



**ELM05 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT –
ELECTED MEMBERS**

Aim	To enable Elected Members to meet their Local Government Act obligations in relation to Elected Member training and gives effect to the legislative requirement to adopt a continuing professional development Policy.
Application	All Elected Members
Principles	Strategic Community Plan 2017 – 2027 (Desktop Review 2019) Goal 05 Inspiring Governance Objective 3 Council leadership

PREAMBLE

This policy is to provide a framework within which Elected Members can have access to a range of development and training/conference opportunities that will assist them to undertake their role throughout the elected term of office.

This Policy also provides guidance on training and professional development that is not of a statutory nature, by supporting the attendance by Elected Members at conferences, seminars and relevant training courses that contribute to their ongoing professional, skills, and knowledge development (and to detail the relevant expenses to be paid by the Shire associated with such attendance).

POLICY

Where the benefits to the Council, or the organisation, can be clearly identified, Council encourages and will fund the attendance of Elected Members and Employees at training events. Training can take several forms, including formal qualifications: and on and off-site short courses, events, seminars, and conferences.

Training is required to relate to the professional development of Shire of Ashburton representatives. Training related to for example, local government leadership, town planning, strategic planning, financial management, corporate governance, risk management, conflict resolution, emergency management, and public sector management, are all considered to be relevant.

Where possible, training should be conducted through a Registered Training Organisation. Examples of organisations that provide training relating to the professional development of Elected Members and Employees, includes, but is not restricted to:

- Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA);
- Australian Local Government Association (ALGA);
- Local Government Managers Australia (WA and national);
- Australian Institute of Management;
- Australian Institute of Company Directors; and
- Institute of Public Administration Australia



Legislated Training for Elected Members

S5.126 of the Local Government Act (Training for Council Members) requires that each Elected Member must complete training in accordance with the Regulations. The Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 requires Elected Members to complete a 'Council Member Essentials' course consisting of five modules. Training is required to be completed (and passed) by all Elected Members within 12 months of taking office and is valid for five years. Non-compliance with the requirements to complete training is an offence under the Act.

S5.127 of the Local Government Act (Report on Training) requires that each financial year, a report must be prepared for the training completed by Elected Members in that financial year. The CEO must publish this report on the Shire's website by the end of July of every year.

Following each ordinary election, Elected Members will be provided with information on training options from approved training providers. Elected Members will be able to select a training option to meet their learning style and availability. Unless otherwise resolved by Council, training that an Elected Member is required to complete under section S5.126 of the Act will be paid for separately by the Shire and will not be subtracted from any budget allocation provided for additional (non-legislated) training for Elected Members.

Additional (Non-Legislated) Training and Professional Development for Elected Members
Subject to sufficient funds being available in the Shire's Budget for this purpose, Elected Members are encouraged to attend:

- Western Australian Local Government Association's (WALGA) Annual Local Government Week Convention;
- WALGA's Pilbara Zone Meetings;
- up to two separate conferences/seminars/training events of significant importance to the Shire each financial year;
- other relevant conferences or seminars in addition to the above, but only following a request being submitted by the Elected Member to the CEO, for presentation to Council for its consideration of approval; and
- ALGA's Annual National Assembly of Local Government (President and Deputy President only).

On return from any conference attended (excluding the Annual Local Government Week Conference and WA Local Government Association Pilbara Country Zone Meetings) Elected Members shall provide any comments from the Training/Conference to be provided to the CEO for inclusion into the CEO's Friday Facts or shared on the Elected Members Teams portal.

Reporting

S5.128 Policy for Continuing Professional Development requires that every WA local government must prepare and adopt (* Absolute majority required) a policy in relation to the continuing professional development of council members. The Policy must comply with any prescribed requirements relating to the form or content of a policy under this section. The CEO must publish an up-to-date version of the policy on the Shire's official website. The Council must at least review the policy after each ordinary election.



Elected Member Authorisation to attend Conferences/Seminars/Training Events

To expedite consideration of attendance, training requests are to be submitted in the first instance, to the CEO. The CEO is authorised to approve, if considered to meet this Policy, Elected Member applications to attend conferences/seminars/training events. Where an Elected Member is seeking to attend more than two training events in a financial year, or an event outside of Australia, the request is required to be the subject of a separate report to Council for its consideration. Where an Elected Member's request for training is declined by the CEO under this Policy, the member can require that the matter be referred to Council for determination.

Where the CEO considers special circumstances apply in relation to an Elected Member's training application, the CEO may refer the application to Council for consideration.

Elected Member Travel Arrangements and Acceptable Costs of Attendance

The cost of travel and accommodation, including meals and any other business-related costs (e.g., telephone calls) for the Elected Member delegates shall be met by the Shire. To best control expenditure, expenses are to be prepaid through the Shire's Purchase Order system or approved Corporate Purchasing/Credit Card, where practical. The only Elected Member partner costs that will be met by the Shire will be for the relevant event's official function (e.g., Local Government Week Dinner).

Conference Training Budget

The \$5,000 individual Elected Member Conference/Training budget is to be maintained and all Conference / Training costs are allocated against that sum, except for the following:

- Car mileage expenses from the Elected Members home in Ashburton to the airport, and likewise for the return journey, from the airport to the Elected Members home.
- Local hotel costs where travel from the Elected Members home in Ashburton to the airport warrants it (Note – generally the hotel in Tom Price or Paraburdoo but could be Onslow or Karratha in certain circumstances).
- Costs to attend the annual WALGA Local Government Week Conference (Note – this is to promote Elected Members attendance at this annual conference as a combination training opportunity; chance to meet other WA Local Government Elected Members and WALGA representatives; and also, as a good forum for Elected Members team development. It will be budgeted separately to the \$45,000 Elected Members Conference allocation, as will the President's attendance at either the ALGA Congress or the State of the Nation event.

Should an Elected Members have the opportunity to be accompanied by a family member or partner to a work-related conference or event, any administration in relation to transport and/or bookings or accommodation and/or any associated costs are the responsibility of the Elected Member in all instances.

Should an Elected Member attend an authorised conference dinner (or similar), where available, the Shire will pay for the cost of one family member or partner to accompany the Elected Member. Any family members or other attendees accompanying the Elected Member is not covered under the Council's relevant insurance policies.



Reimbursement of Statutory Travel Expenses

Members may be entitled to reimbursement of expenses incurred in travelling in connection with their (Council endorsed where relevant) duties as Elected Members, including attendance at but not limited to the following:

- meetings (Council Meetings and Representative Meetings)
- briefings
- workshops
- presentations
- deputations
- ceremonies (i.e., Australia Day, Anzac Day and Citizenship)
- functions and receptions training and seminars
- on-site inspections

The extent to which an elected member can be reimbursed for travel and accommodation costs incurred in any of the circumstances referred to in Regulation 32(1) of the LG Regulations is at the same rate applicable to the reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs in the same or similar circumstances under the Public Service Award 1992, travel costs incurred while driving a privately owned or leased vehicle under the Local Government Officers' (Western Australia) Interim Award 2011 as issued by the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission as at the date of the current determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on Local Government Elected Council Members.

“Away from Home” Expenses

All accommodation requirements to be where-ever possible supported by an official Council purchase order and coordinated by the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate).

All reasonable away-from-home costs like accommodation, taxi fares, meals, refreshments (including non-alcoholic mini-bar purchases) and other minor relevant incidentals are to be reimbursed. Claims can include a reasonable range of expenses commonly associated with living away from home and liaising with external stakeholders, like a limited number of alcoholic refreshments accompanied with an evening meal and in some circumstance's costs like unforeseen/emergency clothes cleaning.

The Shire reserves the right to disallow excessive claims and invoice for reimbursement if required. Expenses like in-room movies and otherwise personal costs like grooming, will not be reimbursed. Reasonably avoidable costs like clothes washing or meal costs where they are otherwise provided by the accommodation package or the training/conference will also not be reimbursed.

Extended Stay

Any Elected Member wishing to remain at a destination for extra days before or after their Council activities has concluded, does so at their own expense (including not

being covered by the Shire's insurance policies). Shire costs should not exceed what would otherwise have applied, like for example, any return flights booked must be of equivalent or lesser value of the day they would have travelled (if it is higher, the



Elected Member must meet the difference in those costs).

Note: Any extension to accommodation should not be booked at a Local Government rate. However, should the discounted Local Government rate be applied, then Elected Members are to take into account the gift implications which apply and should complete the necessary disclosure forms to ensure transparency of the accommodation payment transaction.

Motor Vehicle Allowance

Elected Members may make application to seek reimbursement for costs of utilising their private vehicles to perform their duties as Elected Members where a Shire of Ashburton fleet vehicle is not available.

Travel costs incurred while driving a privately owned vehicle are to be calculated at the same rate applicable to the *Local Government Officers' (Western Australia) Interim Award 2011* issued by the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission as at the date of the current determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on Local Government Elected Members.

Elected Members should endeavour to locate the most cost-effective travel arrangements, including travelling with other Councillors in their vehicles where reasonable to do so and also travelling by plane in lieu of a motor vehicle where that is more cost effective.

Child Care

Members who incur childcare costs as a result of attending Council meetings or a meeting of a committee (of which he or she is a member), are entitled to reimbursement in accordance with section 5.98(2) as prescribed in regulation 31(1)(b) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

Childcare costs incurred are to be calculated at the same rate applicable to the current determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on Local Government Elected Members.

Other Expenses (Incidentals)

It is not expected that members may need to incur any unreasonable level of expense in the performance of their duties. Where a member does incur in the performance of their duties any other expense (in addition to those specifically highlighted in this Policy) which the member believes they are entitled to have reimbursed, a claim should be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer, who shall decide in accordance with the LGA and the Administration Regulations on the extent of the reimbursement.

Claiming of Costs

Any claim for other expenses shall include receipts or suitable evidence of expenditure and are to be submitted with the SOA CEO 023 ELM05 Travel Expense Claim form to the Chief Executive Officer for authorisation.

In instances where receipts or proof of expenditure cannot be supplied, a written declaration with sufficient information of expenditure should be submitted with the travel claim (a written declaration will ideally only be used for special circumstances



and will be determined as appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer).

The appropriate methods of payment of allowances and forms to be used are to be determined by Corporate Services having regard to accounting and auditing requirements.

Other guidelines, directions, and procedures for the administration of this policy may include such things as:

- Purchasing procedures
- Preferred accommodation providers
- Corporate charging arrangements.

Costings

Elected members should contact the Elected Member Support Officer in order to ascertain their expenditure regarding costs incurred as part of this policy at the time of application.

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Industry:	WALGA						
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