

# Elected Members

## Continuing Professional Development – Elected Members

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### Objective

To ensure that Elected Members of the Shire of Koorda (“the Shire”) meet and comply with the prescribed professional development requirements under the *Local Government Act 1995*, and to further encourage participation in other conferences and training specifically designed to enhance skills and knowledge relating to roles and responsibilities, as an Elected Member of the Shire.

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### Policy

The Shire recognises the importance of providing Elected Members with the knowledge and resources that will enable them to fulfil their role in accordance with statutory compliance and community expectations and make educated and informed decisions.

### Compulsory Elected Member Training

Pursuant to the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, Elected Members must complete “Council Member Essentials” course consisting of five modules:

- a) Understanding Local Government;
- b) Conflicts of Interest;
- c) Serving on Council;
- d) Meeting Procedures and Debating; and
- e) Understanding Financial Report and Budgets.

All units and associated costs will be paid for by the Shire and must be completed within 12 months of being elected. The training is valid for a period of five years.

It is Council's preference that the training is undertaken via the eLearning method which is the more cost-efficient form of delivery. It is acknowledged however that there may be Elected Members who prefer to receive training face-to-face and/or opportunities to attend training which is being delivered in the region or in the Perth metropolitan area.

### Exemptions

A Councillor is exempt from the requirement in Section 5.126(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* if;

- The Councillor passed either of the following courses within the period of five years ending immediately before the day on which the Councillor is elected:
  - Council Member Essentials;
  - 52756WA Diploma of Local Government (Elected Member); or
- The Councillor passed the course titled LGASS00002 Elected Member Skill Set before 1 July 2019 and within a period of five years ending immediately before the day on which the Councillor is elected.

### Continuing Professional Development

The professional development of Elected Members is an important activity of the Shire to ensure that its decision making is of the highest standard and is the product of informed and ethical debate by well trained and committed Elected Members acting in the best interest of all of the community.

Elected Members are encouraged to nominate to attend other conferences or training opportunities to enhance and broaden their knowledge of local government issues to support the community.

## **Eligible Formal Training Events**

The formal training events to which this policy applies is limited to those conducted by, or organised by, any of the following organisations or individuals:

- The West Australian Local Government Association (WALGA);
- Local Government Professionals WA;
- Registered training organisations (RTO) offering training which directly related to the role and responsibilities of Elected Members;
- Information sessions organised by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries; or
- Seminars, training and/or information sessions provided by individuals with a demonstrably strong knowledge of local government in Western Australia.

The following are examples of other conferences or training opportunities as described above:

- National General Assembly of Local Government;
- WA Local Government Week;
- Special “one off” conferences sponsored by WALGA or the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries on important local government issues;
- Annual conferences of major professions of local government;
- The Annual Road Congress;
- Conferences which advance the development of Elected Members in their role as Councillors; or
- Conferences of organisations on which an Elected Member has been elected or appointed as a delegate.

## **Procedures**

### **Approval of Professional Development**

Considerations for approval of the training or professional development activity include:

- The costs of attendance including registration, travel and accommodation, if required;
- The Budget provisions allowed and the uncommitted or unspent funds remaining;
- Any justification provided by the applicant when the training is submitted for approval;
- The benefits to the Shire of the person attending;
- Identified skills gaps of elected members both individually and has a collective;
- Alignment to the Shire’s Strategic Objectives; and
- The number of Shire representatives already approved to attend.

Consideration of attendance at training or professional development courses, other than the online Council Member Essentials, which are deemed to be approved, are to be assessed as follows:

- Events for the Shire President must be approved by Council, in conjunction with the CEO; and
- Events for Councillors must be approved by the Council, in conjunction with the CEO.

### **Travel Arrangements**

All booking arrangements for other conferences and training for Elected Members are coordinated through the Administration Office. Elected Members should note that the *Local Government Act 1995* precludes an Elected Member to pre-spend Shire funds.

Any airline travel for an Elected Member is to be booked at economy level and booking arrangements are to be reviewed upon any improved discount offer being identified. Any upgrade to Business Class is permissible provided the Council member funds the difference in cost.

Other than to amend departure times, tickets provided to representatives of the Shire shall not be exchanged, downgraded or rebated. Tickets or bookings may not be altered to include personal travel that is not part of the scheduled conference itinerary.

The proposed duration of another conference or training attendance together with travel time and planned supplementary pre or post conference activities relevant to the Shire will be notified to Council or the Chief Executive Officer for confirmation and/or amendment prior to the delegate's departure for the other conference or training.

### **Expenses**

Expenses relating to other conferences and training as approved, will be paid direct by the Shire.

Expenses may include the following items:

- Air fare;
- Travel insurance;
- Conference registration;
- Copy of conference proceedings;
- Room accommodation up to the value/cost of \$300 per night; and
- Reasonable meals costs if these are not provided during the course of the conference.

Incidental expenses include:

- Travel to and from the conference venue; and
- Travel to and from all airport destinations.

### **General Conditions**

Accommodation will be booked, where practicable, at the associated venue or, if unavailable, at premises in close proximity to the venue. Depending on the commencement time of the training/professional development bookings will include accommodation the night before. Except in extenuating circumstances, accommodation will not generally be provided the night following the training/professional development. Such instances will require the approval of Council prior to booking.

If a Councillor attending training/professional development extends the period of time away or deviates from the travel arrangements for private purposes the Councillor will be responsible for the full cost associated with that extended stay and/or variation to travel arrangements for private purposes.

Attendance by Councillors at interstate or international training and professional development opportunities that incurs any cost to the Shire requires a resolution of Council.

No more than two Councillors may attend the same interstate training and development opportunity unless the training is mandatory or universal to the functions of a Councillor.

Attendance at an interstate training and development opportunity is not permitted within three months of the date of expiry of a Councillor's current term of office.

Nothing in this Policy prevents Council from approving additional funding for Councillor Training & Continuing Professional Development, subject to a resolution of Council.

### **Reporting and Publishing**

All Elected Members attending any other conference or training are expected to report to Council on the benefits achieved by attending and should make the conference papers available to other Councillors.

A record of conferences or other training attended by Elected Members will be maintained by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer is to prepare a report each financial year on prescribed professional development training completed by Elected Members in the financial year.

This report is to be published on the Shire official website within 1 month after the end of the financial year to which the report relates.

### **Ability to recoup non-refundable costs**

If an Elected Member doesn't attend a pre-booked training/professional development opportunity, in which the Shire are unable to apply for a refund, the Shire may recoup the associated costs incurred from the Elected Member.

Associated costs could be, but are not limited to, training/conference bookings, accommodation or travel.

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### **Related Documents (Legislation/Local Law/Policy/Procedure/Delegation)**

Local Government Act 1995, ss 5.126, 5.127 and 5.128

Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, rr.35 and 36

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### **Review History**

Review Due: March 2028

| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Council Resolution</b> | <b>Description of review/amendment</b>  |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| 20/05/2026  | RES: 070526               | V1.1. Amended requirement for completion of Council Member Essentials from "30 June following election" to "within 12 months of being elected" (in line with regulations and practice). |
| 28/06/2023  | RES: 120623               | V1.0. Separated Compulsory Elected Members Training and Continuing Professional Development and added additional guidance and procedures.   |
| <b>Former Policy No: A26 Continuing Professional Development – Elected Members, A42 Conference, Seminar and Forum Attendance &amp; C4 Councillor - Training</b> |                           |   |
| 18/03/2020  | RES: 070320               | Adoption of Policy (A26)  |
| 15/06/2011  | RES: 110611               | Adoption of Policy (A42)  |
| 19/03/2014  | RES: 130314               | Amended   |
| 19/07/2000  |                           | Adoption of Policy (C4)   |
| 19/03/2014  | RES: 130314               | Amended   |