

Council Member Continuing Professional Development Policy

Objectives

To give effect to the Town of Bassendean's commitment to facilitate continuing professional development of Council Members, which enhances their knowledge and develops their skills, thus augmenting Council's capacity for well-informed decision-making and the provision of good government for our community.

This policy provides a framework for council members to meet their statutory obligations in relation to mandatory training and to undertake continuing professional development.

This policy supports compliance with section 5.128 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act), which require local governments to prepare and adopt a policy in relation to the continuing professional development of elected members; and 5.128.(5)(a) that council 'must review of the policy after each ordinary election'.

Scope

This policy applies to Council Member training and continuing professional development, including mandatory training required under s.5.126 of the Act.

Definitions

Mandatory training refers to the statutory training as set out in regulation 35 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

Professional development refers to the attendance or participation in training, conferences, workshops, courses, seminars or similar professional development, as a participant.

Regulations refers to the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

Policy Statement

The Town recognises the value of training and continuing professional development. It is expected that council members will avail themselves of the opportunities afforded for the completion of continuing professional development in order for them to build upon and add to their skills and expertise, and to assist them to fulfil their role as a council member.

1. Council Member Induction

Following each election, the Town will conduct a comprehensive induction program, providing newly elected Council Members with information that will support them to understand Council Member roles and responsibilities; legislative obligations; personal responsibilities; and the Town's strategic direction. Continuing/previously elected Council Members are encouraged to participate in nominated elements of the induction program, to assist in fostering a team culture and to refresh their understanding.

2. Mandatory Training

In accordance with regulation 35 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, a council member completes training for the purposes of section 5.126(1) of the Act if the council member passes the mandatory modules of the Council Member Essentials Course, unless exempt under regulation 36 of the Regulations.

The course consists of the following modules –

- a. Understanding Local Government
- b. Serving on Council
- c. Meeting Procedures
- d. Conflicts of Interest, and
- e. Understanding Financial Reports and Budgets

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

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

(a) the council member passed any of the following courses within the period of 5 years ending immediately before the day on which the council member is elected —

(i) the course of training specified in regulation 35(2);

(ii) the course titled 52756WA — Diploma of Local Government (Elected Member);

(iii) the course titled LGA50220 Diploma of Local Government - Elected Member;

(iv) the course titled LGASS00007 Elected Member;

or

(b) 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.

(2) 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.

The Council Members Essentials Course must be completed within 12 months beginning on the day on which the council member is elected.

3. Continuing Professional Development

The Town of Bassendean will allocate funds in its annual budget for the costs associated with professional development for council members. Council members are encouraged to identify their individual continuing professional development needs to enhance their effectiveness as a council member and address skill gaps.

3.1 Regional Intrastate, Interstate and Overseas

Council members seeking to nominate to attend regional intrastate, interstate and overseas professional development are required to make application through a notice of motion to Council.

Where a council member seeks to apply to attend a training course that is held either intrastate (regional), interstate or overseas, and there is the option to participate in the course through an online remote learning format, a council member is to attend online rather than travel to the course location.

Authorisation requires a resolution of Council and will be subject to –

- a. The relevance of the application to the council member's professional development needs
- b. The relevance of the professional development to the business of the Town of Bassendean, and
- c. The availability of funds.

4. Access to professional development

4.1 General considerations

All booking arrangements associated with the professional development are to be made through the Office of the Chief Executive Officer.

- a. Registration

The Town will pay all normal registration costs for the council member that are relevant to the interests of the Town.

b. Restriction

No council member is permitted to undertake professional development in the last three months of their term, unless otherwise determined by a resolution of Council.

c. Cancellation and inability to attend

In circumstances where a council member is unable to attend an approved professional development course, and cancellation would result in a financial loss to the Town of Bassendean, the Chief Executive Officer is authorised to determine a substitute council member and/or officer to attend the professional development in lieu of the approved council member.

4.2 Travel

Where travel is involved, the travel is to be undertaken by the shortest, most practical route, to and from the professional development location and venue. All reasonable travel costs will be administered by the Chief Executive Officer in line with the adopted budget.

Car rental shall not be permitted without the prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer.

a. Private vehicle

Council members, who use their private vehicle for conference travel, will be reimbursed for vehicle costs in accordance with section 30.6 of the *Local Government Officers' (Western Australia) Award 2021*. Where a vehicle is used instead of air travel, reimbursement will be to a maximum amount equivalent to what it would have cost to travel by air.

b. Air travel

Where air travel is required, travel requests should be provided at least one month prior to the travel date to allow adequate time for bookings to be made. Where practicable, advantage should be taken of available discount fares.

All air travel is to be by Economy Class, and to be by the most direct route to and from the airport situated nearest to the professional development venue.

Council members must not receive any personal frequent flyer loyalty points for air travel booked and paid for by the Town of Bassendean.

Airline tickets are to be insured to enable the ticket purchase price to be refunded.

4.3 Accommodation

The extent to which a council member will be reimbursed for travel and accommodation costs incurred in any of the circumstances referred to in regulation

32(1) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* is as set by the WA Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Determination for Local Government CEO's and Elected Members (the Determination).

Where appropriate, the Town will pay reasonable costs associated with a council member's accommodation.

Accommodation will be pre-booked via the Office of the CEO, where practicable, at the associated venue or, if unavailable, at premises in close proximity to the venue.

Council members must not receive any personal accommodation loyalty points for accommodation booked and paid for by the Town of Bassendean.

4.4 Meals and incidentals

Meal expenses are to be interpreted as reasonable expenses incurred for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, and dinner where these are not provided at the event or in travel. The extent to which reimbursement for intrastate or interstate travel and accommodation costs are applied will be the same rate applicable to reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs in the same or similar circumstances under the *WA Public Service Award 1992*.

Incidental expenses are to be interpreted as reasonable expenses incurred by the elected member for telephone calls, public transport and sundry food and beverages.

4.5 Reimbursement for Child Care Costs

Reimbursement for child care expenses that result from an Council member's attendance at a training course will be reimbursed in accordance with the Determination.

4.6 Claiming expenses

Expenditure incurred by a council member in their private capacity will not be reimbursed. Only expenses incurred in a council member's capacity to fulfil their role as a council member will be reimbursed.

Reimbursement of expenses is conditional upon adequate evidence of such expenditure in the form of invoices or receipts. All claims for reimbursement must be submitted to the CEO within two weeks of completion of the training. Final claims relating to the financial year must be submitted by 30 June of that year.

4.7 Travel insurance

Travel insurance for Town of Bassendean related business trips including cover for expenses for overseas medical treatment, emergency medical evacuation, flight cancellations, lost baggage and personal effects will be paid for by the Town of Bassendean. Council members may wish to obtain their own insurance cover, at

their own cost, to ensure the benefits and endorsements are adequate for their individual needs.

5. Accompanying Person

A Council member must declare in his or her application for attendance at a continuing training course, whether they intend to be accompanied by a partner. Where approval has been granted for a partner to accompany a council member at a conference, all costs for or incurred by the accompanying person including, but not limited to travel, breakfast, meals, registration and/or participation in any conference program, are to be borne by the council member and not by the Town of Bassendean.

6. Accompanying carer

Where a council member is attending professional development and has a disability as defined in the *Disability Services Act 1993*, the Town will meet the cost of a carer to accompany that council member where that carer is a person who provides ongoing care or assistance.

The costs provided by the Town for an accompanying carer will include travel, meals, registration, accommodation and participation in any programs that the council member they are accompanying is attending.

7. Training register

In accordance with section 5.127 of the Act, the Town will publish a report on the Town's website within one month of the end of the financial year detailing the training completed by council members.

In order to complete the register, council members shall, following completion of the training, provide evidence of completion of the training to the CEO. Council members will be asked to confirm their completion or attendance as applicable prior to the publication of the register.

The register will state:

- a. Council Member name
- b. Each training course or module completed
- c. The cost of training and any associated travel and accommodation paid for by the Town, and
- d. The training provider or conference name.

For reporting purposes, the costs of training completed as a group will be apportioned to each council member that was registered to attend.

8. Report on Training

A council member who attends a conference, study tour, seminar, forum or workshop, is encouraged to share their learnings and insights from their training with the Council. Where a council member does so, it will be included in the CEO Bulletin for the Council's information and records. The report will include a summary of the event, points of interest and any recommendations as to the value of attendance at similar conferences.

9. Policy Review

In accordance with s.5.128 of the Act, this policy will be provided for Council's review following each ordinary election. The Town will ensure the policy review occurs within the first 12-months following each ordinary election.

Document responsibilities:			
Owner:	Council	Owner Business Unit:	Office of the CEO
Inception date:	OCM 11/09/2020 Amended 14/12/2021 Reviewed 30/07/2024 (Ref: OCM 2024-07-30/9)	Decision maker:	Council
Review date:	28/07/2026 - OCM	Repeal and replace:	
Review Frequency:	Biennial		
Compliance requirements:			
Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 1995 Part 5, Division 10. Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 reg. 35 and 36.</i>		