COUNCILLOR TRAINING AND CONFERENCE POLICY

Policy Reference No. POL/160
File No. HCC13/377
Strategic Objective 5.3 Provide responsible and transparent governance, services and infrastructure which responds to and supports community needs

Adopted by Council June 2010
Re-Adopted 4 July 2016
Date for Review July 2021
Responsible Officer Manager Governance
Department Governance
1 POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 The purpose of attendance at training or conferences/seminars is to enhance the skills, knowledge and understanding of Councillors in a coordinated sound governance framework.

1.2 Each year Council shall provide a budget for training, conferences and seminars for Councillors. The amount budgeted is a lump sum rather than an individual allocation. It provides for training and conference/seminar attendance for each Councillor.

1.3 Costs associated with the training, conferences and seminars shall be separately disclosed for and include items such as travel, meals, accommodation etc. Separate budgeting allocations exist for these items.

2 PURPOSE

2.1 In accordance with Council’s commitment to open and transparent governance, this policy formalises the processes for Councillors attending training and conferences/seminars as part of their role as Councillors.

2.2 Council supports Councillors accessing professional development and investigating best practices to further enhance our city to the benefit of its residents.

2.3 Councillors are supported and funded to attend relevant training and conferences in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

3 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Objectives

3.1.1 To clarify the process by which Councillors will undertake local, interstate or overseas travel in an official capacity.

3.1.2 To outline the criteria for acceptable expenditure associated with such travel.

3.1.3 To specify a pre-travel approval procedure for Councillors who wish to travel local, interstate or overseas wholly or partially funded by Council.

3.1.4 To specify a post-travel reporting procedure for Councillors who have travelled interstate or overseas wholly or partially funded by Council.

3.1.5 To ensure the statutory Register of Overseas or Interstate Travel is maintained in accordance with regulation 12(a) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2015.

3.1.6 To specify that in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Councillors, a Councillor has the role of representing and promoting Hume City Council when attending any conferences or training.

3.2 Requirements

3.2.1 Prior to any Councillor attending training, a conference or seminar the Councillor Local and Interstate Training/Seminar/Conference Application Form (Attachment 1) will need to be submitted by the Councillor to a Strategy and Policy Councillor Briefing if local or interstate attendance is required.

3.2.2 Where the training or conference requires overseas travel, the details will need to be reported to Council and Council approval is required prior to attending the conference or training. A Council Officer of manager level or above should also attend the conference.
3.2.3 Councillors are to supply a report to a Council Meeting (within the delegates report portion of the meeting) within eight weeks after their return from an interstate or overseas training/conference - a joint report may be submitted. The report should describe the learning, knowledge or information obtained by their attendance and participation at the training/conference.

3.2.4 Payment or reimbursement of expenditure incurred in relation to a training/conference event is governed by Council’s Councillor Support and Expenses Entitlement Policy. The following guidelines will apply:

3.2.5 Where possible, early bird fares and registration discounts will be obtained;

3.2.6 Economy class will be the standard for air travel;

3.2.7 should the total flight time for overseas travel exceed six hours, consideration will be given to an upgrade to business class;

3.2.8 Use of taxi cabs from home to airport and return, airport to training/conference venue and return is to be in accordance with the CabCharge provisions of the Councillor Support and Expenses Entitlement Policy;

3.2.9 Accommodation is to be based at the training/conference venue or at close proximity;

3.2.10 Meals and other incidental costs are to be reimbursed;

3.2.11 If there is an accompanying person, the cost for this person shall be paid for by the Councillor. These costs must be paid in full to Council at the time of the training/conference registration and prior to travel being undertaken. Any additional costs incurred by the accompanying person shall be reimbursed to Council within 14 days of return from travel.

3.2.12 Overnight accommodation will be provided where the training or conference location combined with the commencement and conclusion time of the conference or training is such that a Councillor could not reasonably leave and return to their residence at a reasonable hour of the day.

3.2.13 All claims for reimbursement of out of pocket expenditure shall be claimed in accordance with the Councillor Support and Expenses Entitlement Policy.

4 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

4.1 Nil

5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

5.1 Councillor Local and Interstate Training/Seminar/Conference Application (Attachment 1)

5.2 Code of Conduct for Councillors

5.3 Councillor Support and Expenses Entitlement Policy
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