



POLICY NO:-

CP1-020 – COUNCILLOR INDUCTION, TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GOVERNANCE INFORMATION

Procedure Link:	N/A	Administrative Policy Link:	
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ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

History	1	CP1-020	OCM 12/08/25 Res: 9632	Synopsis:	Policy created.
Version:	2				

1. RESPONSIBLE DIRECTORATE

Chief Executive Officer

2. PURPOSE OR OBJECTIVE

This policy is to provide a framework within which Elected Members can meet their statutory obligations and have access to a range of professional development opportunities that will assist them to undertake their role, including but not limited to pre-election information sessions, induction programs, training programs, attendance at conferences & seminars and other development opportunities throughout the elected term of office.

The Shire of Collie has a budget allocation for the purpose of enabling Elected Members to participate in development opportunities that will assist them to undertake their role and/or develop skills and competencies.

The policy encourages Elected Members to participate in professional development and training opportunities during their elected term of office leading up to the Caretaker Period before their term ends, noting that where a term of office is less than the usual four year term, access to a full range of opportunities may not be available within the term.

3. SCOPE

This Policy applies to elected members of the Shire of Collie.

4. POLICY

4.1 Pre-Election

The Chief Executive Officer or his/her delegate, in conjunction with the Western Australian Electoral Commission and/or WALGA, will conduct a seminar for aspiring Elected Members to be held prior to a Local Government election. The aim of this seminar(s) would be to provide

aspirants with an insight to the role of an Elected Member and better prepare them for what lays ahead.

All candidates for Council will be required to declare that they have completed the candidate induction at the time of nomination. There are penalties under the *Local Government Act 1995* for making false or misleading statements on the nomination form.

4.2 Induction

Upon election to Council, the Shire will provide an induction, training and development program for Elected Members modelled on the Department of Local Government Elected Member Induction Checklist, to provide them with all the information relevant to commencing their role as an Elected Member. Attendance at in-house information and training sessions is also encouraged after the completion of the induction program.

The induction program contributes to the corporate objectives by:

- Assisting new Elected Members to assimilate into the role;
- Assisting Elected Members meet the demands upon them by developing the necessary skills through recognised training;
- Assisting Elected Members achieve excellence in performance; and
- Ensuring Elected Members work professionally in a team environment for the betterment of their constituents.

4.3 Council Member Training

Upon election to Council, the Shire of Collie will facilitate the conducting and participation by Councillors at the Councillor Member Essential training. This will comprise of five foundational competencies that will need to be completed within 12 months of being elected. The five units include:

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

All Council Members will have to complete the Council Member Essentials course unless, in the previous five years, they have passed the Diploma of Local Government 52756WA (Elected Member) or the course titled LGASS00002 Elected Member Skill Set.

This training will be generally be delivered face to face, but may be completed on-line where required. The training is valid for five (5) years, requiring a Council member to undertake the training again every second election. The training undertaken by Councillors is required to be reported annually and published on the Council's website.

This policy is required under Regulations to be reviewed after each election, which provides an opportunity to consider the needs and skill sets of new and returning Councillors.

4.4 Annual Allocation for Training and Development

Elected Members are encouraged to attend various programs during their term of office to assist their professional development and to provide them with enhanced skills to effectively maximise the benefits of the commitment they have given to their elected position.

Each Elected Member is equally allocated an annual sum as specified in each annual budget for attendance at training and development programs and courses. The amount should not, in normal circumstances be exceeded and registration will not be effected if there are insufficient funds available to be used. The Chief Executive Officer shall monitor the budget to appropriately manage the allocation.

4.5 Conferences & Training Courses

The annual budget allocation may be used for any of the following:

- a) Councillor Member Essentials training required under the Act.
- b) Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) Training Program - WALGA offers a module-based training program that is standardised for WA Local Governments. Progressive participation in this program is encouraged and is considered to be the best opportunity outside of the organisation to develop relevant local government knowledge, including the opportunity to obtain a Diploma in Local Government by the completion of the course modules. Elected Members are encouraged to support this training particularly when held in South West venues.
- c) Local Government Week - Local Government Week (Convention) is an annual networking and development opportunity provided by WALGA. This is undertaken in conjunction with the Association's Annual General Meeting at which the Shire of Collie is entitled to have two delegates. It is usual that this will be the President and Deputy President, however this may be passed to another Elected Member (by resolution of Council) when one or both of the President and Deputy President are not in attendance.

In addition to the two delegate participants, opportunity exists for other Elected Members and the Chief Executive Officer to attend Local Government Week.

- d) Examples of other conferences include:-
 - National General Assembly of Local Government (Shire President and Chief Executive Officer);
 - Annual Road Conference;
 - Special "one off" conferences sponsored by WALGA or the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.
- e) Other training and development - Other training and development opportunities are identified from time to time by either an individual Elected Member or the organisation, attendance at which may be approved where:
 - The course or development opportunity is relevant to the functions of an Elected Member;
 - The course or development opportunity is relevant to an Elected Member's role or as a member of a Council approved representative on a Council Committee or external body;

- There is scope for the attendee to acquire skills beneficial to the Shire; and
- The budget remains available to cover the associated costs.

4.6 Restrictions and Exclusion on Travel

No more than two Elected Members may attend the same Interstate event and no more than three Elected Members exclusive of the President and Deputy President may attend the same intrastate event (authorised training and development courses excluded).

Travel Interstate is not permitted without the prior approval of Council; and within three months of being elected as an Elected Member and is not permitted within the Caretaker Period leading up to an elected members expiry of office, unless approved in advance by a resolution of Council. Attendance at any overseas conference, seminar or other development event requires the specific approval of Council.

4.7 Accommodation

Council staff will arrange and make payment for reasonable accommodation for the Councillor for a room at or in close proximity to the event venue.

4.8 Elected Representatives/Delegate Accompanying Person

Where an Elected Member or Officer is accompanied at a conference or training event, all costs for, or incurred by, the accompanying person are to be borne by the Elected Member, Officer or accompanying person and not by the Shire. The exception being the cost of attending an official event dinner where partners would normally attend. An example of an official event is the Annual Local Government Week Gala Dinner or “sundowner drinks” at the event.

4.9 Out of Pocket Expenses

- a) Meals and incidental expenses – An allowance maximum of \$100 per day is provided for the full duration of the training or conference event. This expense would generally include breakfast, lunch, dinner, incidentals and transport (taxi, bus, train), excluding car parking. This allowance cannot be used when the costs of meals etc. are included in the registration fee and the elected member chooses to eat elsewhere.
- b) Travel by car – Where it is available and convenient Elected Members will be encouraged to use one of the Council’s fleet vehicles for intrastate travel. Where an Elected Member uses their own vehicle they shall be reimbursed for fuel costs by providing the Chief Executive Officer with a reimbursement of expenses claimed (ie: car parking) and the receipt. Elected Members are encouraged to “car pool”.
- c) All out of pocket expenses claimed shall be supported by applicable receipts and provided to the Chief Executive Officer for reimbursement.

4.10 Reporting Requirements

On return from attending a training & development opportunity, attendees shall provide a written report to the Shire within 21 days to facilitate knowledge sharing. The report should detail skills and competencies gained, benefits for the Shire, Council and community and relevant recommendations.

The President or Chief Executive Officer may approve an extension in circumstances deemed appropriate. Regard may be given to the technicality of the information to be prepared into a report, workloads or other factors.

Failure to provide a report or presentation within the approved timeframe may result in the Elected Member being required to reimburse costs associated with attendance to the Shire.

4.11 Approval Process

Applications from Elected Members for attendance at interstate training, seminars and conferences will be considered by the President and Deputy President in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer with regard to applicability of the development opportunity to the Councillor's role and budget availability, and a report to Council to seek approval.

The application can only be approved where the costs including registration fees, travel, accommodation and an estimation of other expenses can be accommodated within the approved allowance allocated to the Elected Representative for this purpose in accordance with the annual budget provision. The annual training budget determined by the Council will be equally allocated to each Elected Representative on a pro-rata basis in accordance with election dates. An individual's unspent funds can be carried forward for use within the biennial election cycle.

The Chief Executive Officer is authorised to approve requests from Elected Members for professional development training and conferences without referral to Council provided that:

- a) The event is within the state
- b) The cost does not exceed the annual allowance; and
- c) The course of conference is organised by an identified, industry recognised training provider.

The Chief Executive Officer is to maintain a register of each Elected Members' training and professional development expenses.

Nothing in this policy provision prevents the Council from approving additional funds to be accessible or the Council from approving a specific application that is outside of the existing budget.

This Policy does not apply to meetings or workshops attended by an Elected Member, where they are the approved Council delegate or representative.

5. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Local Government Act 1995 5.36 and 5.42, 5.126, 5.127 and 5.128.

Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996.