

## 1.22 Elected Member Professional Development & Training Policy

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Executive Director Corporate & Commercial Services
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Manager Governance & Risk
<b>Date of Approval</b>	01/07/2025
<b>Amended/Revised</b>	03/07/2025

### Objective

This policy has been developed and implemented to fulfil the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) which states that a local government must prepare and adopt a policy in relation to the continuing professional development of council members.

The policy is intended to ensure equity and accessibility of individual training and professional development opportunities to enhance the ability of elected members to fulfil their function as a local government councillor.

### Scope

This policy applies to all Elected Members.

The annual allowance referred to in this policy is for a twelve-month period commencing 1 July each year.

### Policy Statement

The City of Albany is committed to fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional development among elected members to ensure effective, informed and responsible governance.

A well-informed Council is fundamental to good decision making, strong community leadership and effective oversight of the City's strategic direction.

### A: Elected Member Professional Development Annual Allowance

As part of the City of Albany's annual budget adoption, a specific allocation is made to support the professional development and training of elected members.

The current amount allocated is \$4000. This amount may be reviewed each year during the budget development process. The yearly allowance should be determined with consideration of:

- Legislative requirements related to elected member training;
- Cost estimates for conferences, availability of professional development opportunities including formal qualifications such as a Diploma in Local Government and associated travel and accommodation requirements; and
- Council priorities and strategic objectives which identify key focus areas such as:
  - Governance and leadership capability;
  - Responding to legislative and regulatory change;
  - Supporting strategic and community objectives;
  - Risk management including:
    - Financial sustainability
    - Climate change
    - Digital transformation
    - Community resilience.

Unspent funds for individual elected members from each year will carry over for a maximum of two years, after which time any unspent funds may be returned to the general training budget.

Reimbursement of expenses incurred by elected members for professional development will only be made where the training is considered relevant to their role as an elected member.

Subject to budgeted funds being available, the Chief Executive Officer is provided with the authority to approve and arrange the registration and associated travel, accommodation, and reimbursement of approved expenses necessary for an elected member to attend training.

An elected member, with the approval of the CEO, may make their own arrangements for travel and accommodation, and reimbursement will be made on presentation of tax invoices.

The costs of Elected Member Professional Development arranged by the CEO as part of the induction of newly elected members and any subsequent training arranged by the CEO for current serving elected members will be met from the Elected Member General Training budget and not deducted from the individual member's allocation.

### **B: Travel and Accommodation**

Travel, accommodation, and meals costs will only be paid or reimbursed for the duration of the professional development event and will be exclusive of accommodation/meals which are supplied as part of the training event.

Should an elected member wish to extend their stay, either before or after the training, they will be wholly responsible for all additional costs, including but not limited to accommodation, meals and incidentals during that period.

Where travel is involved, the cost of the shortest, most practical route to and from the training venue will be booked by the City for the respective elected member. Travel will be arranged for the elected member to arrive the day prior to the training commencing prior to 12 noon, and the same day for training that commences after 12 noon.

Departure will be the same day for training that concludes prior to 12 noon, or the next day for training that concludes after noon.

Should an elected member wish to travel on different days or by alternate routes, they will be responsible for any additional travel, accommodation, meals and incidental costs.

### **C: Expenses**

Air travel shall be on the basis of an economy class fare with standard baggage allowance. Wherever, possible air fares should be booked to take advantage of advance purchase discounts.

Accommodation shall be on the basis of an appropriate room in an appropriate standard hotel recommended by the training providers, or one located in close proximity to the training venue. Any upgrades or extensions shall be at the expense of the elected member.

### **D: Transport**

Elected members shall be provided with a sufficient number of Cab-Charge vouchers for travel to and from the training venue, airport, accommodation or other identified destinations.

Hire cars may only be booked if it is deemed to be more economical.

### **E: Conditions of Approval**

Approval should be obtained from the Council where:

- Training is requested after 30 June in the year an elected member's term of office ends;
- Where two or more elected members have requested to attend the same training; or
- Where the elected member does not have sufficient funds available in their Professional Development allocation to meet all training and associated costs.

### Summary of Expenses and Allowances

Nature of Expense/Allowance	Notes	Annual Limit
Training-related travel and accommodation expenses at the request of the elected member.	Actual costs include travel, meals, accommodation, and training costs. The unspent balance of the allowance may be carried forward for two years.	The annual allowance of a percentage to be set by the Council for each Elected Member.
Training is provided by the annual Elected Member Professional Development Program.	Training provided by the City to induct elected members and provide ongoing professional development opportunities	Funded from the Elected Member Professional Development budget.

### Legislative and Strategic Context

It is a legislated requirement under the Act for elected members to conduct training and professional development.

#### Local Government Act 1995:

##### **s5.126. Training for council members**

Each council member must complete training in accordance with regulations.

Regulations may:

- (a) prescribe a course of training; and
- (b) prescribe the period within which training must be completed; and
- (c) prescribe circumstances in which a council member is exempt from the requirement in subsection (1); and
- (d) provide that contravention of subsection (1) is an offence and prescribe a fine not exceeding \$ 10,000 for the offence.

##### **s5.127. Report on training**

- (1) A local government must prepare a report for each financial year on the training completed by council members in the financial year.
- (2) The CEO must publish the report on the local government's official website within 1 month after the end of the financial year to which the report relates.

##### **s5.128. Policy for continuing professional development**

- (1) A local government must prepare and adopt\* a policy in relation to continuing professional development of council members.  
\*Absolute majority required.
- (2) A local government may amend\* the policy.  
\*Absolute majority required.
- (3) When preparing the policy or an amendment to the policy, the local government must comply with any prescribed requirements relating to the form or content of a policy under this section.
- (4) The CEO must publish an up-to-date version of the policy on the local government's official website.
- (5) A local government –
  - (a) Must review the policy after each ordinary election; and
  - (b) May review the policy at any other time.

## Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996

### 35. Training for council members (Act s. 5.126(1))

- (1) A council member completes training for the purposes of section 5.126(1) if the council member passes the course of training specified in subregulation (2) within the period specified in subregulation (3).
- (2) The course of training is the course titled *Council Member Essentials* that:
  - (a) consists of the following modules:
    - (i) Understanding Local Government;
    - (ii) Serving on Council;
    - (iii) Meeting Procedures;
    - (iv) Conflicts of Interest;
    - (v) Understanding Financial Reports and Budgets; and
  - (b) is provided by any of the following bodies:
    - (i) North Metropolitan TAFE;
    - (ii) South Metropolitan TAFE;
    - (iii) WALGA.
- (3) The period within which the course of training must be passed is the period of 12 months beginning on the day on which the council member is elected.

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

#### 36. Exemption from Act s5.126(1) requirement

- (1) A council member is exempt from the requirement in section 5.126(1) if:
  - (a) the council member passed either 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)*; or
    - (iii) the council member passed the course titled *LGASS00007 Elected Member*; or
    - (iv) 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.

## Review Position and Date

In accordance with s5.128(5), a local government –

- (a) Must review the policy after each ordinary election; and
- (b) May review the policy at any other time.

Document History	
Version Description	Date
Readopted by Council on 01/07/2025. Reference: OCM 01/07/2025 Resolution AR178.	01/07/2025
Amended to reflect changes to the Local Government Act 1995. Refer to the Legislative and Strategic Context section of the document.	03/07/2025