

# COUNCIL MEMBER CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

## Purpose

This policy provides a framework to assist Council Members to identify and access relevant training and defines the expenses that will be paid by the Shire of Plantagenet.

## Scope

This policy applies to Council Member training and continuing professional development, including mandatory training required under s.5.126 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act).

## Policy

### 1. Budget Allocations

The Shire of Plantagenet Annual Budget will include an allocation for Council as a whole, to be used for:

- Mandatory Council Member Training, and
- Continuing Professional Development.

### 2. Mandatory Council Member Training

- Council Members are required to complete the Council Member Essentials Course within 12-months from the day on which they are elected, unless exempt under Regulation 36 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996. Council Members should confirm with the Chief Executive Officer whether they are eligible for an exemption.
- Council Members will be provided with enrolment options and the Shire of Plantagenet will coordinate bookings and arrangements to implement their selection.
- Council Members who are not yet required to complete the Mandatory Training may still choose to participate, with associated costs attributed to the Whole of Council Training and Development budget allocation.

### 3. Continuing Professional Development

#### 3.1. Formats

Eligible Continuing Professional Development formats include, but are not limited to:

- Short courses;
- Training courses;
- Workshops;

- Seminars;
- Conferences;
- Formal qualifications, or individual units or modules as components of formal qualifications; and
- Membership of professional development organisation, where the membership incorporates access to Continuing Professional Development.

### 3.2. Providers

Continuing Professional Development should be delivered by industry recognised training providers, peak bodies or professional organisations.

### 3.3. Outcomes

To be eligible for approval under this policy, Continuing Professional Development must be relevant to the role of a Council Member, and offer demonstrable benefit to the Council as a governing body, the Shire of Plantagenet as an organisation, and the broader community.

This includes Continuing Professional Development that:

- Enhances the understanding of Council Member roles and responsibilities, and/or the role and function of Local Government;
- Assists Council Members to develop knowledge and skills in relation to the strategic objectives of the Shire of Plantagenet;
- Enables Council Members to further develop personal and professional skills necessary for excellence in performance of the Council Member role; or
- Supports Council Members in developing and maintaining positive and healthy communication, team culture and relationships, to facilitate excellent teamwork to achieve outcomes that deliver good government for the Shire of Plantagenet community.

Eligible Continuing Professional Development activities include:

- WA Local Government Association Council (WALGA) and Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) conferences.
- Special 'one off' conferences called for or sponsored by WALGA and/or ALGA on important Local Government issues.
- Annual conferences of the major professions in Local Government and other institutions of relevance to Local Government activities.
- Other Local Government-specific training courses, workshops and forums, relating to the outcomes listed above.
- Training relevant to the outcomes listed above offered by accredited organisations.
- Conferences, training, workshops or seminars that address the initiatives and projects identified in the Shire of Plantagenet's Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan or other strategic documents.

Council Members are encouraged to identify and share relevant Continuing Professional Development opportunities with Council and the CEO. The CEO will also identify and inform Council Members of relevant opportunities.

## 4. Application and Approval

### 4.1. Request for approval

Council Members who wish to attend training or professional development may make application to the Chief Executive Officer in writing.

Applications are to be submitted in reasonable time for registration. Where possible, the Shire of Plantagenet will seek to take advantage of reduced prices for early registration.

### 4.2. Approval

Approval for Council Member attendance may be granted by:

(a) the Chief Executive Officer where the:

- (i) application complies with this policy;
- (ii) event is to be held within Australia; and
- (iii) there are sufficient funds available in the Council professional development allocation to meet all costs of attendance.

(b) resolution of Council where the:

- (i) application has been refused by the Chief Executive Officer;
- (ii) application does not comply with this policy;
- (iii) estimated costs of attendance exceed the available balance of the Council annual professional development allocation; or
- (iv) event is to be held outside of Australia.

### 4.3. Limitations

Training and continuing professional development is for the purpose of enhancing a Council Member's performance of their role. Therefore, in some instances, approval may not be granted where attendance conflicts with scheduled Council or Committee meetings (i.e. a meeting where important strategic decisions are required or where the meeting may lack a quorum), unless Council has otherwise resolved.

Where attendance at a particular training or professional development event would require an extended absence, no more than two Council Members may attend, unless Council has otherwise resolved.

Approval will not be granted for training or continuing professional development that is scheduled to occur in the last three months of a Council Member's term of office or

upon delivery of a notice of resignation to the Chief Executive Officer or during period of suspension of the council or council member.

#### 4.4. Sharing of knowledge

To realise the maximum benefit for the Shire, Council Members will provide a report on their attendance, key features and benefits of the training or professional development within a reasonable period after completion. Council Members may include ideas and innovations identified through the professional development for discussion at future Council Member workshops, where the matter relates to the Shire of Plantagenet's strategic objectives.

Knowledge sharing may be provided as a presentation or verbal update to a Council Forum, or a written report provided to the Chief Executive Officer and circulated to all Council Members. Where relevant, copies of resources obtained at the event may also be provided to the Chief Executive Officer for circulation to all Council Members.

#### 4.5. Registration, travel and expenses

The Shire of Plantagenet will be responsible for the costs associated with training or professional development approved in accordance with this policy, as detailed in this section.

#### 4.6. Event Registration and Bookings

Travel, registration fees and accommodation are to be arranged directly by the Shire of Plantagenet administration.

Council Members are not to pay such costs and seek reimbursement, except in the case of an emergency or unique circumstances and subject to the Chief Executive Officer's prior approval.

#### 4.7. Travel

Where travel is involved, the actual costs of travel to and from the event venue are to be met by the Shire of Plantagenet in accordance with the current WA Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Determination for Local Government CEOs and Elected Members (the Determination).

Travel arrangements are to be by the most cost effective and reasonably convenient mode.

Air travel is to be by Economy Class at a time that is convenient to the Council Member. As far as is practicable, tickets will be purchased well in advance and take advantage of available discount fares.

A Council Member may seek approval from the Chief Executive Officer to travel within Western Australia by private motor vehicle and be reimbursed for vehicle costs in accordance with the Determination. Approval may only be granted where the cost is

approximately equivalent to the most cost-effective mode of travel. A Council provided vehicle will be provided for travel where available.

A Council Member may choose to upgrade the mode of travel, however additional costs incurred are to be paid to the Shire of Plantagenet by the Council Member before the Shire of Plantagenet confirms the booking/s.

### 4.8. Registration

Registration fees may include, where applicable, event registration, conference program dinners, technical tours and accompanying workshops identified within the event program.

### 4.9. Accommodation

Reasonable accommodation will be booked for the Council Member for a room at, or in close proximity to, the event venue and within the expenditure limitations prescribed in the Determination.

If it is not reasonable to expect travel to occur on the day of the event, the booking may allow for arrival the day prior to commencement, and departure the day following the close of the event.

A Council Member may choose to upgrade their accommodation standard or extend their visit for personal reasons; however additional costs are to be paid to the Shire of Plantagenet by the Council Member (including any additional associated or travel costs) prior to the Shire of Plantagenet confirming the booking.

### 4.10. Loyalty Program and Reward Points

Council Members are not to obtain personal benefit from expenditure of the Shire of Plantagenet funds and must not claim personal frequent flyer or accommodation loyalty points for air travel or accommodation paid for by the Shire of Plantagenet.

### 4.11. Meals and Incidental Expenses

Funding for meals and incidental expenses is to be provided in accordance with the Determination.

Meal expenses are to be interpreted as reasonable expenses incurred for the purchase of breakfast, lunch and dinner where these meals are not provided at the event or in travel. When meals are included and have been paid for as part of the registration fee or accommodation costs, claims for alternative meals at venues other than the event will not be paid by the Shire of Plantagenet.

Incidental taxi, economy ride share or public transport modes of transport (i.e. to / from airport, event venue) may be claimed for reimbursement on submission of receipts.

### 4.12. Accompanying Persons / Entertainment Costs

Council Members are responsible and will be required to pay all costs associated with an accompanying person attending an event (including conference functions).

The exception to the above being the cost of attending any official conference and training event dinner where partners would normally attend as well as accommodation costs associated with a shared room with the Elected Member where such costs are not above a room rate for the Elected Member alone.

The Shire of Plantagenet may coordinate accompanying person bookings and registrations for travel, accommodation and the event / function, with costs incurred to be paid to the Shire of Plantagenet by the Council Member prior to the Shire of Plantagenet confirming the booking/s.

### 4.13. Booking Change / Modification Costs

Costs incurred for changing or modifying a booking for travel or accommodation, where the change or modification is:

- (a) At the request of the Council Member, are to be paid by the Council Member; or
- (b) A requirement for the convenience of the Shire of Plantagenet, are to be paid by the Shire of Plantagenet.

### 4.14. Cancellations

Costs incurred for cancellation of registration, travel or accommodation, where the cancellation is:

- (a) At the request of the Council Member, are to be paid by the Council Member unless there are extenuating circumstances including illness; or
- (b) A requirement or for the convenience of the Shire of Plantagenet, are to be paid by the Shire of Plantagenet.

## 5. Report on Training

The Shire of Plantagenet is required to produce a report detailing the training completed by Council Members during each financial year, in accordance with s.5.127 of the Act.

## 6. 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 Shire of Plantagenet will ensure the policy review occurs within the first 12-months following each ordinary election.

| Document Control    |                                                    |                                   |                   |
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| Reviewer            | Chief Executive Officer                            | Approval                          | Council           |
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