Elected Members Training & Professional Development Policy

Strategic Reference	Outcome 5 – Leadership Strategy 3.6 – Council staff and Council Members act with integrity and accountability. Strategy 3.8 – Council Members demonstrate 'good governance' in their roles.
File reference	AR20/11420
Responsibility	Office of the Chief Executive Officer
Revision Number	5
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Next review date	Within 12 months of the next periodic election or more frequently if legislation or Council requires.
Applicable Legislation	Local Government Act 1999
Related Policies	Behavioural Management Policy Council Members Allowance, Benefits & Support Policy
Related Documents	LGA Training Standards

1. Policy Statement

Council is committed to providing training and development activities for its Elected Members, including the mandatory training requirements under the Local Government Association (LGA) Training Standards, and recognises its responsibility to develop and adopt a policy which complies with the *Local Government Act 1999.*

2. Policy Objectives

To ensure Elected Members are offered opportunities to undertake the required training in accordance with the *LGA Training Standards* and any other appropriate training and development activities relevant to their roles and functions.

3. Definitions

"Development" means the process of enhancing the skills of both the elected Council body and individuals.

"Elected Members" mean the duly elected representatives of the community including the Mayor and Elected Members (Councillors).

"Induction" means the orientation, training and development program delivered in the first twelve months directly following a general election including completion of the LGA Training Standards for Elected Members.

"Training" means the provision of necessary information to Elected Members enabling them to gain the required skills.

"Training & development activity" means any activity with the objective of increasing an Elected Member's knowledge, skills and competencies in relation to the performance of their roles and responsibilities as Elected Members at the Coorong District Council.

4. Training & Professional Development Plan

4.1 A Training & Development Plan will be developed so as to ensure that activities available to all Elected Members comply with the Regulations and contribute to the personal development of the individual and the achievement of the strategic and good governance objectives of Council.

4.2 Particular emphasis will be given in the Training & Professional Development Plan to the participation of all Elected Members in the development of a new team following a general election as well as the orientation of first-time Elected Members.

4.3 In preparing the Plan, Council administration will utilise a range of strategies to identify the needs of Elected Members and match these needs against its strategic and good governance objectives.

4.4 The Plan will be reviewed by Council administration on an as-needed basis.

4.5 Elected Members recognise that in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities to the community, specific training and refresher courses about their legislative and governance roles and functions is needed as a continuous improvement strategy.

4.6 The Plan will:

- Ensure that training activities are available to all Elected Members;
- Comply with the Act and Regulations;
- Contribute to the personal development of the individual and achievement of the strategic and good governance objectives of Council;
- Contribute to the development of a new team following a general election
- Contribute to the orientation of first-time Elected Members.

4.7 The preparation, review and monitoring of the Plan will consider:

4.7.1 Mandatory Training Requirements

4.7.1.1 The prescribed LGA Training Standards will be prioritised for completion with the first twelve (12) months of appointment to Council.

4.7.1.2 Completion of the mandatory training is a statutory obligation for all Elected Members – continuing and new.

4.7.2 Mid-Term Council Leadership Refresher Training

4.7.2.1 Mid-Term refresher training will be provided for Elected Members. This will include but is not limited to:

- A workshop about the maintenance of effective working relationships amongst Elected Members with the Chief Executive Officer and key Council staff
- Legal and financial responsibilities
- Effective Council meeting procedures

4.7.3 Additional Training Requirements

4.7.3.1 Other training needs may be identified in the Plan that are directly related to specific service areas, community issues, environmental, social and economic challenges facing the community. This may include training and development opportunities related to, but not limited to:

- Role and function of Elected Members
- Relationship between Elected Members, the Chief Executive Officer and staff
- Meeting procedures
- Conflict of interest
- Behavioural management and standards
- Interpretation of financial reports and statements
- Information technology

4.8 It is recognised that a range of delivery methods will be required to support the training needs of Elected Members, including:

- In-house workshops, seminars and briefing sessions conducted by the appropriate Council staff, trainers or guest speakers;
- Attendance at workshops, seminars and conferences offered by training providers and industry bodies, eg. LGA of SA, and other industry bodies and/or private providers
- Printed material, including training booklets and discussion papers, that may be distributed for information;
- Online self-paced learning; and
- Webinars.

Council's Training & Development Plan will include an approximate delivery date and a degree of flexibility with regard to the delivery mode in recognition of the nature of the training/development opportunity.

All interstate or overseas training sessions, conferences or seminars require an individual Council approval by resolution, along with training that is not listed in the Plan.

5. Local Government Association Training Standards

5.1 Council recognise that in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities to the community, Elected Members will need specific training and refresher courses about their legislative and governance roles and functions. The *LGA Training Standards* can be accessed on the LGA website (as published 5 October 2022).

The mandatory training framework lists leadership competencies in four parts:

5.1.1 Behaviour
- Values, ethics and behaviour
- Communication skills
- Leadership skills

5.1.2 Civic
- Introduction to Local Government
- Effective council meetings
- Council meeting procedures
- Representing council decisions

5.1.3 Legal
- Role of a Council Member
- Registers, returns and resources
- Legal protection and oversight

5.1.4 Strategy & Finance
- Integrated strategic management planning and performance
- Strategic risk management and oversight
- Financial management

Additional to the above is prescribed mandatory training for the Mayor only:

5.1.5 Behaviour
- Effective leadership
- Public speaking and media skills

5.1.6 Civic
- Meeting procedures – technical knowledge
- Effective meetings – chairing skills

Council administration will consider training requirements for the Deputy Mayor according to each election cycle.

6. Annual Budget Allocation

A budget allocation will be provided to support the training and professional development activities for Elected Members, and progress against expenditure of the budget allocation will be reported on an annual basis.
Council will ensure sufficient budget allocation is made to enable each Elected Member to undertake the mandatory training.

All Training and Professional Development undertaken by Elected Members will be recorded in the Elected Members Training Register which will be updated as required to reflect attendances, as well as in Council's Annual Report.

7. Attendance at Training & Professional Development Activities

The Plan determines the nature of training and professional development activities available, however access to training programs and development programs not directly conducted by Council will require CEO approval upon application and must link to the training plan unless otherwise agreed by the Council. Application forms are available from the Office of the Chief Executive Officer.

This approval process will have regard to:

- Alignment with the Community Vision Plan;
- Anticipated benefits to the Elected Member attending; and
- Anticipated benefits to the Coorong District Council.

Following attendance at a training program or activity, Elected Members are required to prepare a written report/briefing to Council outlining the nature of the training program/activity and the benefits gained through attendance.

This is not required for the mandatory training consistent with the LGA Training Standards, nor in house training or trainings/conferences that the majority of Elected Members have attended. Should multiple members attend the same program/activity, only one report/briefing will be required. Members may reach agreement on how/who shall provide the one report/briefing.

The CEO will keep a record of all training and professional development attended, including mandatory training requirements. Failure to complete the mandatory training requirements will result in suspension of the member from office, unless the member satisfies the Council that there were good reasons for the failure to comply (refer section 80A, Local Government Act 1999).

8. Payments/Reimbursements

Where approval has been granted for an Elected Member to attend a training and professional development activity, the Elected Member may seek the reimbursement of

approved expenses in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 1999 and Regulations* and the Council Members' Allowance, Benefits and Support Policy.

9. Availability/Accessibility

This policy is available for inspection at Council's offices during normal business hours & Council's website and will be emailed to interested parties on request (request may be lodged in writing to council@coorong.sa.gov.au).

10. Document History

This policy will be reviewed within twelve (12) months of the next periodic election, or more frequently if legislation or Council requires.

Version	Adopted	Minute No	Description of change(s)
1	20 September 2011	279/11	New policy
2	21 October 2014	233/14	Cyclical review
3	21 August 2018	147/18	Cyclical review
4	21 July 2020	161/20	Inclusion of Professional Development Plan as an appendix to the policy, rather than a stand-alone document. Inclusion of reference to legislated modules (four in total) under the Training Standard Modules for new and returning Council Members.
5	27 January 2026	009/26	Refinement of definitions Local Government Association Training Standards referenced as appropriate Consideration for training requirements of the Deputy Mayor position listed at clause 5