



City of Greater Geraldton Council Policy

4.1 COUNCIL MEMBER CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAVEL

SUSTAINABILITY THEME

Leadership

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines to Council Members with regard to:

- Completion of training in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995* section 5.126(1) and regulations.
- Access to training and development programs that may enhance and improve the skills necessary to perform their role and function as a Council Member.
- Travel and accommodation arrangements when required to travel on City business.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy provides a framework to all Council Members on training, professional development and travel related to City Representation, for the benefit of the Council and the community.

POLICY DETAILS

1. Professional Development

1.1. Commitment to professional development

- 1.1.1. As the public face of Council and as community representatives, Council Members play an integral leadership role in the processes for the development, communication and representation of the Council Strategic Community Plan and Council's policies, strategies and programs.
- 1.1.2. Professional development for Council Members contributes towards a positive presentation of the council for the betterment of the organisation and the community.
- 1.1.3. Council will allocate funds through its budget process to meet approved professional development needs of Council Members.

1.2. Mandatory Training

Each Council Member must complete training in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995* section 5.126(1) and the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*:

1.2.1. Council Member Essentials

A Council Member must pass the course titled *Council Member Essentials* in accordance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* Regulation 35.

The course consists of the following modules:

- Understanding Local Government;
- Serving on Council;
- Meeting Procedures;
- Conflicts of Interest;
- Understanding Financial Reports and Budgets; and

Is provided by any of the following bodies:

- North Metropolitan TAFE;
- South Metropolitan TAFE;
- WALGA.

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.

1.2.2. Exemption from Mandatory Training

A Council Member is exempt from the requirement in section 5.126(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* if:

1.2.2.1. The Council Member passed any of the following courses within the period of five years ending immediately before the day on which the Council Member is elected:

- *Council Member Essentials*;
- *52756WA - Diploma of Local Government (Elected Member)*;
- *LGA50220 Diploma of Local Government - Elected Member*;
- *LGASS00007 Elected Member*.

1.2.3. Council Member training declaration

Pursuant to the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* Regulation 36A:

1.2.3.1. A Council Member must, within the prescribed declaration period declare either:

- That the Council Member passed the required training specified in Regulation 35(2) on the date specified in the declaration; or
- That the Council Member is not required to pass the training specified in Regulation 35(2) within the period specified because they are exempt under Regulation 36.

1.2.3.2. The declaration must be provided within the declaration period, which is the training completion period specified in Regulation 35(3), plus one month beginning on the day after the training completion period.

1.2.3.3. The declaration:

- Must be in writing and signed by the Council Member; and
- Have attached a certificate or other written document from the training provider verifying the Council Member passed the course of training on the date specified; or

- Have attached a certificate or other written document from the relevant course provider verifying the Council Member is exempt under Regulation 36(1)(a); and
- Be provided to the CEO.

1.2.3.4. The CEO must notify the Inspector if:

- A Council Member contravenes Regulation 36A(1), by failing to provide their declaration within the declaration period, and in accordance with sub regulation (3); or
- The CEO has reason to believe a declaration is false or misleading, or likely to deceive.

1.2.3.5. If a Council Member contravenes Regulation 36A(1):

- The Council Member loses entitlement to all fees, reimbursement of expenses and allowances under Part 5 Division 8 from the day after the declaration period, until the CEO is provided with the required declaration (non-compliance period); and
- Any annual allowance or annual fee or allowances paid in advance for the non-compliance period must be repaid to the local government on a pro-rata daily basis, and the local government must take action to recover the amount as a debt due.

1.2.3.6. Regulation 36B of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* prescribes penalties for offences relating to training for Council Members (section 5.126 of the *Local Government Act 1995*).

1.3. Training during term of office

1.3.1. The Council Member that undertakes a Diploma of Local Government and other training is to complete the units and assessments in a timely manner within their term of office.

1.3.2. Monthly updates on progress are to be provided to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, where requested.

1.4. Personal development

1.4.1. Council Members are encouraged to identify individual and group personal development needs to enhance their effectiveness. As the needs of individual Council Members may vary, each member is encouraged to seek the assistance of the Chief Executive Officer in analysing their particular requirements and in identifying appropriate courses, seminars and training to meet those needs.

1.4.2. A Professional Development Study Agreement (i.e. refund requirements if subjects are not completed successfully) is to be put in place should a Council Member wish to undertake tertiary education, which is to be approved by the Mayor, or in the case of the Mayor approved by the CEO, in the first instance.

1.5. Conferences, seminars, forums or delegations

1.5.1. A Council Member who is funded by the council to attend a conference, seminar, forum, delegation or similar event, shall participate as a representative of the council, not as an individual.

1.5.2. Council Members may participate in conferences, seminars, forums, delegations or similar events where it can be demonstrated that attendance will:

- Inform Council's contribution to contemporary issues or debate;
- Represent Council's position in collaborative policy development;
- Meet community expectations for Council representation;
- Support the member's development in their role; or
- Contribute to the built, social, economic, or natural well-being of the community.

1.5.3. A Council Member attending a conference, seminar, forum, delegation or similar event in their private capacity is to NOT use their title or present on matters relating to the Council.

1.5.4. Where voting delegates are required to represent the City of Greater Geraldton – i.e. Western Australia Local Government Association (WALGA) AGM, this is to be approved by the Council.

1.6. Pre-approved Conference Attendance

Conferences which are covered under Council Policy 4.29 Attendance at Events will not be subject to approval under this policy.

1.7. Funding for Professional Development

The Council will allocate funds for professional development during the budget process each year to provide for the professional development of Council Members. In deciding whether funding approval is granted the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, or the CEO in the case of the Mayor, should take into consideration the Council Member's status of their Council Members Essential Training and their remaining term of office. [refer to 3.3.4.4]

1.7.1. Funding of the approved training will be at the Council Members own expenses, during their term of office, should they:

- 1.7.1.1. not complete the Diploma of Local Government, or other approved training; and/or
- 1.7.1.2. fail a subject, the course, or not complete the tertiary education. [refer to 1.4.2]

1.8. Applications for professional development funding

1.8.1. To maximise the effectiveness of allocated resources, the Council will only meet the cost of professional development outlined in this policy, subject to approval of the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, or in the case of the Mayor approval of the CEO.

1.8.2. A Council Member is required to complete an application form (Appendix A) to facilitate participation in professional development.

1.8.3. If a request for professional development cannot be accommodated within the budget allocation the Mayor, in conjunction with the CEO, will determine if additional funding may be available from another area of the budget.

1.8.4. Applications to attend any interstate and overseas conferences, seminars, forums, delegations or similar events under this policy must be discussed with the Mayor or Deputy Mayor prior to arrangements being made. [Decision of Council required - Refer to 3.2.3]

1.8.5. The Mayor or CEO may limit the attendance of multiple Council Members to a conference to ensure the effective governance of the Council.

2. Report on Training

Pursuant to section 5.127 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the City must prepare a report for each financial year on the training completed by Council Members in the financial year. The report must be published on the City's website within one month after the end of the financial year to which the report relates.

3. Travel and Accommodation

Travel and accommodation expenses incurred as part of attending professional development activities must be in accordance with Section 3 of this policy - Travel and Accommodation.

Travel requests during a State of Emergency and Public Health State of Emergency will be reviewed and are to adhere to the current directives issued by the State Government.

3.1. Travel *within* Western Australia

Council Members may attend City Representation events within Western Australia during their term of office upon the following conditions:

- 3.1.1. The travel falls within the definitions for conference, professional development or delegation;
- 3.1.2. Prior approval has been granted by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, or CEO as applicable;
- 3.1.3. In deciding whether approval to travel is to be granted, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or CEO should take into consideration the Council Members remaining term of office; [refer to 3.3.4.4] and
- 3.1.4. There is sufficient budget allocation for the Council Members travel.

3.2. Travel *outside* of Western Australia [Council Approval]

Council Members may attend City Representation events held outside WA and overseas during their term of office upon the following conditions:

- 3.2.1. The travel falls within the definitions for conference, professional development or delegation.
- 3.2.2. An item has been presented to the Council specifying:
 - the benefit to the City of the attendance at the conference, professional development or delegation;
 - whether, if applicable, there is a necessity to send more than one Council Member; and
 - whether the information to be discussed at the conference or professional development can be sourced from within Western Australia.
- 3.2.3. Approval has been granted by Council resolution;
- 3.2.4. There is sufficient budget allocation for the Council Members travel.

3.3. General conditions of travel

3.3.1. Bookings

Travel, accommodation and registrations will be booked by the Office of the Chief Executive Officer upon receipt and approval of the application form (Appendix A). This will allow the City to take advantage of any discounts offered. Where practicable, travel requests should be provided at least one month before travel to allow adequate time for bookings to be made.

3.3.2. Travel

- 3.3.2.1. The cost of air travel to and from destinations is to be by the shortest most practical route unless additional travel is contemplated before or after a conference.
- 3.3.2.2. Where a Council Member chooses to arrive earlier or extend their stay at the location of a conference or deviates from the travel arrangements, then the Council Member will be responsible for the full cost associated with that extended stay and/or variation to travel arrangements for private purposes. The exception would be if the flight schedules determine an extended stay is required.
- 3.3.2.3. Air travel will be booked as economy class on the most economical flight. The cost of any upgrade to business class shall be paid from the Council Members personal funds.
- 3.3.2.4. The Mayor shall have the authority to assess special, medical or extenuating circumstances and approve business class travel. Such requests must be in writing and supported by appropriate evidence.
- 3.3.2.5. Hire cars may be booked only if required to meet the reasonable travel requirements of the conference or professional development.
- 3.3.2.6. Reasonable travel requirements relevant to the conference and/or Council business using taxis, trains, bus and tram fares to/from the airport and the venue will be reimbursed upon return on the production of receipts to verify the expense.
- 3.3.2.7. Council Members who use their private vehicle / or hire car (not booked by the City) for approved travel will be reimbursed in accordance with section 2.3 and 2.4 of Council Policy 4.31 Council Member Fees, Allowances, Reimbursements and Benefits, to a maximum amount equivalent to what it would have cost to travel by air.
- 3.3.2.8. A Travel Expenses Reimbursement form (Appendix B) is to be completed and submitted to the Office of the CEO to process for approval and payment.
- 3.3.2.9. A part of the City's business travel insurance policy, any travel insurance for Council Members or their spouse / partner is provided for as part of that certificate of currency.

3.3.3. Accommodation

Accommodation will be booked, where practicable, at the associated venue or, if unavailable, at premises in close proximity to the venue. Bookings will include accommodation the night before and/or after the event where necessary because of travel, airline flights and/or event timetables.

3.3.4. Meal and Incidentals

3.3.4.1. The City will pay for reasonable costs of meal and incidentals. Such expenses which will be paid or reimbursed by the City include:

- Breakfasts, lunches, dinners not included in the registration fee;
- Optional activities related to the conference/ training; and
- Laundry and dry cleaning if the stay is for more than three days.

3.3.4.2. All costs are to be fully substantiated by receipts and invoices, and a Reimbursement of Expenses form (Appendix C) is to be completed and submitted to the Office of the CEO to process for approval and payment in a timely manner.

3.3.4.3. The City will only pay for or reimburse a Council Member's participation in continuing professional development (CPD) where the activity is directly relevant to:

- the Council's role as defined under the *Local Government Act 1995* or another written law (including section 2.7); and/or
- the Council Member's role as defined under the *Local Government Act 1995* or another written law (including sections 2.8 to 2.10).

3.3.4.4. No payment or reimbursement will be made for CPD participation that occurs during any of the following periods:

- The final three months of the Council Member's elected term (whether as Mayor or Councillor).
- The period between delivering a notice of resignation to the CEO and the date the resignation takes effect.
- Any period during which the Council or the Council Member is suspended under Part 8 or 8A of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

[Regulation 37 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* - Fees and expenses (Act s. 5.129(4))]

3.3.4.5. The City will not pay for or reimburse:

- Mini bar expenses or alcohol;
- Entertainment costs not associated with those scheduled as part of the City Representation event;
- Any expenses associated with matters other than those attended to while attending the City Representation event; and
- A meal allowance if the conference provides meals as part of the package.

3.3.5. Accompanying persons

3.3.5.1. A partner or spouse may accompany a Council Member to a City Representation event.

3.3.5.2. All expenses incurred by the accompanying person are to be paid by the accompanying person or Council Member, except the following which will be paid or reimbursed by the City:

- Official conference meals; and

- Accommodation provided there is no increase in accommodation costs arising if the Council Member was attending the event on their own.

3.3.5.3. Where the City meets an account containing any expenditure of cost incurred on behalf of an accompanying person attending, such expenditure must be repaid to the City by the Council Member/ accompanying person within 30 days of being invoiced for such expenditure.

4. Workplace Information

Following participation in an event covered by section 1 or a City Representation event of more than 2 days' duration covered in section 2 (excluding Local Government Week):

- 4.1. The Council Member(s) may consider submitting an individual or composite report (where approval has been granted for more than one member to attend) for inclusion in the "Reports to be Received" in the next Council Agenda, within 30 days of attendance.
- 4.2. The report should document:
 - the program and major points of interest to the City;
 - whether the objectives of the participation were met;
 - the benefits to the Council Member, Council and the community; and
 - the value of future attendance or representation by council at similar events.
- 4.3. All conference and training papers remain the property of the City.

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

CEO means the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Greater Geraldton

Council Member(s) means Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

Conference means conferences, seminars, congresses, forums, workshops, study tours, delegations and events relevant to the role of a Council Member.

Professional Development means personal development such as undergraduate and post graduate studies, tertiary education, short courses, study tours, conferences, seminars, forums, or similar events that will assist a Council Member in their broad civic leadership role.

Delegation means any formal group visit, authorised by Council, to an external organisation representing the City of Greater Geraldton.

The Terms "Conference, Professional Development and Delegation" are collectively used in this policy under the term "City Representation".

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing this policy.

Pursuant to section 5.128 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the policy must be reviewed by the local government after each ordinary election.

WORKPLACE INFORMATION

Local Government Act 1995

Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996

Council Policy 4.2 Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates

Council Policy 4.29 Attendance at Events

Council Policy 4.31 Council Member Fees, Allowances, Reimbursements and Benefits

DRAFT

Directorate		Officer	Review Cycle	Next Due
Office of the CEO		PA for the Chief Executive Officer	Biennial and after each Ordinary Election	November 2027
Version	Decision Reference	Synopsis		
5.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Policy Review		

Application Form

Council Member Professional Development

Please refer to policy clause 3.3.1 Bookings.

Council Member Name: _____

Type of Professional Development

Tick Box



Professional Development

☐

Council Member Essentials training, as per *Local Government Act 1995*

☐

Conference, Seminar or Forum

☐

Delegation

☐

Other

☐

Name of Event* _____

Date/s: _____ Location: _____

Cost: _____

*Attach any information, flyer etc. you may have

How will participation in this professional development event meet the criteria# in Council's policy?

For criteria refer to [CP 4.1 Council Member Continuing Professional Development & Travel](#).

Council Member:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Office Use only

Does the request for professional development meet the criteria in Council's Council Member Continuing Professional Development & Travel Policy?

Yes / No* (*Circle option)

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Mayor / Deputy Mayor / CEO

Submit your completed form to the Office of the CEO for processing

Council Member Claim Form - Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

Council Member Name: _____

In accordance with Council Policy 4.1 Council Member Continuing Professional Development & Travel and Council Policy 4.31 Council Member Fees, Allowances, Reimbursements and Benefits, I hereby certify that the following expenses are true and correct, and were incurred to enable me to undertake my functions as a Council Member of the City of Greater Geraldton.

Period Claim From: _____ To: _____

Item No.	Date	Details of travel/purpose of attendance	Location / Address	Year, Make and Model of Vehicle	Km's travelled
No.1	1/1/2026	Attended the Northern Country Zone Meeting as a Council Member representative.	Mingenew Sports Centre, Mingenev		117Km
No.2					
No.3					
No.4					
No.5					
Total Km's being claimed					

Council Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

** Travel will be reimbursed on a per kilometre basis as per Section 30.6 of the Local Government Officers' (Western Australia) Award 2021*

Office Use only

Authorised by CEO

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approved by Financial Accountant

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Submit your completed form to the Office of the CEO for processing

This Page can be reprinted/ copied if more than one page is required

Council Member Claim Form - Reimbursement of Expenses

Council Member Name: _____

In accordance with Council Policy 4.1 Council Member Continuing Professional Development & Travel and Council Policy 4.31 Council Member Fees, Allowances, Reimbursements and Benefits I hereby certify that the following expenses are true and correct and were incurred to enable me to undertake my functions as a Council Member of the City of Greater Geraldton.

All Receipts must accompany this claim for reimbursement.

Period Claim From: _____ To: _____

Receipt No.	Date	Details of expenses/purpose of attendance	Full name of Meeting / Event / Professional Development	Total Cost
No.1	3/4/19	Taxi from Regional Capitals Australia WA Meeting to Perth Airport, attending Council Member representative	Regional Capitals Australia WA	\$45.00
No.2				
No.3				
No.4				
No.5				
No.6				
No.7				
No.8				
No.9				
No.10				
Total Claim				\$

ATO Determined Reasonable Claim Amounts as per Table 1 [TD 2026/4 | Legal database \(ato.gov.au\)](#)

Council Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

Office Use only
Authorised by CEO

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approved by Financial Accountant:

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____