

Governance and Corporate Leadership

GL4 Councillor Professional Development



13 September 2017

This policy was adopted by Council to set governing principles in place that align the strategic direction of the organisation with Corporate Plan 2014-2018 Goal 5 – Effective Leadership and Governance.

Objectives

To ensure that Councillors have equitable access to a range of relevant Councillor training and professional development opportunities to enhance their ability to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as elected members and to provide good governance to the Shire.

Policy

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.

Authorised Training / Conferences

This policy permits Councillors to attend training up to a total value of \$3,000 in expenditure per annum without requiring further Council authorisation from the following list of conferences and workshops:

- WALGA Elected Member Training Modules, **Conferences**, seminars, forums and workshops;
- WALGA Local Government Convention and associated training courses;
- LG Professionals WA Annual State Conference, SW Conference and other LG Professionals WA seminars and workshops
- The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) Annual State Conference, seminars and forums;
- Breakfast or workshop speakers identified by the President in liaison with the CEO and advertised by email;

The Shire will arrange for any registrations or bookings to be made as per the advice in the section of this policy referring to training and conference costs

Additional Training / Conference Opportunities require Council Approval

Alternatively a Councillor may apply in writing to the CEO to participate in a relevant alternative conference or training program requiring the approval of Council. The CEO will provide a report to Council after assessing the training against the requirements of the training/conference assessment matrix below. A score of fifteen or more will be required to receive a favourable recommendation.

Conference / Training Assessment Matrix

| Criteria | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Relevance to Councillors' governance role under LGA, as opposed to officers' operational role | | | | |
| Value for Money & Cost/Benefit | | | | |
| Alignment with Council's Strategic Plan and Current Priorities | | | | |
| Lack of alternative training opportunities to gain same skills | | | | |
| Level of quality networking opportunities with peers | | | | |

In the event that there is insufficient time for Council approval to be obtained for a Councillor to attend an identified relevant training opportunity, the CEO is authorised to register the Councillor's attendance in the training program after firstly completing the evaluation matrix in liaison with the President, and the President and CEO being satisfied that at least 15 points has been achieved.

Councillors will be eligible to attend only one event per financial year without Council's authorisation under this section of the policy.

In addition to the above permitted training opportunities, the President can attend one or more of the following conferences; the annual LG Professionals WA National Congress, the Australian Coastal Councils Conference, and the ALGA National Conference, or in the event that the President is unable, or declines to attend, then Council is to be represented by the Deputy President, or if the Deputy President is unable, or declines to attend, then Council shall appoint a Councillor who is able to put forward the best case for attending.

Training / Conference Costs. (Please also refer to footnote below taken from policy GL12 – Reimbursement of Expenses)

The Shire will meet the costs of all the Councillor's accommodation, airfares, conference costs and associated insurance costs, through advance payment by the Shire directly to the provider, or by reimbursement to the Councillor upon the production of receipts and other supporting documentation

The Shire will also meet the cost of additional travelling expenses including meals, transport and incidentals based on the State Public Service Schedule of Allowances for intrastate and interstate conferences. These expenses, supported by receipts, shall be reimbursed to the Councillor.

Councillors will be required to meet the costs of any additional accommodation and expenses incurred as the Shire will not meet any costs for private travel over and above the number of nights' accommodation and expenses required to attend the conference.

The cost of the Councillor's partner attendance at Conference dinners, associated functions and partners' programs and daily meals will be met by the Shire, but not additional airfares, full conference registration and travelling allowances. This policy is also to apply to the CEO when attending an intrastate or interstate conference accompanied by their partner.

Whilst Council supports Councillors in balancing their public duties with their family commitments, it does not support ratepayers having to pay the full cost of partner's accompanying elected members on Council business.

Council's delegate is to provide a written report on the key outcomes from any interstate conference relevant to the Shire of Augusta Margaret River within one month of returning from the conference.

Other Matters

Council approval is required in advance in order for any Councillor with the exception of the President as outlined above to attend an interstate conference. If Council approval is granted, then accommodation and travelling expenses will be met in accordance with the State Public Service Schedule for Interstate Travel.

Council will consider on its merits any request for the payment of registration fees and daily allowances from a Councillor who wishes to attend an interstate or overseas conference and is prepared to meet their own travel and accommodation costs. Daily allowances will be based on the State Public Service Schedule of Travel Allowances.

Council will consider sending a maximum of two Councillors on an organised local government study tour to the Eastern States or New Zealand when the opportunity arises and meet all costs of airfares, accommodation and daily allowances in accordance with the State Public Service Schedule of Daily Allowances.

The CEO, in liaison with the President, shall bring forward for Council consideration any proposals for "in-house" training and Councillor development opportunities to meet Council's strategic objectives and priorities or to meet perceived gaps in Councillor skill development.

A Councillor shall not be permitted to nominate for attendance at a conference four months prior to their term of office expiring with the exception of WALGA's Local Government Convention.

Application

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the President, Councillors and Chief Executive Officer. The policy is to be reviewed every three years.

Footnote: Extract from GL12 Reimbursement of Expenses

Reimbursement for Statutory Child Care Expenses

Section 5.98(2) of the Local Government Act and Regulation 31 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations

A Councillor has a statutory entitlement to be reimbursed for child care expenses incurred by the Councillor as a result of attendance at a council meeting or a meeting of a committee of which he or she is member. The Shire of Augusta Margaret River will reimburse child care expenses, verified by sufficient information, in accordance with the determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members under the Salaries and Allowances Act 1975 section 7B.

Reimbursement of Statutory Travel Expenses

Section 5.98(2) of the Local Government Act and Regulation 31 of the of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations

A Councillor has a statutory entitlement to be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred by the councillor as a result of attendance at a council meeting or a meeting of a committee of which he or she is member. The Shire of Augusta Margaret River will reimburse travel expenses, verified by sufficient information such as a log book or signed memorandum outlining journeys and kilometres travelled, in accordance with the determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members under the Salaries and Allowances Act 1975 section 7B.

ie. Travel costs incurred while driving a privately owned or leased vehicle (rather than a commercially hired vehicle) are to be calculated at the same rate contained in Section 30.6 of the Local Government Officers' (Western Australia) Interim Award 2011 as of the annual date of the SAT determination.

Reimbursement of Other Expenses

Section 5.98(2) of the Local Government Act and Regulation 32 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations

A Councillor is to be reimbursed for the following types of expenses to the extent set for each type of expense where the expense is incurred:

- in performing a function under the express authority of the Shire;
- by reason of being accompanied by no more than one other person while performing an official function where the Shire considers it to be appropriate; or
- in performing a function in the Councillor's official capacity as a council member as distinct from an individual ward councillor.

Reimbursement of expenses will be provided where the expense is verified by sufficient information such as tax invoices for purchases, log book entries, signed memorandum etc.

Document and version control table

| Strategic outcome | Corporate Plan 2014-2018 Goal 5 – Effective Leadership and Governance | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Responsible Directorate | CEO | |
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| Date of original issue | Council meeting date 27 August 2009 | |
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| 1.0 | 27/8/2009 | Initial issue |
| 2.0 | 23/1/2013 | Full review |
| 3.0 | 13/9/2017 | Full review |
| 3.1 | 17/9/2018 | Amended to include conferences in list of approved training courses and to reference policy GL12 regarding reimbursement of expenses – OM2018/208 |