

Moira Shire Council

Councillor Professional Development Policy

Policy type	Council
Version Number	3
Responsible Director	Director Corporate Performance
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance, Risk and Performance
Date adopted by Council	25 September 2024
Scheduled for review	This policy will be reviewed four years from the date of adoption, or sooner if required.

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Administrative changes do not materially alter the document (such as spelling/typographical errors, change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department). Administrative updates can be made in accordance with the Policy Framework Guidelines.

PURPOSE

This policy describes the support available to Councillors / Administrators to assist them in undertaking relevant professional training and development to enhance their performance and leadership on behalf of the Moira Shire community.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Moira Shire Councillors / Administrators and staff responsible for administering the process.

The policy does not apply to professional development programs initiated by Council such as Councillors' / Administrators' induction.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Councillor	A person who holds the office of member of Council as defined in the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> . Including Administrators in accordance with <i>Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act 2023</i> .
Personal Expenses	Out of pocket expenses incurred by Councillors that are not related to their duties as a Councillor. This may include attendance at an event in a personal capacity and not as the council representative.
Councillor Expenses	Expenses incurred in the performance of Council duties as described in section 41 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and eligible for reimbursement.
Duties as a Councillor	The duties of a Councillor include those that are defined in the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , as the duties performed by a Councillor that are necessary or appropriate for the purposes of achieving the objectives of a Council having regard to any relevant Act, regulations, Ministerial guidelines or Council policies.
Professional Development	Learning that leads to or emphasises education in a specific professional career field or builds practical job applicable skills.
Training	The process of increasing the knowledge and skills of an employee or Councillor for doing a particular job. It seeks to improve the job performance and work behaviour of those trained.

POLICY STATEMENT

Application for Professional Development

Councillors can request support under this policy to attend professional development activities. The request must be:

- provided in writing using the Professional Development Application Form;
- addressed to the CEO; and
- received at least 7 business days prior to the close of registrations.

An application must:

- detail the benefit to Council and/or Moira Shire community that will result from the professional development.
- include relevant information about the program e.g., program brochure including cost, time commitments and associated expenses that may be incurred such as accommodation and travel.
- demonstrate that the Councillor fulfills any eligibility or prior learning requirements that may apply.
- demonstrate that the training can be completed within the term of office.

Funding

- Each Councillor may access up to \$5000 per financial year to fund approved professional development activities which excludes mandatory training such as inductions.
- Approved professional development activities are consistent with the duties of a Councillor and therefore Councillors may apply for reimbursement of associated expenses via the Councillor Expenses and Support Policy.
- With the approval of the Chief Executive Officer, Councillors may access additional funding in a specific year provided the expenditure does not exceed \$20,000 across the four-year term of office, or pro-rata equivalent for Councillors appointed between general elections.

Application assessment and approval

This policy outlines the guidelines to ensure that Councillors are provided the opportunity to attend training programs, conferences and functions to support any professional development.

In assessing a Councillor's professional development application, the CEO will consider:

- the relevance to the role and development of the Councillor
- and whether the participation will:
 - Provide information on a contemporary issue, so that Council can contribute to discussion or debate;
 - Put forward Council's viewpoint during formation of a collaborative policy, or stance on an issue;
 - Meet community expectations that Council representation is necessary for the benefit of the community;
 - Deliver economic development opportunities; or
 - Provide improvements to the built, social, economic and natural well-being of our community.

Accountability

Councillors will provide a written report to the next Scheduled Council Meeting following completion of the professional development activity.

The report will include:

- Details of course topic, content, location, date and duration;
- Relevance of Conference/Workshop/Training Session to Council's business and Councillor's personal development requirements;
- Total costs covering course, course material, travel, accommodation and any other expenses for the Councillor; and
- Benefits from attendance.

Reimbursement to Council

Councillors are required to advise of and reimburse Council for private expenses incurred in the use of Council resources. This may include private use of a Council provided mobile phone, accommodation or any other expense as mentioned in this policy.

No new training or training expenses will be approved, in the final six months of a Councillor term.

Organisation responsibilities

Council is publicly accountable for the use of its funds and all staff exercising financial authority under delegation have the responsibility for ensuring that approvals accord with Council's policies.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government (Moira Shire Council) Act 2023

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Administrator Code of Conduct

Fraud Prevention and Control Policy

Governance Rules

Annual Budget

Procurement Policy and Guidelines

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version	Summary of Changes	Approved by	Date
1	Councillor Professional Development Policy developed.	Council	19/08/2013
2	Scheduled policy review.	Council	27/11/2019
3	Scheduled policy review.	Council	25/09/2024