



POLICY – 1.10 – Elected Members Ongoing Professional Development

Relevant Delegation

N/A

Objective

To ensure equitable access to ongoing professional development and training opportunities to enable elected members to fulfil their function and perform the duties required of them under the *Local Government Act 1995*.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Policy 1.11 Attendance at Events.

Statement

In recognition of the complexity and demands on elected members in undertaking their role, the Shire is committed to resourcing elected members to support them in performing their duties of office and to enable attendance at conferences or to undertake professional development training relevant to their role and as required by legislation.

To ensure each elected member is provided reasonable opportunity to participate in required, as well as ongoing, professional development, a budget provision will be included annually for each elected member for planning purposes to meet the costs of registration, travel and accommodation for elected member professional development.

Professional development may include (but is not limited to):

- Mandatory elected member training as specified within section 5.126 of the Local Government Act 1995;
- Study tours;
- West Australian Local Government Association and Australian Local Government Association conferences;
- Special 'one off' conferences called for or sponsored by the West Australian Local Government Association and/or Australian Local Government Association on important issues;
- Annual conferences of the major professions in local government and other institutions of relevance to local government activities;
- Municipal Training Service's Councillor Induction Program;
- West Australian Local Government Association Elected Member Training and Development;
- Training relating to the role of elected members; and
- Other local government-specific training courses, workshops and forums, relating to such things as understanding the roles/responsibilities of elected members, meeting procedures, etc.

Approval of Attendance

If attendance by elected member/s for professional development is considered in the best interest of the Shire, and where appropriate budget provision remains to facilitate attendance, the CEO will prepare details for council to consider for the relevant member's attendance at the event as detailed within the 'Approval of Attendance' sections of this policy.

Approval of Attendance – General

The CEO will prepare an agenda item for council to consider, relating to attendance at professional development, detailing the following information:

- Who is providing the ticket to the professional development (the Shire, the organiser of the event or a third party);
- The location of the professional development in relation to the local government (within the district or out of the district);
- The role of the council member, CEO when attending professional development (participant, observer, presenter);
- Whether the professional development is sponsored by the local government;
- The benefit to the district of council representation at the professional development;
- Which elected member and / or officer should be authorised to attend the professional development; and
- The cost to attend the professional development and availability of funding within adopted annual budget.

Decisions to attend events in accordance with this policy will be made by simple majority.

Approval of Attendance – Short Notice

Where the timing of receipt of an invitation and the professional development itself does not provide an opportunity for council to consider attendance at professional development (such as when received at short notice), the CEO shall:

- a) Prepare an agenda item in accordance with 'Approval of Attendance – General' and circulate to the council via email;
- b) Email correspondence is to set a reasonable period of notice for elected members to respond (not less than 24 hours);
- c) If no objections are raised within the set notice period by an elected member to the CEO, it will be taken by the CEO the elected member agrees with the recommendation;
- d) Decision to attend professional development at short notice will be made once agreement has been received from a simple majority of all elected members; and
- e) Decision is to be presented for noting at the next ordinary meeting of council.

The council may also delegate attendance to professional development to another council member or the CEO or another officer after a decision has been made, by a circular email from the CEO explaining the proposed change. The subsequent process shall be as described at (b), (c) and (d) above.

Study Tours

A study tour is designed to enable elected members (and staff) to travel intrastate, interstate and/or overseas to research and study specific issues fronting Council.

Details of study tours are to be arranged in advance so that suitable provision can be included in each year's budget. When no details of study tours have been arranged, or arrangements are incomplete, an appropriate amount may be included in the budget to cover the cost of an annual study tour.

Study tours will be considered with the following guidelines:

- The maximum attendance at any study tour is to be two Elected Members (and two staff);
- Attendance at a study tour shall only take place where there are appropriate funds provided in the annual budget; and
- A detailed report including recommendations on each study tour is to be submitted to Council for noting.

Special Provision

To provide an opportunity to network with Federal Ministers, Members of Parliament and/or Senior Departmental Officers on issues affecting the Shire, the Shire President (and the Chief Executive Officer), with the prior approval of Council, are to attend an appropriate interstate conference incorporating a visit to Canberra where possible on an annual basis.

Guidelines for Conference and Training Attendance

Generally, no more than two elected members may attend a particular Conference or Training event outside Western Australia at the same time. The CEO or Council may, however, approve attendance by more than two elected members if a particular purpose or need arises.

Attendance at Overseas Conferences

An elected member may, with prior Council approval, attend an overseas conference. The Council approval must include a specific Council resolution indicating how the conference attendance will be of benefit to the Shire and the elected member and detailing any conditions applied.

Report

Upon return from any professional development event as detailed within this policy, where registration and other associated costs are met by the Shire, the attending elected member is required to provide a written report on their attendance and the benefits to them and the Shire, to the CEO. The CEO is to record these reports in a register to support required annual reporting required by legislation.

– *End of Policy*

ADOPTED: 25 MARCH 2021

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