
ELECTED MEMBERS POLICIES

Councillors: Training & Continuing Professional Development



Policy Number:	E2
Relevant Delegation:	Not Applicable
Adoption Details:	28 January 2016
Last Review Details:	28 November 2023

POLICY OBJECTIVE:

To establish guidelines and parameters to enable Councillors to meet their statutory obligations in relation to Councillor training and gives effect to the requirement to adopt a continuing professional development policy.

POLICY SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Councillors.

Part 5, Division 10 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) describes provisions related to the universal training of Councillors:

- under Section 5.126 of the Act, each Councillor must complete training in accordance with the Regulations.
- under Section 5.127 of the Act, the Chief Executive Officer must publish a report on the local government's website within one (1) month of the end of the financial year detailing the training completed by Councillors.
- under Section 5.128 of the Act, a local government must prepare and adopt a policy in relation to the continuing professional development of Councillors.

POLICY STATEMENT:

INTRODUCTION

Councillors have been elected to provide leadership for the Shire on a range of matters with the expectation that this will occur in a way that shows good governance practice. They work within a sector which is fast changing and requires engagement with local communities, regional and state systems and structures, and engagement with issues that range across economic, social, environmental, legal and cultural concerns with local, national and, in some cases, global implications.

Training and continuing professional development is essential to providing Councillors with the capacity to maintain and enhance their skills in this complex environment.

PRINCIPLES

- (a) Councillors have a responsibility to complete training in accordance with the Act and relevant Regulations.
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- (b) There is commitment via budgeting processes to support training and continuing professional development up to a prescribed amount per Councillor on an annual basis.
 - (c) First priority is given to training and professional development opportunities to comply with the Act and Regulations followed by opportunities to maintain and further develop governance skills.
 - (d) Training and development opportunities targeted around key issues of relevance to the Council and Shire will also be available to Councillors.
 - (e) Training and development opportunities may include formal training that results in an accredited qualification upon completion.
 - (f) Councillors will have equitable access to a range of relevant training and professional development opportunities.
 - (g) A Councillor funded by the Shire to attend a conference, forum, seminar or similar event participates as a representative of Council and not as an individual.

PROVISIONS

1. GOVERNANCE TRAINING

- 1.1 All Councillors are required to complete the training titled Council Member Essentials in accordance with Regulation 35 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* unless an exemption applies in accordance with Regulation 36.
- 1.2 As a continuation of the Council Member Essentials, the Diploma of Local Government (Course Code LGA50220) is also available for Councillors upon request. The Chief Executive Officer has the authority to approve a request for a Councillor to undertake the Diploma in consultation with the Shire President and in accordance with Policy E3 – Councillors: Travel and Accommodation, subject to sufficient budget being available. Where a Councillor undertakes the Diploma, it is the Shire's preference that the cost be split over two financial years. Preference will be given to Councillors who have successfully completed the Council Member Essentials and are elected for a second term of office. Instances where a first term Councillor wishes to undertake the Diploma will be referred to Council, subject to budget allocation being available.
- 1.3 Councillors may be offered or request further governance upskilling opportunities and opportunities to engage with emerging issues at the regional and state levels, or with emerging or proposed legislative changes affecting the sector and their governance role.

2. TARGETED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1 A proposed program of professional development activities will be presented to Council via the Concept Forum at induction and on an annual basis and used to inform the annual budget process.
 - 2.2 Provision will be made for Councillors to attend conferences, seminars, training sessions, study courses etc. dealing with issues/ matters of direct relevance to the Shire.
 - 2.3 Development opportunities will be identified as part of the annual Councillors professional development program. Where opportunities arise to attend other professional development events during the year that are not identified in the program, Councillors will be required to apply for approval to the Council to attend the relevant event.
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3. APPROVAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Chief Executive Officer has the authority to approve a request in accordance with the principles of this policy, as well as Policy E3 - Councillors: Travel and Accommodation, and the budget available.
- 3.2 Any request for training/development within three (3) months of any election process for the seat held by the Councillor making the application will not be eligible for approval unless there are compelling reasons for attendance (see also E3 Councillors: Travel and Accommodation). This does not include the WALGA Local Government Convention.
- 3.3 Any requests to attend interstate or overseas conferences, seminars or other professional development opportunities, or that will exceed the annual budget allocation will be considered by Council.

4. ANNUAL BUDGET ALLOCATION

- 4.1 As part of the annual budget process, an allocation per Councillor will be made for professional development during that financial year which will include.
 - (a) costs for Councillors to attend the WALGA Local Government Convention if they choose to do so.
 - (b) any other professional development requests made by application to the Chief Executive Officer.

5. COVERAGE OF COSTS

- 5.1 Funding of, or a contribution to any training or development opportunity may include:
 - (a) entry/registration fees.
 - (b) enrolment fees.
 - (c) where relevant, travel and accommodation costs in accordance with Policy E3 Councillors: Travel and Accommodation.
- 5.2 The Shire will not cover late enrolment fees, course materials or any liability incurred under the Higher Education Contributions Scheme (HECS).

6. ADVICE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAMS

- 6.1 The Chief Executive Officer will have responsibility for the development of the Professional Development Program presented to Council via the Concept Forum at induction and on an annual basis, in consultation with Councillors and the Shire President.
- 6.2 The Chief Executive Officer will provide assistance to Councillors, where sought, to identify potential targeted professional development opportunities.

7. REPORT BACK

- 7.1 Within thirty (30) days of attending a Professional Development event of more than one (1) day duration, the Councillor must submit an individual or combined report for inclusion on the Council agenda. The report can include major points of interest for the Shire and, where relevant, comment on any future relevance for the training program.
 - 7.2 In accordance with Section 5.128 of the Act, the Chief Executive Officer will publish a report on the Shire's website detailing the training undertaken by Councillors within one (1) month of the end of the financial year.
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PENALTIES:

Not applicable.

KEY TERMS/DEFINITIONS:

'Governance Training' means training provided in accordance with Regulation 35 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

'Targeted Professional Development' means training and development opportunities built around specific matters or issues which have been identified by Officers and/or a Councillor as providing benefit from attendance to them and the Shire in relation to Shire business.

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Contact Officer: Council & Executive Support Officer

Relevant Legislation: *Local Government Act 1995*, Section 5.126 to 5.128
Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 – Regulation 35 & 26

Review History:

Date Review Adopted:	Resolution Number
Adopted – 28 January 2016	
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Reviewed – 31 March 2020	
Reviewed – 28 November 2023	181123
Former Policy No:	G1.2