

Elected Member and CEO Training Professional Development, Travel and Events

POL-GVN 08



Objective

The Policy provides a framework for Elected Members and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in relation to training, professional development, travel and attendance at events.

This Policy is developed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995* (the "Act") Sections 1.4A(1), 5.126(1), 5.127, 5.128 and 5.90A and the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* (the Regulations).

Applicability

This Policy is binding on Elected Members or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) where stated.

Statement

1. Mandatory Elected Member Training

- a. In accordance with section 5.126(1) of the Act and regulation 35 of the Regulations, Elected Members must complete mandatory training, titled Council Member Essentials, within a period of twelve months beginning on the day on which the Elected Member is elected.
- b. The Council Member Essentials, consists of the following modules:
 - Understanding Local Government;
 - Serving on Council;
 - Meeting Procedures;
 - Conflicts of Interest; and
 - Understanding Financial Reports and Budgets.

The training course is provided by the following bodies –

- North Metropolitan TAFE;
 - South Metropolitan TAFE;
 - West Australian Local Government Association (WALGA).
- c. An Elected Member is exempt from the requirements outlined in section 5.126(1) of the Act if the Elected Member passed any of the courses specified below within the period of five years ending immediately before the day on which the Elected Member is elected:
 - Council Member Essentials;
 - 52756WA Diploma of Local Government (Elected Member);
 - LGA50220 Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member;
 - LGASS00007 Elected Member; or
 - The Elected Member passed the course titled LGASS00002 Elected Member Skill Set before 1 July 2019 and within a period of five years ending immediately before the day on which the Council Member is elected.

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- d. Any costs associated with the mandatory training will be funded outside of the Elected Members Training and Professional Development allocation. This includes any actual costs (including registration, accommodation, meals and travel) which has been incurred.

2. Elected Member and CEO Training and Professional Development

2.1 Continuous Professional Development

- a. Elected Members are encouraged to identify their individual continuing professional development needs to enhance their effectiveness and address skill gaps as required.
- b. As the needs of individual Elected Members may vary, each Elected Member is encouraged to seek the assistance of the CEO and/or Mayor in analysing their particular requirements and in identifying appropriate courses, seminars and training to meet those needs.
- c. In determining the professional development activities for individuals, Elected Members should consider the current or future strategic direction and activities of the City of Mandurah (the City) and its priorities and the skills that will be needed to give effect to the direction.

2.2 Approved Training and Professional Development Allocation

- a. The CEO and Elected Members are encouraged to attend training and professional development opportunities that will further develop their skills and knowledge. Elected Members are entitled to a Training and Professional Development allocation, as determined under Clause 3.
- b. Training and professional development activities which this Policy applies shall generally be limited to the following:
 - WA Local Government Association Council (WALGA) and Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) conferences.
 - Special 'one off' conferences called for or sponsored by the WALGA and/or ALGA on important issues.
 - Annual conferences of the major professions in local government and other institutions of relevance to local government activities.
 - Accredited organisations offering training relevant to the role and responsibilities of Elected Members and the CEO.
 - WALGA Council Member Training and Development.
 - Other local government-specific training courses, workshops and forums, relating to such things as understanding the roles/responsibilities of Elected Members, meeting procedures, etc.
 - Subscriptions for professional memberships that assist an Elected Member in fulfilling their role on Council. Note, the CEO professional membership allocation is in accordance with their contract conditions and is not included in the allocation.
 - Conferences or study tours that address the initiatives and projects that have been outlined in the City of Mandurah's Strategic Community Plan, advocacy statements or Council resolutions.

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2.3 Advocacy

- a. The City's Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan supports and encourages the creation of a vibrant and connected City that supports and improves the community for everyone. Council supports this purpose through ongoing advocacy and lobbying to higher levels of government and other stakeholders to increase the City's funding eligibility and opportunities and to highlight priority projects.
- b. The Mayor and CEO will represent the City in proactive and reactive advocacy activity and opportunities, in accordance with Council's approved advocacy framework. The Mayor may delegate the Deputy Mayor in the first instance and where they are unavailable, another Elected Member to attend where appropriate. The CEO may delegate another City officer to attend where appropriate.

3. Funding Allocation

- a. An allowance over two-years of \$9,000 per Councillor, will cover costs associated with attendance at training and development activities. This includes any actual costs (including registration, accommodation, meals and travel) which has been incurred.
- b. An allowance over two-years of \$16,000 for the Mayor and CEO, will cover costs associated with attendance at training and development activities.
- c. Elected Members will only be registered for professional development activities if the Elected Member has sufficient funds in their two-year expense allocation to meet the costs, unless Council resolves that attendance by that Elected Member would be of specific benefit to the City and resolves to allocate additional funding for any shortfall.
- d. Elected Members cannot enrol in a course under this Policy that provide a formal qualification (or accreditation) within three months of their term of office concluding. Note: nothing in this Policy precludes Elected Members from enrolling in other training or professional development activities.
- e. Elected Members may elect to utilise a portion of their allocation for Professional Membership. Professional Membership must relate to their role as an Elected Member in local government and be approved by the CEO.
- f. An Elected Member is not allowed payment or reimbursement of an amount in relation to professional development training if the participation occurs during any of the following periods:
 - i. the period of 3 months ending on the day on which the Elected Members term ends;
 - ii. if the Elected Member delivers a notice of resignation to the CEO, from that date of the delivery of the notice; or
 - iii. where an Elected Member is suspended under Part 8 of the Act.
- g. Elected Members may elect to utilise a portion of their allocation for Professional Membership. Professional Membership must relate to their role as an Elected Member in local government and be approved by the CEO.
- h. Elected Members who request professional membership to be paid in a year that their term of office is not a full financial year will only have the proportion paid for the days of the membership period they hold office.

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- i. Any activities for advocacy as described at clause 2.3, or for where an Elected Member or CEO is the City's appointed representative on a board or external organisation and where the Elected Member or CEO is required to attend a conference or event hosted by that board or organisation, will not be included in the Elected Member or CEO Training and Professional Development allocation and will be determined as part of the annual budget. The amount is outside of the allocation mentioned within this Policy and the City will cover all costs associated with the activity. Note that gift disclosure requirements may still apply.
- j. Unexpended funds at the end of the two-years will not be carried over to the next financial year, unless approved by Council.
- k. Internal workshops, strategic planning days, whole of Council training and development and internal training programs are not included in an Elected Member's or CEO's training and professional development allocation.
- l. All claims for reimbursement must be submitted within one month from the Elected Member or CEO returning from the training and professional development. Final claims relating to the financial year must be submitted within 14 days after the end of the financial year.

4. Approval for Training or Professional Development

- a. The CEO may approve Elected Members training and professional development applications and the Mayor may approve the CEO's where the:
 - i. Application complies with this Policy;
 - ii. Elected Member or CEO attends the training and development activity within Australia or New Zealand; and
 - iii. Elected Member has sufficient funds available in their allocation for training and development activity to meet the costs of attendance.
- b. A resolution of Council is required to approve an Elected Member or CEO request to attend training and professional development where:
 - i. The application has been refused by the CEO or Mayor;
 - ii. The application does not comply with this Policy;
 - iii. Estimated event expenses exceed the available balance of the Elected Member's two-year expense allocation; or
 - iv. Attendance at the training or professional development requires the Elected Member or CEO to be physically outside of Australia or New Zealand.
- c. Generally, two but no more than three Elected Members may attend a particular training or development activity outside Western Australia at the same time, unless Council has resolved for additional Elected Members to attend. Note: approval of attendance at a training or professional development activity should not impede a quorum at any scheduled Council or Committee meetings.
- d. Elected Members or the CEO who wish to participate in training or professional development activities must complete an application form. All applications are to be forwarded to the CEO in reasonable time to meet the registration deadline. Where practicable the City will utilise the 'early bird' registration option. Approvals in respect to the CEO must be forwarded to the Mayor for approval.

5. Training Reports and Register

- a. Elected Members are required to prepare an informal report on their attendance and benefits to them and the City, to be circulated to all Elected Members and the CEO within one month of completing a training or professional development activity. Elected Members are not required to prepare a written report for mandatory training.
- b. Elected Members must forward records of completion of professional development to the City for inclusion in the Elected Members' Professional Development Register on the City's website, within 10 days of completion.
- c. In accordance with section 5.127 of the Act and regulation 35 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, the City must prepare a report for each financial year on the training completed by Elected Members during the financial year. The Council Member Training Report must be published on the City's website within one month after the end of the financial year to which the report relates.

6. Travel, Accommodation, Meals and Incidentals

Incidentals: Includes snacks/food that is consumed outside of breakfast, lunch and dinner, drinks, laundry and dry cleaning, stationery, official telephone calls and internet.

- a. Travel, registration fees and accommodation are to be arranged directly by the City administration and not the Elected Member or CEO.
- b. Where practicable, travel requests should be provided at least one month prior to the travel date to allow adequate time for bookings to be made, this will allow the City to take advantage of any available discounts for early purchase.
- c. The cost of air travel to and from destinations is to be by the shortest most practical route unless additional travel is contemplated before or after a conference.
- d. All air travel is to be by Economy Class (unless otherwise provided for by Council resolution) at a time that is convenient to the Elected Member or the CEO. The cost of any upgrade to business class shall be paid for by the Elected Member or CEO. Any costs incurred to allocate a seat in Economy Class will be at the expense of the City. Note: The travel period will be the day before the commencement of the activity and the day after the conclusion of the activity.
- e. Elected Members, who use their private vehicle for conference travel, will be reimbursed for vehicle costs in accordance with the *Public Service Award 1992* to a maximum amount equivalent to what it would have cost to travel by air.
- f. Accommodation will be booked, where practicable, at the associated venue or, if unavailable, at premises in close proximity to the venue. Bookings will include accommodation the night before and the night of the closing of the event. If there are no flights available either the day before or the day after the event, the Elected Member will be required to use their allocation to cover the additional accommodation, meals and incidentals related to the additional length of time as a result of flights not being available the day before and/or the day after the event.
- g. Elected Members and the CEO must not receive any personal frequent flyer or accommodation loyalty points for air travel or accommodation booked and paid for by the City.

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- h. The City will pay Elected Members and the CEO, a daily allowance that is considered reasonable costs for meals and incidentals in accordance with the rates contained in Schedule I of the Travelling, Transfer and Relieving Allowance of the *Public Service Award 1992* for these expense amounts. Where an allowance has been paid, however the Elected Member or CEO has been provided with a meal that an allowance was paid for, the Elected Member or CEO must notify the City and reimburse the allowance amount paid upon returning from the professional development.
- i. Where an Elected Member or CEO chooses to arrive earlier or extend their stay at the location of a conference or deviates from the travel arrangements, then the Elected Member and CEO will be responsible for the full cost associated with that extended stay and/or variation to travel arrangements for private purposes. The exception would be if the flight schedules determine an extended stay is required.
- j. Hire cars will only be paid for by the City if the CEO or in the case of the CEO, the Mayor, consider it the most effective means of travel when attending the conference or professional development. Standard taxi fares (or similar services) or public transport for reasonable travel requirements will be reimbursed upon return, on the production of receipts to verify the expense.
- k. Where an Elected Member or CEO is accompanied by another person for Training and Development or advocacy activities, costs for or incurred by the accompanying person including but not limited to travel, meals, registration and/or participation in any event program, are to be borne by the Elected Member, CEO or the accompanying person and will not be paid for by the City. The only exclusion is for the payment of accompanying persons to attend the conference dinner, such costs will be met by the City.

6.1 Claiming Expenses

- a. Elected Members are advised that care needs to be taken in making application for claims for reimbursement of expenses and to differentiate between expenditure incurred in their private capacity and expenditure necessary to fulfil their role as an Elected Member.
- b. Reimbursement of expenses is conditional upon adequate evidence of such expenditure in the form of invoices or receipts.
- c. All claims for reimbursement by Elected Members, must be submitted to the Office of the Mayor and Councillors on the provided claim form, within two weeks of the Elected Member returning to the City. Final claims relating to the financial year must be submitted within 7 days after the end of the financial year. No back payment of claims relating to prior financial years will be permitted.
- d. All claims for reimbursement by the CEO must be submitted in accordance with the Council Elected Member Entitlements Policy.
- e. The City will not reimburse any meal or incidental expenses of any type as the allowance provided is considered a reasonable amount for attendance of the activity. The allowance will only be provided where the Training and Development and advocacy activity does not include a meal as part of the costs of the activity.
- f. No acquittal of expenses is required where the reasonable allowance and applicable rates are paid to an Elected Member or the CEO in accordance with the *Public Service Award 1992*.

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6.2 Travel Insurance

- a. Travel insurance for City related business trips, including cover for expenses for overseas medical treatment, emergency medical evacuation, flight cancellations, lost baggage and personal effects will be paid for by the City.
- b. Elected Members and the CEO must determine whether the benefits and endorsements of the above insurance cover is adequate. Elected Members and the CEO may wish to obtain their own insurance cover, at their own cost, to ensure the benefits and endorsements are adequate for their individual needs.

7. Attendance at Events

Events: in accordance with Section 5.90A of the Act, events include the following: concerts, conferences, functions or sporting events. whether part of a sponsorship agreement, paid by the local government or a ticket/invitation.

No action or approval is required if:

- a. An event is ticketed and the Elected Member or the CEO pays the full ticketed price and does not seek reimbursement;
- b. The event is free and all Elected Members are invited; or
- c. An event is free and open to the public.

7.1 Invitations

- a. In the course of their duties, Elected Members and/or the CEO will receive tickets or invitations to attend events to represent the City.
- b. All invitations and offers of tickets for an Elected Member or CEO to attend an event should be in writing and received by, or passed onto, the City via the Office of the Mayor and Councillors.
- c. Any invitation or offer of tickets not received by, or passed onto, the City are not captured by this Policy and must be disclosed in accordance with the gift and interest provisions in the Act.

7.2 Criteria for attendance at events

- a. In accordance with section 5.90A of the Act, Council must actively consider the purpose of and benefits to, the community, from Elected Members or the CEO attending events.
- b. Attendance at events by Elected Members and/or CEO are required to meet the following criteria:
 - i. Be of benefit and relevance to the City and the community; and
 - ii. Demonstrate alignment to the City's Strategic Community Plan, Long Term Financial Plan or Corporate Business Plans.

7.3 Pre-approved events

- a. The following events satisfy the criteria established in clause 7.2(b) and are considered pre-approved events ("Pre-approved Event"):
 - i. City hosted ceremonies and functions;
 - ii. City owned and/or sponsored functions or events;
 - iii. Community art exhibitions or cultural events;
 - iv. Events hosted by Clubs or Not for Profit Organisations;
 - v. Events run by schools and educational facilities within the City;

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- vi. Events run by a Local, State or Federal Government within Australia or New Zealand;
 - vii. Events or conferences outside Australia where there is no cost to the City;
 - viii. Advocacy lobbying or Ministerial briefings/events;
 - ix. ALGA or WALGA events;
 - x. Major professional bodies associated with local government at a local, State and Federal level;
 - xi. Events hosted by organisations, which have a Council-appointed Elected Member representative;
 - xii. Announcement of funding, donations and awards events, including where the City is receiving an award or providing an award;
 - xiii. Business invited events within Western Australia, where the business has a presence in the Peel Region;
 - xiv. Opening or launch of an event or facility within the City; and
 - xv. CEO or Mayor representation has been formally requested.
- b. Elected Members and/or the CEO are entitled to attend a Pre-approved Event where there is no cost to the City. Where a set number of tickets or invitations are received by the City, the Mayor and CEO shall allocate the invitations or tickets.
- c. When allocating a limited number of invitations or tickets received by the City, the Mayor and/or CEO may consider the following criteria:
- i. Fairness and equity and where appropriate tickets will be allocated on a rotational basis;
 - ii. The ward in which the event is being held;
 - iii. The relevant experience/interest areas of each Elected Member;
 - iv. Specific requests from Elected Members; and
 - v. Specific requests from event organisers.
- d. A register of event attendances under this Policy will be maintained to ensure equity and opportunity for Elected Members to represent Council. The Office of the Mayor and Councillors will coordinate this process and distribute the invitations or tickets in accordance with this Policy. The register of event attendances will be provided to Elected Members on a monthly basis.
- e. Where there is a cost to the City for the Pre-approved Event, two Council/City representatives may attend. In the first instance the Mayor and CEO will represent the City. The Mayor may delegate another Elected Member to attend where appropriate. The CEO may delegate another City officer to attend where appropriate. Where there are more than two representatives wanting to attend, the City will pay for additional tickets from the Elected Member Events budget.
- f. Preference will be given to Elected Member attendance as events where additional tickets are provided under subclause (e) above that are held within the District of Mandurah.
- g. For conference dinners or significant State and National award events where the Mayor and CEO (or delegates) attend, payment of accompanying persons to attend the event will be met by the City. For all other events, the Mayor and CEO (or delegates) may purchase a ticket for accompanying persons.
- h. Any appropriate expenses for attendance at Pre-approved Events, such as travel and accommodation, will be paid for by the City out of the City's budget, unless the event is a conference which is described at under clause 3.

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7.4 Approval process

- a. Where an invitation is received to an event that is not a Pre-approved Event under clause 7.3a, that invitation may be submitted for approval to Council in the provided form.
- b. The event should align to the criteria for attendance at events under clause 7.2. Additional considerations for approval of the event include:
 - i. The cost involved for attendance (including travel or accommodation);
 - ii. The role of the Elected Member or CEO when attending the event (participant, observer, presenter) and the value of their contribution;
 - iii. The numbers of invitations/tickets received;
 - iv. The benefit of City representation at the event;
 - v. The location of the event in relation to the City (within the district or outside of the district);
 - vi. Who is providing the invitation or ticket to the event; and
 - vii. Any justification provided by the applicant when the event is submitted for approval.

7.5 Non-approved Events

- a. Any event that is not approved under this Policy or is received in the Elected Member or CEOs personal capacity is considered a non-approved event.
- b. If the event is ticketed and the Elected Member or CEO pays a discounted rate or is provided with a ticket at no cost then the Elected Member or CEO must disclose receipt of the tickets as a gift within the City's gift register.

7.5 Gifts excluded from interest provisions

- a. Gifts relating to attendance at events, where attendance is approved under this Policy, are excluded gifts in accordance with s5.62(1B) of the Act. Providers of excluded gifts are excused from becoming a closely associated person and therefore do not require a disclosure of interest.
- b. Gifts provided by specific entities, as outlined at r20B of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* are also excused from becoming a closely associated person and therefore do not require a disclosure of interest.
- c. Elected Members or the CEO should note that excluded gifts under clause 7.5a are still considered a gift and, when received in the capacity of Elected Member or CEO must be disclosed and published on the City's gifts register. Note, conflict of interest provisions do not apply in relation to excluded gifts.
- d. Elected Members or the CEO should note that any invitation not captured by this Policy must be disclosed in accordance with the gift and conflict of interest provisions in the Act.
- e. Elected Members must disclose any events that are paid by a third party or provided to the Elected Member as a discount that is not available to the public, in the City's gift register.

8. Caretaker Period

- a. Elected Members attendance at training, professional development and events during a caretaker period must be in accordance with POL-GVN 06 Caretaker Period Policy.

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- b. Training and professional development is not to be scheduled during the caretaker period applicable to an election where the Elected Members current term of office is due to conclude.

Legislative Context

Local Government Act 1995 s5.126(1), s5.127, s5.128, s5.129 and 5.90A
Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996

Review

At a minimum this Council Policy will be reviewed after each ordinary election.

Responsible Directorate:	Business Services
Responsible Department:	Governance Services
Reviewer:	Executive Manager Governance Services
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Amendments			
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2	Minute G.12/1/22, 25 January 2022	25 January 2022	13 December 2023
3	Minute G.10/12/23, 12 December 2023	13 December 2023	