

Responsible Directorate	Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Business Unit/s	Governance
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance
Affected Business Unit/s	All

Due to the State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency declaration, attendance at Interstate and International Conference and Training have been suspended

Objective

To support Elected Members participation in professional development, as required under Section 5.126 and 5.128(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act). Elected Members are encouraged to attend professional development opportunities that will improve their skills and knowledge that is essential to fulfil their duties and responsibilities on Council.

Scope

This policy applies to all Elected Members of the City of Stirling (the City).

Policy

1 Compulsory Elected Member Training

In accordance with Section 5.126 of the Act, all Elected Members are required to complete the 'Council Member Essentials' course, unless they meet limited exemptions.

Elected Members will be provided training options for the 'Council Member Essentials' course, by the Approved Training Providers, in line with the City's Procurement Policy. Elected Members are to ensure the training is completed within the required 12 month timeframe.

1.1 Funding

The 'Council Member Essentials' course will be funded by the City and met from the Elected Member's Training Allocation.

2 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

In accordance with Section 5.128 of the Act and this policy, Elected Members whose terms expire at the next election are required to undertake CPD.

CPD opportunities will be provided to Elected Members via the Elected Members' Portal. Opportunities will be in line with the City's Strategic Community Plan key result areas and the following categories:

- Health and wellbeing
- Professional skill development.

The City will investigate opportunities for professional skill development based on the direction of Council or individual Elected Member needs and/or requests.

2.1 CPD Points

Elected Members must complete 10 CPD points every two years, from Ordinary Council Election to Ordinary Council Election. CPD Points will be earned for professional development that is in relation to the City's Strategic Community Plan key result areas or categories provided within this policy. The following CPD Points apply:

- Attendance at one approved conference is four points.
- Attendance at one external training seminar, webinar or course is two points.
- Attendance at one 'CPD Workshop' provided by the City is two points.
- Completion of the 'Australian Institute of Company Directors Course' is 10 points.
- Completion of a relevant diploma or higher qualification is 10 points.
- Completion of the 'Council Members Essentials' course is 10 points.

Any training requested, and not stipulated above, will be referred to the Manager Governance for review and points allocation (if approved).

Elected Members must forward records of completion of professional development to the City for inclusion in the Elected Members' Professional Development Register on the City's website, within 10 days of completion.

2.2 Funding

CPD will be funded by the City and met from the Elected Member's Training Allocation.

Where CPD is completed through attendance at an approved conference or training stipulated in Section 4 of this policy, the cost will be met from the Elected Member's Conference Allowance.

3 Other Professional Development Opportunities

Elected Members may attend professional development opportunities of their choice that supports their role as an Elected Member. All training is to be arranged by the City.

3.1 Funding

Costs associated with other professional development opportunities are to be met from the Elected Member's Training Allocation and/or Conference Allowance upon submission of Sufficient Information, as set below. If an Elected Member does not have sufficient funds, the cost is to be met from the Elected Member's Personal Funds.

- Company Directors Course – The total cost of the course is to be split (50/50) between the Elected Member's Training Allocation and Conference Allowance.
- Mentoring or Business Coaching –The total cost of the programme/plan is to be met from the Elected Member's Conference Allowance.
- Diploma or higher qualification –The total cost of the course is to be split (50/50) between the Elected Member's Training Allocation and Conference Allowance.
- Elected Members are entitled to one annual professional development membership with the cost to be met from the annual membership budget.

4 Conferences

Elected Members may attend conferences of their choice that supports their role as an Elected Member.

A conference is a Pre-Approved Event in accordance with the Elected Member and Chief Executive Officer Attendance at Events Policy.

Attendance at state, interstate and international conferences are permitted if the conference is an Eligible Conference; the Elected Member has sufficient Conference Allowance available to meet all conference expenses; and if Mayoral/Council approval is provided (where required).

Referral to the Mayor for approval is required, in the following circumstances:

- Three or more Elected Members have requested to attend the same conference that is held in the Perth Metropolitan area; or
- Three or more Elected Members have requested to attend the same conference that is held online.

Referral to Council for approval is required, in the following circumstances:

- Three or more Elected Members have requested to attend the same state (excluding Perth metropolitan area) or interstate conference within Australia;
- Application to attend an international conference; or
- More than one Elected Member or employee has requested to attend the same international conference.

4.1 Funding

Elected Members are allocated a **biennial** Conference Allowance to attend conferences in their role as an Elected Member. The biennial Conference Allowance period commences on 1st November following the Ordinary Council Election to the date of the next ordinary election, refer to Appendix. Any unused allowance as at 31st October (end of the biennial period) is forfeited.

Refer to the Elected Member Entitlements Policy for funding of Mayoral Representation.

Should an Elected Member wish to upgrade their travel or accommodation standard, add additional travel arrangements or extend their visit for personal reasons, all additional costs are to be met from the Elected Member's Personal Funds.

4.2 Registration and Bookings

Conference related registration fees; air fares; accommodation; and car hire (if applicable) shall be arranged by the City and will be met from the Elected Member's Conference Allowance in accordance with the conditions below:

- Reasonable conference registration fees and related events will be booked, as requested by the Elected Member, and in accordance with Section 4.5 of this policy.
- Reasonable airfares will be determined by the most practical route to and from the conference venue, unless it is approved by the Manager Governance. All air travel shall be by Business Class unless the Elected Member nominates Economy Class as their preferred option.
- Reasonable accommodation for an Elected Member and an Accompanying Person (if applicable) will be made at, or in close proximity to, the conference venue unless approved by the Manager Governance. The length of stay at the accommodation will be made according to the conference location, refer to Appendix.
- Hire cars may be used to meet reasonable travel requirements during the conference.
- Travel insurance will be provided in accordance with the Corporate Travel Insurance Policy, for an Elected Member and an Accompanying Person (if applicable).
- Any additional travel expenses will be paid in accordance with Section 7 of the Elected Member Entitlements Policy.
- Where travel, accommodation bookings or other associated bookings are made which carry Loyalty Rewards or Bonus Points, they must not be personally claimed, as this may be considered a personal benefit gained through the position of an Elected Member.

4.3 Reimbursement of Costs

Providing conference requests meet all conditions of this policy, Council authorises reimbursement of expenses that have Sufficient Information. Elected Members seeking to claim reimbursement of expenses shall submit their claim within ten working days of return from the conference.

Meals and incidental expenses will be met from the Elected Member's Conference Allowance. Reasonable expenses incurred include:

- Meals – the purchase of breakfast, lunch and dinner where these are not provided at the conference or during travel.
- Incidentals – telephone calls, Wi-Fi charges, newspapers, laundry, public transport, taxi, ride-sharing, sundry food items and beverages.

4.4 Cash Advance (International only)

Elected Members may request a cash advance (EFT transfer) for attendance at an international conference. The cash advance rate covers the daily cost of meals and incidentals whilst at an international conference, refer to Appendix.

Within 30 days of returning from an international conference, an Elected Member must submit an acquittal that includes original invoices and receipts to verify the cash advance. The conversion rate will be calculated at the daily exchange rate provided on the evidence submitted by the Elected Member. Any cash advance that is not expended must be returned to the City and credited to the Elected Member's Conference Allowance.

4.5 Accompanying Person

All expenses incurred by the Elected Member's Accompanying Person, are to be met by the Elected Member's Personal Funds, except for attendance at an official conference luncheon and/or dinner.

4.6 Sharing of Knowledge

Where an Elected Member attends an interstate or international conference of more than two days, the Elected Member must provide a written report, or a composite report when attending with another Elected Member and/or employee, for publication on the Elected Members' Portal.

The report must be submitted within 30 days of returning from the conference and detail the proceedings, benefits, knowledge gained and outcomes for the City.

4.7 Cancellation of Travel

Where an Elected Member requests cancellation of a conference and costs are non-refundable, the costs will be met from the Elected Member's Conference Allowance. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, the Manager Governance may approve the cost to be removed in accordance with the City's insurance provider's advice. Where advice is provided by the City's insurer, Smartraveller or other Government authorities the Manager Governance may cancel travel to ensure safety of Elected Members.

5 Carer

In line with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, a Carer may accompany an Elected Member to a professional development event. Registration and incidental costs for the Carer will be met from the Elected Member's Conference Allowance.

6 Reporting

Section 5.127 of the Act requires the City to prepare a report for each financial year on the training completed by Elected Members within that financial year. All training and professional development completed in accordance with the Act and this policy will be included in the report for the financial year ended. The report will be published on the City's website by 31st July each year.

7 Election Caretaker Period

Professional Development is not to be scheduled and/or expenses expended during the election caretaker period with exception of the annual WA Local Government Convention. Any other CPD or compulsory training stipulated in this policy is to be completed prior to the caretaker period. The caretaker period is in accordance with the City's Council Election Caretaker Policy.

8 Dispute Resolution

Any disputes under this policy are to be resolved by the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer.

Definitions

The following term is prescribed in Regulation 35(2) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and applies to this policy; Council Member Essentials.

The following term is defined by *Local Government Act 1995* and applies to this policy; Event.

Accompanying Person means travel companion.

Appendix means the Appendix listed in the end of this policy.

Approved Training Providers means the bodies listed under Section 35(2)(b) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, which are North & South Metropolitan TAFE and WALGA.

Carer means a person employed or not, to care for a person with a disability.

Conference Allowance means a Council adopted budget allocation to each Elected Member for the purpose of attending conferences in their role as an Elected Member.

Council Business means any business where an Elected Member:

- a) Represents the interests of electors, ratepayers and residents of the district;
- b) Provides leadership and guidance to the community in the district;
- c) Facilitates communication between the community and the Council;
- d) Performs such other functions as are given to an Elected Member by the *Local Government Act 1995* or any other written law.

CPD Points is the City's method of measurement for professional development completed.

CPD Workshop means a training and/or professional development workshop for Elected Members, hosted by the City of Stirling, which can be presented by employees and/or external consultants.

EFT means Electronic Funds Transfer to a nominated bank account.

Elected Member means a person elected under the *Local Government Act 1995* as a member of the Council. The City's Elected Members include the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

Elected Members' Portal means an internal confidential website for Elected Members.

Eligible Conference means a conference that is relevant to the role of an Elected Member and includes a seminar, webinar, convention, congress, summit, roadshow, forum, workshop or study tour.

Loyalty Reward or Bonus Points means company benefits received for using their services, such as Frequent Flyer Points, discounts and other forms of loyalty rewards or benefits.

Personal Funds mean a private payment of money from an individual, not the City.

Pre-Approved Event/s means Events Council has approved in advance.

Referral to Council means a written report requesting approval by Council.

Sufficient Information means completion of the required claim or request form (via the Elected Members' Portal) with the related documentation attached (if applicable), such as; receipt, transaction, proof of purchase, invoice (that has been paid) or completion of a statutory declaration.

Training Allocation means a Council adopted budget allocation for the purposes of attending a training course, to support the role of an Elected Member.

Relevant management practices/documents

Council Election Caretaker Policy

Elected Member and Chief Executive Officer Attendance at Events Policy

Elected Member Entitlements Policy

Elected Member CPD Points Register

Elected Member Claim and Request Forms

Legislation/local law requirements

Local Government Act 1995

Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996

Office use only			
Relevant delegations	Not Applicable		
Initial Council adoption	Date 17 November 2020	Resolution #	1120/016
Last reviewed	Date	Resolution #	
Next review due	Date 2022		

Appendix

Elected Members Biennial Conference Allowance

The biennial Conference Allowance will be adjusted by the CPI rate every two years in November, rounded to the nearest \$100.

Year	Amount	Effective	Period
2019	\$18,400	1 November 2019	1 November 2019 to 31 October 2021

Accommodation

The City will arrange for reasonable accommodation for Council Business, as below, in accordance with this policy:

Conference Location	Length of Stay
State and/or Interstate Conference	One night prior, during and one night after
International Conference	Two nights prior, during and one night after

Cash Advance (International only)

The cash advance daily rate will be adjusted by the CPI rate every two years in November, rounded to the nearest dollar.

Year	Daily Rate	Effective	Period
2019	\$215 AUD	1 November 2019	1 November 2019 to 31 October 2021