



POLICY REGISTER

Councillor Training

Policy adopted: 2022

Reviewed: 2025

File Ref: D25.108526

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Issue.	Prepared/Revised by and Date	Action/Amendment Description	Approved By and Date
1.0	17.10.2017	First Edition	Minute No. 10.17.4114
2.0	20.05.2025	Second Edition	2025/130

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate Balranald Shire Council's commitment to ensuring that councillors have access to training and educational opportunities which will assist them to develop and maintain the skills and knowledge required to perform their civic duties as part of a professional development program.

Background

Councillors are from a range of diverse backgrounds and bring different and valuable skills to the role. Despite this, few new councillors have extensive knowledge of the system of local government, how a council works or the full range of their roles and responsibilities.

From their first council meeting councillors will be required to make important decisions on behalf of their communities and take responsibility for those decisions. Those decisions often involve significant use of public money, assets or natural resources. It is important that councillors have, or may quickly attain, a clear understanding of the system of local government, how their council works and the full range of their roles and responsibilities.

It is equally important that all councillors have ongoing opportunities to undertake appropriate skills development and training in areas needed to assist them to carry out their role effectively.

2. Objectives

The training made available to councillors will assist them in carrying out their local government duties and will be offered on a continual basis throughout the councillor's term of office.

3. Scope

This policy applies to elected Councillors for the Balranald Shire Council. The policy will be reviewed every four years following local government elections.

4. Principles

Council will ensure that Councillors have a clear understanding of:

- the system of local government
- how council works
- their roles and responsibilities

5. Policy

5.1 Levels of Training

Training offered to Councillors will be considered:

- Imperative
- Desirable
- Developmental

Imperative Training

Training considered imperative and must be attended by all Councillors at least once per term includes training that is:

- Vital to the role of Councillor
- Specific to the legislative and governance roles and functions, such as:
 - Councillor Induction Program
 - Meeting procedures
 - Code of Conduct
 - Conflict of Interest
 - The relationship between councillors and staff

Desirable Training

Training considered desirable is that which is important to the role of the councillor and is in the best interest of the Councillor to attend, such as:

- Financial skills
- Planning legislation
- Strategic management
- Community leadership
- Ecologically sustainable development

Developmental Training

Developmental training is offered to Councillors for the further development of skills or professional expertise. Such training may include:

- Attendance at conferences, seminars and workshops offered by LGNSW, LGPA and ALGA and other private providers
- Informal sessions conducted by council with appropriate guest speakers or trainers
- Purchase of training manuals, discussion papers and the like
- On-line training
- Mentoring

5.2 Minimum Training Requirements

- Internal councillor induction sessions
- Compulsory councillor information seminars delivered by the Office of Local Government
- Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest training
- Code of Meeting Practice training

5.3 Notification of Training Opportunities to Councillors

Any training or educational opportunities for Councillors will be notified to Councillors and every effort will be made to provide Councillors with as much notice as possible of upcoming training and educational opportunities. Councillors are also encouraged to visit the 'Learning Solutions' section of the Local Government NSW website (www.lgnsw.org.au) to identify upcoming training programs. Councillors may also notify the Mayor or the General Manager of any training they may wish to attend.

5.4 Approval of Training and/or Expenses

Approval of training and payment and reimbursement for expenses relating to councillor's registration and attendance at training, will be determined in accordance with the councillors – Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities policy.

A budget allocation will be provided to support the training activities undertaken by councillors and progress against expenditure will be monitored and reported quarterly.

5.5 Reporting

The General Manager's Office will maintain data pertaining to Councillor training and development opportunities, including courses, training, workshops and information sessions formally made available to Councillors, and a record will be kept of Councillor participation at these events.

Training data, that is required to be reported by legislation, will be included in the Annual Report.

6. Related Documentation

- *Local Government Act 1993, Division 5*
- Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors Policy.
- LGNSW Professional Development Program