ULR resigning from their position, and/or from the Council will be filled in accordance with the rulebook of that Union.
- 6.3 Where necessary the Committee will involve outside organisations to help and support the achievement of the Lifelong Learning Plan
- 6.4 A Chairperson and Vice-Chair will be elected at the first meeting and once a year thereafter, one being from the trade union side and the other from the officer side
- 6.5 The Chairperson and Vice-Chair will meet 2 weeks before every meeting to set the agenda for future meetings and to make sure that all correspondence is sent to all members of the Lifelong learning Committee (including the minutes of the previous meeting which will also be distributed to all CMT and JCC members)

7 Union Learning representatives (ULRs)

- 7.1 Members from each trade union will select ULRs within their own department in accordance with the learning agreement, the ACAS Code of Practice and Union Branch rules, as appropriate.
- 7.2 Employees of the City Council, who are union members, may be selected as ULRs in accordance with the terms of this Agreement. Representatives are expected to abide by the Values and Principles of the City Council and Trade Unions
- 7.3 The appropriate Trade Union Officer will confirm in writing to the Head of Human Resources at the earliest opportunity, the outcome of any appointment confirming the acceptability of the representative(s) to the Union
- 7.4 The City Council will not unreasonably object to a choice of ULR

8 Time Off for Union Learning Representative Duties

- 8.1 ULRs will be provided with reasonable time off to carry out the duties and responsibilities associated with this Agreement. Agreed time off the job will be paid at either the amount that the ULRs would have earned had they worked during the time off taken or, an amount calculated by reference to the average hourly earnings for the work that they are employed to do (in line with local agreements).
- 8.2 ULRs seeking time off the job to carry out learning duties must advise Supervisors in advance of both the reason and likely duration of the absence. Permission will not be unreasonably withheld.
- 8.3 It is mutually recognised that well trained ULRs will add value to the learning opportunities of the employees and the council. It is therefore agreed that ULRs will be released for a minimum of 2 weeks per annum for relevant and recognised training courses. Time off for agreed training courses will be paid at either the amount that the ULRs would have earned had they worked during the time taken off or, an amount calculated by reference to the average hourly earnings for the work they are employed to do (in line with local Agreements). Time off for attendance at relevant Union Learning Conferences will be in addition to the above.
- 8.4 Any issues concerning time off for ULR duties will be dealt with in the first place through the Learning committee and then through the City Council procedures
- 8.5 For all issues relating to time off for union learning representative duties and activities, guidance can be found in the ACAS Code of Practice.

9 Union Learning Representative Facilities

- 9.1 A suitable room will be made available for the ULRs which will have access to a telephone, a computer, printer and secure filing cabinet. Lifelong Learning Notice Boards will also be made available

10 Lifelong Learning Needs Analysis

- 10.1 The Partners agree that any Lifelong Learning Needs Analysis is undertaken with the full co-operation of all Partners and is used solely for learning and educational purposes. The Analysis will not be used in relation to other issues such as job evaluation, redundancy, pay, performance appraisal, disciplinary procedures etc.
- 10.2 Individual Lifelong Learning Needs analysis will be updated as and when a programme is completed

- 10.3 Individual Lifelong Learning Needs Analysis will be maintained in complete confidence by the ULRs unless the individual agrees otherwise

11 The Learner

- 11.1 The Council will consider requests for changes to work patterns and start and finish times to enable employees to undertake Lifelong Learning opportunities. Requests will be considered on an individual basis and in accordance with the Council's Flexible Working Policy
- 11.2 All voluntary basic skills learners (including basic IT Learners) will receive some paid time off from the City Council to undertake their training/learning. Paid time off will be given for basic skills assessments and to take any tests. Employees will be given paid time off for 50% of the time required to undertake the training identified from the assessment and will be expected to undertake the other 50% in their own time. However, where job related basic skills development needs are identified on recruitment or through PanDA and are included in the employee's Development Plan, training will be fully funded by the Authority.

12 Equal Opportunities

- 12.1 All Partners are committed to positive policies to promote equal opportunities in learning, regardless of sex, age, marital status, race, ethnic origin, religion, creed, disability or sexual orientation.
- 12.2 They are equally committed to creating and maintaining a learning environment that is free from any form of harassment and bullying
- 12.3 The Partners are committed to ensuring that all opportunities for Lifelong learning are brought to the attention of all employees and that they are actively encouraged to fully participate in learning initiatives
- 12.4 Equal opportunities will at all times reflect existing Council policy.

13 Review of this Agreement

- 13.1 This Agreement came into force on 30 January 2004 and was revised in June 2005. In future, it will be reviewed at intervals of two years, or earlier at the request of either the management or staff side.

June 2005 (1st revision)