

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

Subject : Training Update Report
Committee : Governance, Policy & HR Committee
Date : 23 March 2026
Author : Tracy Adams, Head of Human Resources

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. This report gives Councillors an overview of staff learning and development activity during 2025. It covers what was delivered, who benefited, how the budget was used, and where the focus will shift in 2026/2027.
- 1.2. The headline position is:
 - 1.2.1. 2025 was the first year the Council had a properly funded training budget. The focus was deliberately on catching up, addressing a backlog of mandatory compliance training and investing in management capability that had not been possible in previous years.
 - 1.2.2. Across the organisation, hundreds of training events were completed, from statutory eLearning modules through to professional qualifications and an SMT leadership development programme.
 - 1.2.3. Not all of the budget was spent in 2025. This was a deliberate choice in some areas, particularly management development, where the Head of HR wanted the Council to invest in the right solution rather than a quick one. A carry forward of £18,100 is being requested.
 - 1.2.4. The foundations are now in place for a more structured, evidence-led approach to training in 2026/2027, including formal pre- and post-course reviews and a systematic approach to identifying development needs across all roles.

2. Background

- 2.1. For a number of years, the training budget at Salisbury City Council was limited, meaning investment was largely restricted to health and safety compliance. 2025 was the first year a meaningfully increased budget was in place, and the priority was to use it purposefully, closing known gaps, meeting legal obligations, and beginning to build longer-term management capability.
- 2.2. This report should be read as the start of a journey, not a finished picture. The Job Evaluation project has identified that a number of roles now carry greater responsibility than before. This means the development needs of staff and managers will continue to grow through 2026/2027, and the Council's approach to identifying and meeting those needs will need to develop alongside that.

3. Completed professional qualifications and specialist development

3.1. The following courses and qualifications were completed during 2025. These represent targeted investment in specific individuals or teams.

Course / Qualification	Who Attended	Type
CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration)	Chief Executive Officer	Strategic / Legal
Coaching for HR Professionals	Head of HR	Professional Development
Co-Production (communities focused)	Communities Team (6 staff)	Service Delivery
IOSH Risk Assessment Training	Streetscene Officer	Health & Safety
Asbestos Awareness	Facilities	Health & Safety
Level 3 Leadership & Management Apprenticeship	Streetscene officer	Management Development
Level 5 Leadership & Management Apprenticeship	Operations Officer	Management Development
Level 3 HR Administration Apprenticeship	HR Administrator	Professional Development
SMT Leadership Development Programme (6 sessions)	Senior Management Team	Management Development
ACAS Code of Practice Awareness	Streetscene Officer	Compliance
Tree Inspection	Parks Officer	Regulatory

3.2. The Senior Management Team completed a six-session development programme over six months, covering leadership skills, organisational vision and effective performance management. This was a deliberate investment in the people who lead others and the learning from this programme will help the Council identify what management development is needed at other levels in 2026/2027.

3.3. Coproduction means designing and delivering services alongside the people who use them, rather than for them. Six members of the Communities team completed training in this approach, supporting the Council's ambition to involve residents more meaningfully in local decisions.

4. Qualifications currently in progress

4.1. The following are underway and expected to complete in 2026/2027 or 2027/2028 for Spatial Planning. A budget carry forward is being requested to support these:

4.1.1. CIWM Waste Management qualification - 3 members of staff. This is a requirement to ensure the Council meets the standards required to deal with waste.

4.1.2. MSc Spatial Planning - 1 member of staff. A significant long-term investment in specialist expertise.

4.1.3. NEBOSH Diploma - 1 member of staff. An advanced health and safety qualification that will strengthen the Council's internal H&S expertise.

5. Organisation wide training (volume activity)

5.1. In addition to individual qualifications, a significant amount of training was delivered across the whole of the Council in 2025. The chart below shows participation levels across each activity.



5.2. A few areas worth highlighting include:

5.2.1. Sexual harassment awareness: 93 members of staff completed the eLearning module and 23 managers completed an additional module on their specific responsibilities. This was a direct response to the new legal duty on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment.. Providing evidence

that the Council has actively trained its workforce is part of demonstrating compliance with this duty.

5.2.2. Procurement awareness: 22 budget holders attended a workshop developed in partnership with Hampshire County Council, to ensure the Council follows appropriate procurement rules. This directly supports sound financial management and the Council's legal obligations.

5.2.3. Inclusion awareness: 65 staff attended a workshop on inclusion. This is refreshed annually and reflects the Council's commitment to a respectful, fair working environment for all staff and the communities it serves.

5.2.4. Manual handling and basic first aid eLearning: 70 and 80 completions respectively. These are mandatory for relevant staff and are refreshed on a rolling basis to maintain compliance.

5.2.5. HR induction: 22 completions, covering all new starters - ensuring that everyone joining the Council understands how it operates, its values, and their obligations as an employee from day one.

6. How the budget was used

Category	Actual Spend	% of Spend
Health & Safety	£19,209	34%
Management Development	£16,035	28%
Regulatory	£10,473	19%
Service Enhancement	£7,727	14%
eLearning Licences	£1,420	3%
Interpreter Costs	£961	2%
Total Spent	£55,825	100%
Carry Forward Requested	£18,100	

6.1. Carry forward request:

6.1.1. The unspent £18,100 is not a sign that training was deprioritised. It reflects deliberate decisions made in the interests of getting lasting value from the

investment:

- 6.1.2. Management development: The Council chose to wait for the SMT development programme to conclude before commissioning the next phase of management training across the organisation. The SMT programme finished in December 2025. This means the Council now has a much better evidence base for what managers need, rather than commissioning a generic off-the-shelf solution.
- 6.1.3. Waste management qualifications: Three members of the team are part-way through their CIWM qualifications. These run across financial years and the carry forward will allow them to complete in 2026/2027.
- 6.1.4. Staff induction project: Work on improving the onboarding experience for new starters began later than planned due to capacity pressures in summer 2025. The project is now underway and outcomes will be presented to SMT in March 2026 for implementation in the new financial year.

7. Looking ahead 2026/2027

- 7.1. 2025 was about catching up. 2026/2027 will be about building a more systematic and evidence-led approach to staff development. The key areas of focus will be:

7.2. Identifying development needs more rigorously

- 7.2.1. The Job Evaluation project has clarified what each role in the organisation is expected to deliver. This creates a stronger foundation for identifying where individuals and teams need further development to meet those expectations. A first round of development bids from staff closes in mid-March 2026, with a second round planned for August to ensure opportunities are available throughout the year.

7.3. Formal pre- and post-course review

- 7.3.1. At present, the objectives for any training are discussed verbally before a course, and outcomes are reviewed informally afterwards. In 2026/2027, this will move to a more formal process, with written objectives set before training begins and a structured review of impact afterwards. This will allow the Council to demonstrate clearly whether money spent on development has made a difference, and to report on that to Committee over time.

7.4. Management development - the next phase

- 7.4.1. With the SMT programme now complete, the Council has a clearer picture of what effective management looks like here. The next phase will extend development to managers and team leaders at all levels, with a sustainable programme rather than one-off courses. The approach will be confirmed and commissioned in early 2026/2027.

7.5. Onboarding and induction

7.5.1. The HR Manager is leading a project to strengthen how new starters are welcomed and inducted into the organisation. This has involved a staff focus group and benchmarking against other councils. Recommendations will be presented to SMT on 30 March 2026 for implementation in 2026/2027. A better induction process supports retention and reduces the time it takes for new staff to become fully effective in their roles.

8. Recommendation:

8.1. It is recommended that the Committee:

8.1.1. Note the contents of this report.

9. Wards Affected: None

10. Background papers: None

11. Implications:

Financial: None

Legal: None

Personnel: Ensuring staff are appropriately trained for the job they are doing.

Environmental Impact: None

Equalities Impact Statement: Training and development is reviewed to ensure it is accessed by all groups of staff.