Staff Development Policy	
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Prepared by	Clare Ruxton, Director of Corporate Services
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Reviewed & Approved by	Corporate Services Committee

OSPREY STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT

Osprey believe that effective and efficient people management is vital to the success of maintaining good quality services for all our tenants and providing value for money.

We embrace quality people management and this is encompassed in our Core Values:

- ➢ **Ambition and Achievement** – we are a high performing organisation delivering through innovation and challenge

- ➢ **Equality and Respect** – we recognise and celebrate the unique value in everyone

- ➢ **Quality and Professionalism** – we strive to deliver high standards

- ➢ **Agile and Responsive** – we are flexible and quick to deal with change without diminishing our delivery

1. Introduction

Osprey Housing is a dynamic and people-friendly organisation which strives to support the development of our employees and Board members, as well as ensuring that such interventions are relevant and support our business. It is acknowledged that training and development will be both self driven by individuals and supported by the organisation to equip our people to fulfil their responsibilities and to ensure personal development.

2. Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide a framework for ensuring that the business as well as our team members benefit from development activities undertaken.
- Ensure fairness, clarity and consistency for all staff and Board members
- Promote a culture of sharing knowledge and skills with work colleagues
- Assist staff and Board members with their continuous professional development.
- Assist a development discussion between team members and their line managers during appraisals.
- Promote the consideration of alternative methods of training to attending courses and conferences.

3. Policy Principles

This policy applies equally to **all** employees of Osprey and where noted Board members also. This policy seeks to outline how we will support the following aims and objectives:

- Resources for training and development should be allocated effectively to achieve business objectives.
- All training and development provision should be planned, delivered and monitored on the basis of equality of access for all.
- Team members attending or undertaking approved training/development are entitled to payment of normal earnings, all prescribed fees and other relevant expenses arising (as per Expenses policy).
- Board members attending or undertaking approved training are entitled to payment of prescribed fees and other relevant expenses arising (as per Expenses policy).
- Tenants attending or undertaking approved training and/or development are entitled to payment of prescribed fees and other relevant expenses arising (as per Expenses policy).

4. Objectives

4.1 Definitions
- **Staff development** is defined as developing the skills, knowledge and abilities of our staff team members to perform their current jobs effectively, develop their own potential and respond to future changes for the purpose of enabling them to contribute fully to the achievement of Osprey's aims and objectives and the implementation of our aims and values.
- **Board member development** is defined as developing the skills, knowledge and abilities of our Board members to perform their roles effectively, develop their own potential and respond to future changes for the purpose of enabling them to contribute fully to the achievement of the Osprey's aims and objectives and the implementation of its aims and values.
- **Approved training** is defined as that which is **required** by the organisation and includes such things as health and safety, new policies and procedures, positive action to address inequalities in the workplace, professional development, management development and information technology.
- **Supported training** is defined as that which the organisation **is able** to support but is not essential for effective work performance and may include such things as courses in preparation for future career changes/succession planning.

4.2 Responsibilities
Development and training is an activity that permeates the whole of Osprey Four areas of responsibility have been identified:

- Individual team members
- Managers
- Corporate Services team
- Chief Executive

4.2.1 Team Members
It is the responsibility of each employee, in partnership with their manager, to:

- identify their development and training needs.
- participate fully and positively in any development and training activity (including pre and post activity discussions).
- monitor time and effort put into development and training with a view to getting the right balance between work and private life, which should reduce incidences of stress, and enable adherence to the European Working Time Directive.

4.2.2 Managers
It is the responsibility of managers to:

- Consider and attempt to meet the development and training needs of team members within available resources.
- Discuss with each team member (prior to undertaking any development and training activity) the objectives of the activity, how the activity is expected to change their knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or behaviour and how these anticipated changes can improve the way things are done.
- Discuss with the team member (after development and training activity, or at regular intervals throughout an extended period of development and training) any new skills or knowledge acquired, and evaluate how these can be used for increased job performance or development purposes and any follow up action that is required.
- Ensure the team member has considered their responsibility relating to any course that has the potential to impact upon their availability for work.
- Monitor time and effort put into staff development and training with a view to getting the right balance between work and private life which should reduce incidences of stress and enable adherence to the European Working Time Directive.

4.2.3 The Corporate Services Team

The Team is responsible for:

- Preparing an annual development and training plan for inclusion in the budgeting process. This plan will take account of Osprey objectives as well as individual needs as identified by the Performance Appraisal Scheme. This plan will provide information on key objectives, targets, priorities, resources and responsibilities.
- In liaison with Director of Finance, ensuring the appropriate financial resources are made available for developing our team members. This amount will be set as relevant and appropriate given Osprey's financial position.
- Working with managers to provide advice on development and training opportunities, financial opportunities/constraints and any policies or procedures particular to the development of their teams.
- Overseeing the development and training delivery to ensure best value.
- Seeking and managing funding for development and training.
- Making recommendations to the management team about the level of funding requiring to be invested in employee development and training based on funding availability.

4.2.4 Chief Executive
- Overall oversight of training and development agenda.

- In cases of dispute of how much support to give between team member and their line manager the decision of the Chief Executive shall be sought. This decision shall be final.
- Has discretion to authorise payment of exam fees for external courses for subsequent sittings in exceptional circumstances.

5. Types of Development and Training

Osprey will provide the following training/development opportunities:

5.1 Induction
This includes both new starts and people changing jobs along with our new Board members.

Initial impressions are formed during the first weeks of employment therefore it is important to welcome staff appropriately. All new team members will undertake an induction process that includes information about Osprey, our role, location, culture, business objectives and job specific issues.

At local level, a checklist system is operated for all new starts. It is important that team members are aware of and accept mutual roles and responsibilities.

5.2 Job Related Competencies
To provide the best possible service to Osprey's tenants and other service users it is essential that our team members' competencies reflect the aims and values of our organisation as well as the detailed knowledge of their own area of work (including compliance with statutory obligations for example Health and Safety and Data Protection). Training and development opportunities that are directly relevant to the team member's specific role will be supported.

For a clearer understanding of what each role requires see Osprey Training matrix 220327 Training Matrix.xlsx.

Board members will also be supported in their development. Attendance at appropriate conferences will be the main source, however, from time to time other training methods will be used. In cases of dispute around attendance and/or the amount of support given the final decision will be taken by the Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive.

5.3 Development Beyond the Current Job Function
Future employability or promotion prospects may be enhanced, where budgetary provision and service requirements permit, by preparing team members for tasks, duties and responsibilities that extend their knowledge and skills which (though relevant to current post) will be required to be exercised to a greater extent in a future post.

Requests for development in such cases should be considered by the manager particularly where they have been recommended through the Osprey Succession Plan. In areas of dispute around attendance and/or the amount of support given for such opportunities, the Chief Executive shall make the final decision.

Job roles change over time. Managers should be aware of their responsibilities in terms of monitoring the activities and tasks which team members become involved in to avoid jobs changing to the extent that re-grading claims may be made particularly where it is unlikely that funding to support such a move is available. In cases where this does occur, however, the Osprey policy HR 5.16 Grading Review should be used.

6. Approaches to Development and Training

6.1 Methods
Development and training methods are varied and their use depends on circumstances, individual and organisational needs and finances. They may include the following:

- on the job coaching, mentoring and training;
- off the job training courses and seminars run in-house;
- off the job training courses and seminars run externally;
- access to learning resource centre materials;
- day, evening or block release courses at local colleges or universities;
- open and flexible learning programmes;
- web based and e-learning training;
- internally, or externally run competency based S.V.Q. programmes.

Osprey is open to using any of these techniques plus any others in the appropriate circumstances.

6.2 Support from Osprey
Contribution from Osprey will be as follows:

- Up to 100% of the course fee paid for appropriate courses which are detailed as essential within the team member's job description, included in the Osprey Training Matrix and lead to technical or professional qualifications.
- Up to 50% for appropriate courses which are deemed as desirable or as individual personal development opportunities. In such cases Osprey will pay the full amount up front and the balance will be deducted from the individual's salary over a maximum of 12 months.
- Paid time off for the first sitting of an exam and one day's study leave per half exam day. Exam fees will be paid for first sitting only. Financial support for re-sits will not normally be given though the Chief Executive will retain discretion in this matter.

- Sympathetic consideration of requests for unpaid leave or annual leave where required to attend development opportunities.
- Payment of up to £40 towards cost of coursework material.
- Payment of travel expenses for public transport for all courses attended outwith a 20-mile radius of the individual's home address. All receipts must be retained.

6.2.1 Application Procedure

Financial assistance for external courses of study/conferences/other training opportunities shall be at the ultimate discretion of the Chief Executive for all team members.

Team members wishing to apply should complete the Training Request [Training Request Record.docx](#) (Appendix 1) with full details if they wish to attend a development opportunity. They should then discuss the course with their manager to seek approval.

Managers must agree and authorise team member participation/attendance at any such development activities prior to any event by completing their part of the training request form and submitting it to the Corporate Services team. The Corporate Services team will then make the booking and any other arrangements corresponding with the team member directly.

Approval will not be unreasonably withheld particularly where an employee in a similar post has already obtained support and approval but may be subject to limitation through budget constraints or where attendance would lead to operational difficulties.

All training received will be recorded in the team member's training record on the SAGE HR system. Team members will be responsible for keeping this up to date.

If the training opportunity is of a longer length e.g. academic study, the line manager will monitor progress through the course. Where the course covers more than one year, the funding will only be available for the second year if the individual continues to show commitment both to Osprey Housing and to the course being undertaken.

6.2.2 Personal Development Fee Payment

Rules applicable to payment of remaining fees (where Osprey pay up to 50%) for desirable or individual personal development opportunities are as follows:

- The fees paid are to be regarded as a loan. The loan will normally be paid in monthly amounts deducted from salary for up to 12 months following commencement of the relevant course/examination or stage qualification.

- Osprey will have a right to require the team member to refund the full or a proportion of the cost of fees where the employee voluntarily leaves their employment within those 12 months, or where the employee or the training institution prematurely terminates their course or where the employee is summarily dismissed from their employment.
- Withdrawal from a course will result in repayment of the fees paid on the basis of the above, unless:
  - The employee, on presentation of written justification, has obtained Osprey's agreement to withdraw,
  - The employee has had to withdraw due to long-term sickness, maternity leave, or redundancy.

6.2.2 Sharing the Knowledge

There is a lot of specialised knowledge held amongst our staff team that could better benefit colleagues and the business were it to be shared. This policy aims to encourage colleagues to share their knowledge and skills with each other. A copy of the Feedback form all team members are expected to complete following after every training session is available: Training Evaluation.docx (Appendix 2)

7. The Appraisal Process

In order to prompt a meaningful discussion between the staff member and their line manager as well as to help achieving the targets set by this policy, the targets for training and development activities have been incorporated into the Osprey standard appraisal form. Managers and staff should work together in achieving this level of focussed development, all of which should be driven by the staff appraisal system, which in turn should heavily reflect business priorities.

8. Equality and Diversity

Osprey shall strive to ensure equality of opportunity, and by definition, that all individuals are treated fairly regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Osprey opposes, and shall adopt a zero tolerance stance towards, all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

In this regard, Osprey acknowledges the protected characteristics and types of unlawful behaviour defined within the Equality Act 2010. As a minimum all practices shall aim to ensure compliance with the legislative provisions therein.

9. Monitoring and Reporting

We will monitor this policy in conjunction with our other policies and procedures to ensure that it is being adhered to.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless the following criteria dictate that it would be best practise to review sooner:

1. applicable legislation, rules, regulations and guidance, both those which affect O s p r e y directly and those which affect the resources available to significant numbers of our customers to enable them to sustain tenancies
2. changes in the organisation
3. continued best practice

Appendix 1
TRAINING REQUEST/RECORD

Name:	
Training course title:	
Training course/session run by:	
Date:	
Duration:	
Cost:	

	Yes:		No:	
Course programme attached:				

What is the course about?	
Why do you want to attend?	
What do you hope to learn/gain from attending?	
How will you share the learning outcomes with colleagues?	

	Yes:		No:	
Is this development essential to your current role as noted on Osprey Training Matrix 220327 Training Matrix.xlsx?				

If this development is not essential give details on why Osprey should support your application	

Comments

Manager Approval……………………………………….....   Date………………………..

Please return completed form to sredford@ospreyhousing.org.uk

Appendix 2
CONFERENCE/TRAINING FEEDBACK

Employee name:	
Conference/training course title:	
Conference/training course run by:	
How informative did you find the conference/training event?	1. – Poor 2. – Fair 3. – Good 4. – Very good 5. – Excellent
Did the session meet your expectations?	
Have you gained any knowledge that should be shared with your colleagues at a training session? If yes, who?	
Do you think any other staff member would benefit from attending this course? If yes, who and why?	

Learning session date:	
Attending:	
How was good practice shared and key content/outcomes disseminated?	
Key Learning Outcomes shared	

Signature……………..……………………………..………………….

Date…………………………………………………………………………………..

Please return completed form to sredford@ospreyhousing.org.uk

Appendix 3

Osprey Housing **Equality Impact Assessment Tool** **PLEASE READ THE GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETION: Equality Impact** **Assessment Guidance.doc**	

Name of the **policy / project proposal** to be assessed	Grievance Policy HR 5.13	Is this a **new policy / proposal or a revision**?	Revision
Person(s) responsible for the assessment	DCS		

1. Briefly describe the **aims, objectives and purpose** of the policy/proposal	The Grievance Policy outlines the arrangements for Osprey team members who wish to raise a grievance.
2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy/proposal? *(e.g. applicants, tenants, staff, contractors)*	Osprey team members
3. What **outcomes** are **wanted** from this policy/proposal? *(e.g. the benefits to customers)*	A fair process to resolve issues/concerns that are raised by our team

4. Which **protected characteristics** could be **affected** by the proposal? (*tick all that apply*)

X Age　　　　　X Disability　　　　　X Marriage & civil partnership　　　　X Pregnancy/maternity

X Race　　　　X Religion or belief　　X Sex　　　X Gender reassignment　　　X Sexual orientation

5. If the policy / proposal is not relevant to any of the **protected characteristics** listed in part 4, state why and end the process here.

	Positive impact(s)	**Negative impact(s)**
6. Describe the **likely positive or negative impact(s)** the policy/proposal could have on the groups identified in part 4	Allows team members to resolve issues which may be based on their protected characteristics	Decisions on grievances may be inappropriately influenced by individual's protected characteristics through unconscious bias.
7. What **actions** are **required** to address the impacts arising from this assessment? *(This might include; collecting additional data, putting monitoring in place, specific actions to mitigate negative impacts).*	SLT members have been made aware of unconscious bias and how to mitigate it.	

Signed: _____Clare Ruxton _____ (Job title): ___Director of Corporate Services_____
　　　　　　　Date the Equality Impact Assessment was completed:_____22 September 2023_____