

Policy Type

Council

Policy Purpose

The aim of this policy is to:

1. Ensure Elected Members are afforded opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to undertake their legislative duties and responsibilities
2. Provide clear guidance on when personal and professional development for Elected Members will be funded by the City.
3. Meet the requirements of section 5.128 of the Local Government Act 1995 for the City to have a policy about the continued professional development of Elected Members.

Policy Statement

1. Introduction
 - 1.1. The City supports the ongoing professional development of its Elected Members to ensure they have the necessary skills, knowledge and resources to fulfil their statutory duties and responsibilities.
2. Mandatory Training
 - 2.1. All Elected Members must complete mandatory training as required by the Local Government Act 1995.
 - 2.2. The City will fund mandatory training as required by the Local Government Act 1995.
 - 2.3. Continuing Professional Development for an Elected Member will not be funded by the City if that Elected Member has not completed their mandatory training.

3. Continuing Professional Development
 - 3.1. The City will fund Continuing Professional Development which is relevant to the role of Council or an Elected Member, as provided in the Local Government Act 1995 or any other written law.
 - 3.2. The following categories of Continuing Professional Development are acknowledged as relevant to the role of an Elected Member:
 - 3.2.1. Governance, ethics and legislative responsibilities
 - 3.2.2. Strategic organisational planning and policy development
 - 3.2.3. Financial management and budgeting
 - 3.2.4. Community and stakeholder engagement
 - 3.2.5. Leadership, conduct and decision-making (including meeting procedures)
 - 3.2.6. Government relations and intergovernmental engagement
 - 3.2.7. Risk, audit, compliance and integrity
 - 3.2.8. Digital capability and information management
 - 3.2.9. Data governance and artificial intelligence governance
 - 3.2.10. CEO selection, recruitment and performance review
 - 3.2.11. Urban planning
 - 3.2.12. Environmental sustainability and climate change
 - 3.2.13. Economic development & State/Regional economic context
 - 3.2.14. Cultural awareness and diversity
 - 3.2.15. Knowledge of enabling legislation (i.e. legislation for which Council has powers, functions or duties)
 - 3.2.16. Personal effectiveness and professional skills; and
 - 3.2.17. Any other category approved in writing by the CEO.
 - 3.3. Continuing Professional Development includes:
 - 3.3.1. Formal education through a Registered Training Organisation
 - 3.3.2. Workshops and Seminars
 - 3.3.3. Online Learning
 - 3.3.4. Mentoring and Coaching
 - 3.3.5. Support and Wellbeing Services; and
 - 3.3.6. Attendance at Conferences, Seminars and Conventions (but not Events – which may be funded through the Elected Members yearly Professional Allowance).
 - 3.4. While not mandatory, the City encourages Elected Members to complete a Professional Development Plan to assist them to identify areas of interest and development opportunities.
 - 3.5. Continuing Professional Development identified in a Professional Development Plan is approved for funding once the CEO has approved the Professional Development Plan.
 - 3.6. For Continuing Professional Development not identified in a Professional Development Plan to be funded, approval from the CEO must be sought.
 - 3.7. In the event of there being more applications for Continuing Professional Development then there are funds available in the budget, priority for funding is to be given to:
 - i. Mandatory Training; then
 - ii. Continuing Professional Development identified in a Professional Development Plan.

4. Approval Process

- 4.1. Requests for approval of a Professional Development Plan or for Continuing Professional Development are to be determined by the CEO.
- 4.2. The CEO must not approve Continuing Professional Development if:
 - 4.2.1. the application does not comply with this Policy;
 - 4.2.2. the budget for that year has or will be expended by that request; or
 - 4.2.3. more than three Elected Members have requested to attend the same Conference, Seminar or Convention outside the Perth Metropolitan Area (except for the annual ALGA NGA and annual WALGA convention).
- 4.3. Where more than three Elected Members have requested to attend the same Conference, Seminar or Convention outside the Perth Metropolitan Area, a Council resolution is required.
- 4.4. Where the Continuing Professional Development involves international travel, the CEO may only approve the application if the CEO is satisfied that the cost of the international travel is beneficial to the City when having regard to:
 - 4.4.1. existing relationships with the destination of travel;
 - 4.4.2. the nature of the Continuing Professional Development;
 - 4.4.3. the availability of similar Continuing Professional Development opportunities closer to home; and
 - 4.4.4. the calibre of the Continuing Professional Development.
- 4.5. Before making a decision under clause 4.4, the CEO must notify all Elected Members of the application.
- 4.6. When determining applications for Continuing Professional Development, the CEO must have regard to:
 - 4.6.1. the impact the approval of that request may have on the ability for other Elected Members to access funding for Continuing Professional Development; and
 - 4.6.2. whether the approval will impact the ability for Council to form a quorum for a Council or Committee Meeting.
- 4.7. In accordance with the Local Government Act 1995, the City must not fund any Continuing Professional Development in the 3 months prior to a local government election, if that Elected Member's term of office expires at that election.
- 4.8. Elected Members should submit requests for Continuing Professional Development well in advance to allow for sufficient time for the request to be considered, and for any bookings or travel arrangements to be made.
- 4.9. Requests for Continuing Professional Development are to be made by completing the relevant form on the Elected Members Portal.
- 4.10. Elected Members must, in their application, demonstrate the relevance of the Continuing Professional Development to the role of Council or of an Elected Member. If no details or insufficient or unclear details are provided, the CEO may decline the request.

5. Conditions of Approval

- 5.1. Where the City funds formal education for an Elected Member, the Elected Member is expected to complete that education. If the education is not successfully completed at least three months prior to the end of their term of office without reasonable excuse, the CEO may require the Elected Member to reimburse the City for some or all of the costs of that formal education.

6. Funding

- 6.1. The City will include funding for Mandatory Training and Continuing Professional Development in each Annual Budget.
- 6.2. Funding will be a global budget for access by all Elected Members, i.e., there will not be individual Elected Member budgets.
- 6.3. Funding from the budget will cover the cost of the Mandatory Training or Continuing Professional Development, as well as any travel expenses required to attend the Mandatory Training or Continuing Professional Development, to the extent as provided in the Elected Member Entitlements Policy.
- 6.4. A Council resolution is required for the City to fund partners, spouses or other persons to accompany an Elected Member.
- 6.5. The CEO may approve funding for a carer to travel with an Elected Member, to ensure compliance with anti-discrimination legislation.
- 6.6. Where the Continuing Professional Development is a Conference, Seminar or Convention, the City will also fund the Elected Member to attend any optional events offered by the Event Organiser which form part of the formal program.

7. Dispute Resolution

- 7.1. Any disputes regarding this policy will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance. If the Elected Member and the Chief Executive Officer cannot reach an agreement, the matter will be referred to Council for determination.

Related policies:

- Attendance at Events Policy
- Elected Member Entitlements Policy

Definitions

Carer has the meaning given in the Carer Recognition Act 2004.

CEO means the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Cockburn.

Continuing Professional Development means professional development funded under clause 3.

Event means any organised gathering or activity, typically held for social, cultural, civic, recreational or community-focused purposes, and does not include any activity primarily intended to provide structured learning, skills and knowledge development, industry engagement or professional accreditation.

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