

1.3 COUNCIL MEMBER CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Responsible Directorate	Corporate Services	
Responsible Service Area	Governance	
Adopted	December 2020	SC18.12.20
Reviewed	March 2023	C2.03.2023
Procedure Ref	N/A	

1. PURPOSE

Shire of Mundaring (the Shire) is committed to supporting council members to fulfil their role as leaders and enable them comply with relevant legislation that prescribes training requirements.

The knowledge, skills and experiences that council members bring to their role when elected, which are enhanced during an induction program, will generally need to be supplemented with ongoing knowledge and skills development relevant to their complex and significant role as leaders in the community.

This policy provides a structured approach to Continuing Professional Development (CPD), compulsory training and professional memberships whilst maintaining the flexibility to enable council members to tailor to their individual needs.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all council members of the Shire. This policy is to be reviewed after each ordinary local government election.

3. DEFINITIONS

compulsory training	the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> (the Act) and <i>Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996</i> requires all council members to undertake training courses within 12 months of being elected.
Elected Member Essentials	as defined by the <i>Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996</i> , regulation 35(2).
council member	a person elected under the Act as a member of Council. The Shire's council members includes the Shire President, Deputy Shire President and Councillors (as defined by the Act).
external committee member	a person appointed to a Committee established under the Act who is not a council member.

Continuing Professional Development	attendance or participation in (in person or online) training relevant to the role of a council member. Including but not limited to: conferences, workshops, courses, webinars, seminars, networking forums, formal qualifications or similar professional development provided by a Registered Training Organisation or government agency.
Registered Training Organisation	provider registered by the Australian Skills Quality Authority or similar state regulator to deliver nationally recognised training and qualifications.
training allocation	Council adopted budget allocation for the purposes of attending compulsory training or CPD to support the role of a council member to attend CPD.

4. POLICY

Council members are encouraged to seek the assistance of their peers and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to identify opportunities for their particular development requirements and appropriate training, courses, conferences and formal qualifications to improve their skills and knowledge.

4.1. Compulsory Training

Section 5.126 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) includes provisions relating to the universal training of council members. All council members are required to complete Elected Member Essentials within 12 months of election to Council. Compulsory training remains valid for five years.

A council member is only required to undertake compulsory training after every second election unless exempt under regulation 36 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*. Exemptions include:

- Completion of compulsory training courses within the period of 5 years ending immediately before the day on which the council member is elected.
- Completion of Diploma of Local Government (Elected Member) within the period of 5 years ending immediately before the day on which the council member is elected.
- Completion of the course titled LGASS00002 Elected Member Skill Set before 1 July 2019 and within the period of 5 years ending immediately before the day on which the council member is elected.

Immediately following each election, newly elected council members, be they first-time or returning, are to request to be enrolled in compulsory training on their preferred date either online or in person, depending on their preference.

It is the responsibility of the council member to complete their compulsory training in accordance with legislation.

4.1.1. Cost of Compulsory Training

Costs to undertake compulsory training are determined by the Training Providers.

A training allocation for compulsory training will be determined as part of the budget setting process.

Noting that the allocation for compulsory training will generally be expended every two years, based on election cycles, a training allocation will be made available to any new or returning council member who is required to complete compulsory training. The training allocation for compulsory training is in addition to the training allocation for CPD.

All unspent funds in the training allocation for compulsory training will not be carried forward at the end of the financial year.

4.2. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Where CPD is attendance at a conference, this policy is to be considered in conjunction with the “Attendance by Council Members and CEO at Conference and Events Policy” where relevant.

4.2.1. Cost of CPD

Costs to undertake CPD are determined by training providers or event organisers.

The training allocation for CPD will be determined as part of the budget setting process.

The training allocation for CPD is to be equally distributed between council members.

Any requests from council members to attend CPD that exceeds their available allocation will be presented to Council for consideration.

All unspent funds in the training allocation for CPD will not be carried forward at the end of the financial year.

4.2.2. Conditionally Approved CPD – costing up to \$750

CPD costing up to \$750, including reimbursement of expenses, is conditionally approved.

Conditions for approval include:

- a. A request is submitted in writing including all estimated expenses (see item 4.6) to the CEO.
- b. The council member has completed or enrolled in all compulsory training.
- c. The request addresses the council member’s professional development needs.
- d. The CPD aligns with the strategic direction of the Shire.
- e. The CPD is held online or within the Perth metropolitan area.

- f. The CPD is delivered by a reputable organisation or Registered Training Organisation.
- g. There are sufficient funds available in the council members training allocation.

If the request meets the above conditions, the CEO will arrange for the council member to be enrolled/ registered. Any requests that do not meet the above conditions will be presented to Council for consideration.

4.2.3. Conditionally Approved CPD – costing \$750 and above

Council members may request to attend conditionally approved CPD costing \$750 and above (refer to 4.2.5 for CPD costing up to \$750) including:

- Courses conducted by the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA). Excludes WALGA Elected Member Diploma. Refer to 4.2.4.
- Courses conducted by the Australian Institute of Company Directors.
- Courses conducted by the Institute of Public Administration Australia.
- Courses conducted by the Governance Institute of Australia.
- Courses conducted by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

Conditions for approval include:

- a. A request is submitted in writing including all estimated expenditure (see item 4.6) to the CEO.
- b. The council member has completed or enrolled in all compulsory training.
- c. The request addresses the council member's professional development needs.
- d. The CPD aligns with the strategic direction of the Shire.
- e. The CPD is held online or within the Perth metropolitan area.
- f. There are sufficient funds available in the council members training allocation.

If the request meets the above conditions, the CEO will arrange for the council member to be enrolled/ registered. Any requests that do not meet the above conditions will be presented to Council for consideration.

4.2.4. Conditionally Approved CPD – WALGA Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member

Council members may request to complete the WALGA Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member.

Conditions for approval include:

- a. The intention to complete the WALGA Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member is raised during budget deliberations.

- b. A request is submitted in writing including all estimated expenditure (see item 4.6) to the CEO within the first 18 months of the council members term.
- c. The council member has completed or enrolled in all compulsory training.

If the request meets the above conditions, the CEO will arrange for the council member to be enrolled/ registered. Any requests that do not meet the above conditions will be presented to Council for consideration.

4.2.5. CPD – costing \$750 and above

Generally, CPD costing above \$750, including estimated expenditure (excluding conditionally approved CPD) are for intrastate, interstate or overseas CPD.

A request is to be submitted in writing to the CEO including all estimated expenditure (see item 4.6).

Criteria for assessment includes:

- a. The council member has completed or enrolled in all compulsory training.
- b. The request addresses the council member's professional development needs.
- c. The CPD aligns with the strategic direction of the Shire
- d. The CPD is delivered by a reputable organisation or Registered Training Organisation
- e. There are sufficient funds available in the council members training allocation.
- f. The CPD does not have an option to participate through an online learning format. If an online learning format is available, the council member is to attend via that means rather than travel to the course location.

Once the CEO undertakes an initial assessment, a report will be presented to Council for consideration.

4.3. External Committee Members CPD

External committee members may be invited to attend in-house training relevant to their role as a committee member.

4.4. General Considerations for Compulsory Training and CPD

No council member is permitted to undertake CPD during the caretaker period prior to the expiry of their term.

In circumstances where a council member is unable to attend Compulsory Training or CPD they have registered for and cancellation would result in a financial loss to the Shire, the CEO is authorised to determine a substitute council member and/or employee to attend the CPD in lieu of the registered council member.

Where other subsidies are provided to council members, they are only entitled to financial assistance through this policy to the extent that the other subsidies don't cover their expenses.

4.5. Professional Memberships

There are a range of professional bodies associated with local government matters. These provide a variety of learning and networking opportunities for council members.

Professional bodies have a range of membership fees which are a recognised cost to participate in training.

Requests for payment of professional membership may be initiated by the council member and must be forwarded to the CEO.

Criteria for approval include:

- a. Membership is to a recognised organisation and is relevant to role of the council member.
- b. The membership aligns with the strategic direction of the Shire.
- c. There are sufficient funds available in the training allocation.

If the request meets the above criteria, the CEO will arrange for the payment of the professional membership for the council member. Any requests that do not meet the above criteria will be presented to Council for consideration.

4.5.1. Cost of Professional Memberships

The cost of professional memberships are determined by the professional bodies.

Requests from council members for the cost of a professional membership to be paid by the Shire will be taken from the council members training allocation.

All unspent funds in the training allocation for professional memberships will not be carried forward at the end of the financial year.

4.6. Reimbursement of Expenses

Where payment or reimbursement of expenses is sought for costs incurred by the attendance at Compulsory Training or CPD exceeding \$500, the formal approval of Council is required. Any request must be submitted in writing at least fourteen days prior to the Council meeting at which the request will be considered.

The extent to which an attendee will be reimbursed will be in accordance with the "Elected Members Allowances and Expenses Policy" and this policy. Where appropriate, the Shire will pay reasonable costs associated with an attendee's accommodation.

Necessary approvals required by this policy are to be obtained prior to making any financial or other commitments. No reimbursement of expenses will be approved retrospectively.

4.6.1. Private Motor Vehicle

The use of a private motor vehicle is reimbursed in accordance with the “Elected Members Allowances and Expenses Policy”.

4.6.2. Intrastate, Interstate and Overseas Air Travel

Economy class air travel arrangements shall apply to CPD requiring air travel. The most direct route to and from the airport situated closest to the venue shall be booked.

Where practicable, advantage should be taken of available discount fares.

Attendees have the option to upgrade their travel arrangements to business class by supplementing the economy airfare at their own cost.

4.6.3. Accommodation

Unless other arrangements are specifically approved by Council the following applies:

- Accommodation costs shall be paid for the duration of the training/ CPD. This includes arrival the day before the start of the training/ CPD and departure the day following the close of training/ CPD where necessary (for example, timing makes it unreasonable to arrive at or return home in normal working hours or have a '10 hour break' between the end of the event and resuming normal hours of work).
- Accommodation will, where practicable, be booked at the associated venue or in close proximity to the venue and be a standard twin or double.
- Accommodation costs paid or reimbursed shall be the actual costs incurred. Wherever possible accommodation costs shall be pre-paid by the Shire.

In the event that an attendee wishes to extend their stay for personal reasons not associated with approved Council business, then any extended stay is to be at the full cost of the attendee.

4.6.4. Personal Accident and Corporate Travel Insurance

Personal accident and corporate travel insurance is provided in accordance with the “Elected Members Allowances and Expenses Policy”.

Attendees may wish to obtain their own insurance cover, at their own cost, to ensure the benefits and endorsements are adequate for their individual needs.

If an attendee extends their stay (item 4.6.3) or an accompanying person attends (item 4.6.8) the Shire will not cover the cost of the additional insurance.

4.6.5. Transportation

The cost of parking costs, taxi, ride share or fares for public transport to and from the airport, training/ CPD venue or other approved places shall be reimbursed.

The cost of car hire will only be reimbursed when the request has been included in the notification of attendance and approval given at the time attendance the conference/ event is authorised.

4.6.6. Meals and Incidental Expenses

Meal expenses are to be interpreted as reasonable expenses incurred for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, and dinner where these are not provided at the event or in travel.

Incidental expenses are to be interpreted as reasonable expenses incurred by the Council Member for telephone calls, public transport and sundry food and beverages.

The CEO is authorised to set standards and calculate costs for reimbursement of approved incidental expenses. Alternatively, Council may determine the amount for meals and incidental expenses at the time of approving the attendance.

4.6.7. Child Care Expenses

Reimbursement for child care expenses that result from attendance at a conference/ event will be reimbursed in accordance with the “Elected Members Allowances and Expenses Policy”.

4.6.8. Accompanying Person

Council appreciates that attendees may require someone to accompany them to training/ CPD. This is supported on the following basis:

- Details of the accompanying person is included when the request is submitted.
- Where it is more efficient for the Shire to make arrangements for registration, travel and accommodation for accompanying persons, it is appropriate that Council meets these expenses in the first instance. The attendee must arrange reimbursement of these costs prior to attendance at the training/ CPD.
- Expenses incurred by the accompanying person at the conference/ event will be borne by the council member, not the Shire.

4.6.9. Accompanying Carer

Where an attendee is attending training/ CPD and has a disability as defined in the *Disability Services Act 1993*, the Shire will meet the cost of an accompanying carer where that carer is a person who provides ongoing care or assistance.

The costs provided by the Shire for an accompanying carer will include travel, meals, registration, accommodation and participation in any programs.

4.6.10. Claiming Reimbursement of Expenses

Within 30 working days of the conclusion of the training/ CPD, receipts must be presented to support the expenditure that is to be reimbursed.

Only expenses incurred in the attendee's capacity to fulfil their role representing the Shire will be reimbursed.

4.6.11. Loyalty Rewards or Bonus Points

Consistent with the principle of not using public expenditure for private advantage, where possible, travel and accommodation bookings that accrue loyalty rewards or bonus points, should not be personally claimed or used for private purposes and where possible be used only for further official purposes.

4.7. Administration Process

Registration for all compulsory training, professional memberships and approved CPD including travel and accommodation are to be organised by the Executive Assistant to the CEO.

Where possible, all airfares and other travel arrangements including registration, accommodation and associated fees and charges shall be pre-paid by the Shire.

Where items are unable to be pre-paid, council members may seek reimbursement for expenses in accordance with this policy.

4.8. Reporting

In accordance with section 5.127 of the Act, the Shire will publish a report on the Shire's website within one month of the financial year detailing the training/ CPD completed by council members.

The report will be in the format of a register which will include:

- Council member name
- Name of training or CPD completed
- Name of Registered Training Organisation

In order to complete the register, council members shall, following completion of compulsory training or CPD, provide evidence of attendance/ completion to the Chief Executive Officer via the Shire's generic email address.

4.9. Sharing of Knowledge

Within one month from the conclusion of an approved interstate and overseas conferences, the attendee shall provide a written report or presentation for the information of council members. Where appropriate, this requirement shall also apply for intrastate conferences. The report or presentation is only applicable to conferences and is to contain relevant

observations and the identification of significant outcomes gained from the conference that would be of benefit to the Shire's operations.

5. RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1995, section 5.126 Training for council members

Local Government Act 1995, section 5.127 Report on training

Local Government Act 1995, section 5.128 Policy for continuing professional development

Local Government Administration Regulations 1996, regulation 35 Training for council members (Act s. 5.126(1))

Local Government Administration Regulations 1996, regulation 36 Exemption from Act s. 5.126(1) requirement

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Attendance by Council Members and CEO at Conferences and Events Policy