

1.22 Elected Member Professional Development & Training Policy

Policy Owner	Executive Director Corporate & Commercial Services
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance & Risk
Date of Approval	27/11/2018
Amended/Revised	25/06/2024

Objective

The *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act), states in part that a local government must prepare and adopt a policy in relation to the continuing professional development of council members.

To ensure equity and accessibility to individual training and professional development opportunities, in addition to group training sessions offered by the City of Albany to enable elected members to fulfil their functions in local government.

Scope

This policy applies to all Elected Members.

The annual allowance referred to in this policy is for a twelve-month period commencing 1 July each year.

Policy Statement

It is acknowledged that Elected members must receive and complete “Council Member Training” as prescribed in the Act and regulations, however Council also acknowledge the need to support an individual’s continuing professional development.

Elected Member Professional Development Annual Allowance

- City of Albany Elected Members are entitled to an annual Professional Development Allowance.
- The amount will be set annually, as part of the Budget Adoption Process. For planning purposes, an amount of \$4000 will be allocated to each elected member annually.
- Unspent funds for individual elected members from each year will carry over for a maximum of two years, after which time any unspent funds may be returned to the general training budget.
- Reimbursement of expenses incurred by elected members for professional development will only be made where the training is considered relevant to their role as an elected member.
- The training undertaken must be relevant to the role of an elected member, and enhance or develop their knowledge, understanding and performance of their role, in order to make informed decisions and effectively represent their constituents.
- Subject to budgeted funds being available, the Chief Executive Officer is provided with the authority to approve and arrange the registration and associated travel, accommodation, and reimbursement of approved expenses necessary for an elected member to attend training.
- An elected member, with the approval of the CEO, may make their own arrangements for travel and accommodation, and reimbursement will be made on presentation of appropriate receipts.
- The costs of Elected Member Professional Development arranged by the CEO as part of the induction of newly elected members and any subsequent training arranged by the CEO for currently serving elected members will be met from the Elected Member General Training budget and not deducted from the individual member’s allocation.

Travel and Accommodation

- Travel, accommodation, and meals costs will only be paid or reimbursed for the duration of the professional development event and will be exclusive of accommodation/meals which are supplied as part of the training event.
- Should an elected member wish to extend their stay, either before or after the training, they will be wholly responsible for all additional costs, including but not limited to accommodation, meals and incidentals during that period.
- Where travel is involved, the cost of the shortest, most practical route to and from the training venue will be booked by the City for the respective elected member. Travel will be arranged for the elected member to arrive the day prior to the training commences prior to 12 noon, and the same day for training that commences after 12 noon. Departure will be the same day for training that concludes prior to 12 noon, or the next day for training which concludes after 12 noon.
- Should an elected member wish to travel on different days or by alternate routes, they will be responsible for any additional travel, accommodation, meals and incidental costs.

Expenses

- Air travel shall be on the basis of an economy class fare with standard baggage allowance. Wherever possible air fares should be booked to take advantage of advance purchase discounts.
- Accommodation shall be on the basis of an appropriate room in an appropriate standard hotel recommended by the training providers, or one located in close proximity to the training venue. Any upgrades or extensions shall be at the expense of the elected member.

Transport

- Elected members shall be provided with a sufficient number of Cab-Charge vouchers for travel to and from the training venue, airport, accommodation or other identified destinations.
- Hire cars may only be booked if it is deemed to be more economical.

Conditions of Approval

Approval should be obtained from Council where:

- Training is requested after 30 June in the year an elected member's term of office ends;
- Where two or more elected members have requested to attend the same training; or
- Where the elected member does not have sufficient funds available in their Professional Development allocation to meet all training and associated costs.

Summary of Expenses and Allowances

Nature of Expense/Allowance	Notes	Annual Limit
Training-related travel and accommodation expenses at the request of the elected member.	Actual costs include travel, meals, accommodation, and training costs. The unspent balance of the allowance may be carried forward for two years.	Annual allowance of a percentage to be set by the Council of each Elected Member Allowance.
Training provided by the annual Elected Member Professional Development Program.	Training provided by the City to induct elected members and provide ongoing professional development opportunities	Funded from the Elected Member Professional Development budget.

Legislative and Strategic Context

It is a legislative requirement under the Act for elected members to conduct training and professional development.

Local Government Act 1995:

5.126. Training for council members

Each council member must complete training in accordance with regulations.

Regulations may: prescribe a course of training; and

- (a) prescribe the period within which training must be completed; and
- (b) prescribe circumstances in which a council member is exempt from the requirement in subsection (1); and
- (c) provide that contravention of subsection (1) is an offence and prescribe a fine not exceeding \$5 000 for the offence.

5.127. Report on training

A local government must prepare a report for each financial year on the training completed by council members in the financial year.

The CEO must publish the report on the local government's official website within 1 month after the end of the financial year to which the report relates.

Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996

Training for council members (Act s. 5.126(1))

A council member completes training for the purposes of section 5.126(1) if the council member passes the course of training specified in subregulation (2) within the period specified in subregulation (3).

The course of training is the course titled Council Member Essentials that:

- consists of the following modules:
 - Understanding Local Government;
 - Serving on Council;
 - Meeting Procedures;
 - Conflicts of Interest;
- Understanding Financial Reports and Budgets; and
- is provided by any of the following bodies:
 - North & South Metropolitan TAFE;
 - WALGA.

The period within which the course of training must be passed is the period of 12 months beginning on the day on which the council member is elected.

Regulation 36 (Exemption from Act s. 5.126(1) requirement)

Exemption from Act s. 5.126(1) requirement

A council member is exempt from the requirement in section 5.126(1) if:

- the council member passed either of the following courses within the period of 5 years ending immediately before the day on which the council member is elected:
 - the course of training specified in regulation 35(2);
 - the course titled 52756WA — Diploma of Local Government (Elected Member); or
- the council member passed the course titled LGASS00002 Elected Member Skill Set before 1 July 2019 and within the period of 5 years ending immediately before the day on which the council member is elected.

A person who is a council member on the day on which the *Local Government Regulations Amendment (Induction and Training) Regulations 2019* regulation 8 comes into operation is exempt from the requirement in section 5.126(1) until the end of their term of office.

Review Position and Date

This policy must be reviewed every two years after a general Local Government election, or earlier if Council considers it necessary.