

ELECTED MEMBER AND CEO TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TRAVEL AND EVENTS

COUNCIL POLICY

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* Sections 5.126(1), 5.127, 5.128 and 5.90A and the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

Statement:

1. APPLICABILITY

- a. This policy applies to Elected Members or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) where stated.

2. ELECTED MEMBER MANDATORY TRAINING

- a. An Elected Member, must complete the course titled *Council Member Essentials*, in accordance with section 5.126(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, within a period of twelve months beginning on the day on which the Elected Member commences their term of office.
- b. The mandatory training is valid for five years.
- c. 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 course is provided by the following bodies –

- North Metropolitan TAFE;
 - South Metropolitan TAFE;
 - West Australian Local Government Association (WALGA).
- d. An Elected Member is exempt from the requirements outlined in section 5.126(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* if the Elected Member passed either of the following courses within the period of five years ending immediately before the day on which the Elected Member commences their term of office:
 - Council Member Essentials;
 - 52756WA Diploma of Local Government (Council Member);

- The Elected Member passed the course titled LGASS00002 Council Member Skill Set before 1 July 2019 and within a period of five years ending immediately before the day on which the Elected Member commences their term of office.
- e. In accordance with section 5.127 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and regulation 35 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, the City must prepare a report for each financial year on the mandatory training completed by Elected Members during the financial year. The report must be published on the City's website within one month after the end of the financial year to which the report relates.

3. ELECTED MEMBER AND CEO TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Approved Training and Professional Development Allocation

- a. 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.

3.2 Continuous Professional Development

- a. In accordance with section 5.128 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, 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 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 and its priorities and the skills that will be needed to give effect to the direction.

3.3 Advocacy and Lobbying

- 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 advocacy and lobbying activities. The Mayor may delegate another Elected Member to attend where appropriate. The CEO may delegate another City officer to attend where appropriate.

4. FUNDING ALLOCATION

- a. Elected Members are entitled to a Training and Professional Development allocation, as determined under Clause 3.1.
- b. An allowance over two-years of \$8,000 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.
- c. An allowance over two-years of \$16,000 for the Mayor and CEO, will cover costs associated with attendance at training and development activities.
- d. 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.
- e. The costs associated with the mandatory training including the *Council Member Essentials* and the 52756WA Diploma of Local Government (Council Member) 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.
- f. 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.
- g. 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.
- h. Any activities for Advocacy and Lobbying, in accordance with clause 3.3, 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 will cover all costs associated with the activity.
- i. Unexpended funds at the end of the two-years will not be carried over to the next financial year, unless approved by Council.

- j. Elected Members are required to prepare a written report on their attendance and benefits to them and the City, to be circulated to all Elected Members within one month of attending a training or professional development activity. Elected Members are not required to prepare a written report for mandatory training (clause 1).
- k. Internal workshops, strategic planning days, whole of Council training and development and internal training programs are not included in an Elected Member or CEO's training and professional development allocation.

5. 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. Training and development activity is to be held 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 Elected Members or CEO request to attend training and professional development where:
 - i. Application does not comply with this policy;
 - ii. Estimated event expenses exceed the available balance of the Elected Member's two-year expense allocation; or
 - iii. Event is to be held 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.

6. TRAVEL, ACCOMMODATION, MEALS AND INCIDENTALS

- a. 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.
- b. 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.
- c. 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 CEOs. 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.

- d. 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.
- e. 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 may 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.
- f. 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.
- g. 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.
- h. 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.
- i. 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.
- j. Where an Elected Member or CEO is accompanied by another person for Training and Development or Advocacy and Lobbying 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, with 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 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 by 31 July of that year (31 days after the end of the financial year). No back payment of claims relating to prior financial years will be permitted.
- d. 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 and Lobbying activity does not include a meal as part of the costs of the activity.
- e. 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*.

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

- 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. In order to meet the policy requirements tickets and invitations to events should be received by the City.

7.1 Criteria for attendance at events

- a. In accordance with Section 5.90A of the *Local Government Act 1995* 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. All invitations and tickets to events should be received by the City;
 - ii. Be of benefit and relevance to the City and the community; and
 - iii. Demonstrate alignment to the City's Strategic Community Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and Corporate Business Plans.

7.2 Pre-approved events

- a. The following events are in accordance with the criteria established in clause 7.1(b) and are considered pre-approved events:
 - i. City hosted ceremonies and functions
 - ii. City owned and/or sponsored functions or events
 - iii. Community art exhibitions or cultural events
 - iv. Any free event held within the City
 - v. Events hosted by Clubs or Not for Profit Organisations
 - vi. Events run by schools and educational facilities within the City
 - vii. Events run by a Local, State or Federal Government within Australia or New Zealand
 - viii. Events or conferences outside Australia where there is no cost to the City
 - ix. Advocacy lobbying or Ministerial briefings/events
 - x. ALGA or WALGA events
 - xi. Major professional bodies associated with local government at a local, State and Federal level
 - 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
 - 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. A register of an allocation of events 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.
- c. 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. For significant State and National award events where the Mayor and CEO (or delegates) attend, payment of accompanying persons to attend the conference dinner will be met by the City.
- d. Any appropriate expenses for attendance at 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 dealt with under clause 3.1.

7.3 Approval process

- a. Where an invitation is received to an event that is not pre-approved under clause 7.2a, it 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 7.1 and 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);
 - iii. The numbers of Elected Members invited to attend; and
 - iv. Any justification provided by the applicant when the event is submitted for approval.

7.4 Non-approved Events

- a. Any event that is not approved under clause 7.2 and 7.3 or is received personally is considered a non-approved event.
- b. If the event is a free event to the public then no action is required.
- c. If the event is ticketed and the Elected Member or CEO pays the full ticketed price and does not seek reimbursement then no action is required.
- d. If the event is ticketed and the Elected Member or CEO pays a discounted rate or is provided with a free ticket 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. Any gift, or multiple gifts, received over \$300 during the course of a year, received by a person is specifically excluded from being considered a closely associated person (conflict of interest disclosure) if the gift relates to attendance at an event when attendance has been approved in accordance with clauses 7.2 and 7.3 or made by specified entities under section 5.62(1B)(b) of the *Local Government Act 1995 and Regulation 20B of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.
- b. Elected Members or the CEO should note that excluded gifts under clause 7.5(a) 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.
- c. Elected Members or the CEO should note that any invitation not provided to the City is not captured by this policy and must be disclosed in accordance with the gift and conflict of interest provisions in the *Local Government Act 1995*.
- d. 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.

DEFINITIONS

Events: in accordance with Section 5.90A of the *Local Government Act 1995* events includes the following: concerts, conferences, functions or sporting events, whether free of charge, part of a sponsorship agreement, or paid by the local government or a ticket/invitation.

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

Responsible Directorate:	Corporate Services
Reviewer:	Manager Governance Services
Creation date:	Minute G.12/1/20, 28 January 2020
Amendments:	
Related Documentation and/or Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> Sections 5.126(1), 5.127, 5.128 and 5.90A and the <i>Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996</i> .

