

# Elected Members Professional Development Policy

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## 1 Policy

Professional development of Councillors is strongly encouraged together with the selection of training or attendance at conferences or seminars based on demonstrable benefit to the enhancement and development of the Councillor's skills and abilities with regard to effective community representation.

## 2 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework to provide for Councillors attendance at seminars, conferences and meetings; and professional development opportunities for Councillors.

The broad framework within which Councillor professional development will be delivered encompasses:

- . Identification of the knowledge, skills and competencies needed by a Councillor/Council as a whole having regard to the strategic directions and performance of the Council, as well as developments within the local government industry.
- . Analysis of the professional development needs of Councillors and the Council as a whole against the identified needs.
- . Attendance at professional development activities by individual Councillors and the Council as a whole.

## 3 Scope

This Policy applies to the Mayor and all Councillors.

## 4 Definitions

Professional Development – includes personal development, attendance at a conference, seminar, forum, delegation or similar event that will assist a Councillor in their broad civic leadership role.

## 5 Principles

### *5.1 Commitment to Professional Development*

As community representatives and the public face of the Council, Councillors play an integral leadership role in the processes for the development, communication and representation of the Council's Strategic Plan, Council policies, strategies and programs.

Professional development for Councillors contributes towards a positive presentation of the Council.

The Council will allocate funds via its budget process to meet approved professional development needs of Councillors.

## 5.2 *Personal Development*

Councillors are encouraged to identify individual and group personal development needs to enhance their effectiveness.

Assessment of needs should focus on the skills and knowledge required to enhance and improve the skills necessary to perform the role of Mayor and/or Councillor.

The General Manager is able to provide guidance and assistance to a Councillor by locating and sourcing personal development opportunities.

## 5.3 *Conferences, Seminars, Forums or Delegations*

A Councillor who is funded by the Council to attend a conference, seminar, forum, delegation or similar event, shall participate as a representative of Council, not as an individual.

The Mayor, Councillors and the General Manager are encouraged to regularly attend the following Local Government events:

- . Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly;
- . LGAT annual general meeting and conference;
- . LGAT general meetings;
- . LGAT professional development, training and elected members courses.

Participation in other conferences, seminars, forums, delegations or similar events by Councillors is encouraged where it can be demonstrated that attendance will:

- . provide information on a contemporary issue, so that the Council can contribute to discussion or debate;
- . put forward the Council's viewpoint during formation of a collaborative policy, or stance on an issue;
- . meet community expectations that Council representation is necessary for the benefit of the community;
- . deliver economic development opportunities; or
- . provide improvements to the wellbeing of our community.

Following participation in an event covered by this section the Mayor, or the Councillor, should submit a written report for inclusion in the *GM's Desk* within 28 days of attendance.

#### *5.4 Professional Development Funding*

To maximise the effectiveness of allocated resources, the Council will only meet the cost of professional development outlined in this Policy, subject to approval by the General Manager, in consultation with the Mayor.

If a request for professional development cannot be accommodated within the budget allocation, the General Manager, in consultation with the Mayor, will determine if additional funding may be available from another area of the budget.

#### *5.5 Expenses*

All booking arrangements, including air fares, registration fees and accommodation (including meals in the hotel where registered) will be coordinated through the General Manager's Office. These will be paid direct by the Council.

Where a Councillor is accompanied at a conference or training, all costs for or incurred by an accompanying person are to be borne by the Councillor or accompanying person, not by the Council. The exception to the above being the cost of attending any official event dinner where partners would normally attend.

## **6 Review**

This Policy will be reviewed every four years.