

Council Policy

Continuing Professional Development of Council Members



POLICY OBJECTIVES

To ensure that Councillors have equitable access to a range of relevant training and professional development opportunities to enhance their ability to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as Councillors and to provide good governance to the Shire, within the prudent budgetary constraints of the Shire.

POLICY SCOPE

This Policy is to provide guidance to Councillors and administrative employees relating to the organisation, attendance and payment for training and professional development undertaken by Councillors.

POLICY DETAIL

Councillors are strongly encouraged to participate in conferences, programs and training courses specifically designed for professional development relating to their role and responsibilities in local government.

Requests for course participation or conference attendance may be initiated by the Councillor and should be forwarded to the CEO prior to enrolment or registration.

The CEO is authorised to approve requests from Councillors for all mandatory training and for additional training that does not exceed a Councillors annual training allocation, without referral to Council.

All conference attendance must be approved by Council.

Each Councillor will have access to an annual training allocation of \$1,500 and the presiding member will have an annual training allocation of \$3,000. Online mandatory training for newly elected Councillors will be budgeted for outside of regular annual allocations. Council shall ensure adequate resources are allocated annually in the Shire's budget to provide the opportunity for Councillors to participate in appropriate training and development.

All courses or conferences undertaken by Councillors must be through certified/industry-recognised training providers. Where possible it is the preference of Council that all training be undertaken online to minimise costs to the Shire.

The CEO must keep a report of all seminars, forums, webinars, training courses, conferences and workshops attended by Councillors and present the report to Council in July each year, and provide a summary of Councillor training in the Annual Report to the community each year.

To comply with Section 5.127 of the Local Government Act an abridged version of the July Council report will be placed on the Shire website under the following headings:

- Title of the training programs
- Date(s) of the program
- Training provider
- Cost
- Location

Council Policy

Continuing Professional Development of Council Members



Mandatory Training

Pursuant to the Local Government Act 1995, Councillors must complete Council Member Essentials training, which incorporates the following mandatory training units:

- Understanding Local Government;
- Conflicts of Interest;
- Serving on Council;
- Meeting Procedures and Debating; and
- Understanding Financial Report and Budgets.

Council's preferred provider for the training is WALGA (WA Local Government Association). It is Council's preference that the training is undertaken via the eLearning method, which is the most cost-efficient form of delivery.

Councillors must complete the mandatory training units within 12 months of their election to Council. The training is valid for a period of five years.

All mandatory training units and associated costs will be paid for by the Shire.

It is acknowledged that there may be Councillors who prefer to undertake the mandatory training units face-to-face and/or opportunities to attend training, which is being delivered in the region or in the Perth metropolitan area, this training must be authorised by the CEO as being within budgetary constraints and practical.

Additional Training

Council considers the below webinars and workshops as an essential training requirement for any Councillor and all Councillors should aim to undertake this training within their first term of office (4 years):

- WALGA Councillor Training Modules:
 - CEO Performance Appraisals (face to face)
 - Introduction to the Local Government Act for Councillors (Webinar)
 - Decision Making in Practice - Delegations (Webinar)
 - Local Government Gift Declaration (Webinar)
 - Communications Webinar for Councillors (Webinar)
 - Chairing of Meetings (Webinar)

Other additional training will be monitored and authorised by the CEO if it is within budgetary constraints. If a Councillor has exceeded their annual allocation and wishes to undertake extra training it must be authorised by a decision of Council.

Council Policy

Continuing Professional Development of Council Members



Conferences

Council recognises that whilst attendance at conferences are a good networking opportunity and provides professional development opportunities beyond those offered by traditional training courses, they also come at a significant cost and attendance must be managed with due consideration of budgetary constraints. All Councillor attendance at conferences must only be authorised by decisions of Council.

Councillors who attend conferences on behalf of Council are expected to present a summary report to Council summarising the conference and any learning at the next ordinary meeting of Council.

When attending conferences on behalf of Council, the Shire will meet the costs associated with the conference including any Gala Dinners. The Shire will organise suitable accommodation for attendees including breakfast. The Shire will also reimburse reasonable costs associated with lunch or dinner when attending conferences – reimbursed upon approval by the President and CEO. When attending conferences, attendees are welcome to invite partners to accompany them and the Shire will cover the cost of accommodation, breakfast and conference related dinners attended by partners – lunch and dinner costs incurred by partners will also be considered for reimbursement upon approval by The President and the CEO.

Council wishes to have representation at the WALGA Annual Local Government Week Conference each year. It is Council's preference that this conference is attended by the President, Deputy President, CEO and one other councillor to ensure representation but limit costs to a reasonable level, however actual attendees will be determined each year. Councillors are encouraged to attend the WALGA Annual Local Government Week Conference at least once during their four (4) year term.

Other

Any requests outside this policy, including those for attendance at course or conferences outside Western Australia, must be submitted to Council for consideration.

DEFINITIONS

CEO – the Shire of Narembeen's Chief Executive Officer or an officer subsequently delegated to manage this function by the Chief Executive Officer.

Council – the Shire of Narembeen Council

Councillor – a person duly elected to the office of Councillor on a Council by way of a free election

RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1995

Local Government Legislation Amendment Act 2019 Section 5.127 & 5.128

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OTHER RELATED POLICIES/KEY DOCUMENTS

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

NA

REVIEW DATE

July 2021

HISTORY

Adopted:	15 July 2020	MIN:	7079/20
Reviewed:		MIN:	
Reviewed:		MIN:	