

# Elected and Appointed Members’ Professional Development and Training Policy

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| <b>Adopted by</b>              | Palmerston North City Council on 2 June 2021  |
| <b>Previous revision date</b>  | 28 May 2018                                   |
| <b>Next review date</b>        | October 2022 (beginning of Council triennium) |
| <b>Relevant legislation</b>    | N/A   |
| <b>PNCC document reference</b> | Oasis 15631407                                |

## 1. Objective

This Policy has been established to demonstrate Council's commitment to ensuring members have equal access to training and educational opportunities and have the opportunity to maintain their knowledge and skills base to contemporary standards and expectations.

## 2. Background

The knowledge, skills and experiences that members bring when they are elected or appointed and that are enhanced during an induction programme generally need to be supplemented with further knowledge and skills development relevant to the specific role and responsibilities of elected and appointed members.

It is important that members have or may quickly attain a clear understanding of the system of Local Government, how Council works and the full range of their roles and responsibilities.

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

A well-planned, structured and continuing training and professional development programme enables members to continue to develop relevant skills and knowledge over time. This is important given the varying responsibilities of the role, the dynamic nature of the legislative and policy framework within

which local government operates, the many competing priorities and high community expectations.

Benefits of a professional development programme include:

- Opportunity to provide needs-based training and professional development to members to assist them to function well in their role and to make informed and effective decisions
- Opportunity for members to learn new skills, knowledge and gain experience
- Opportunity to provide structured updates on changes to key legislation and policies as well as briefings to members on key issues

Currently, there are no specific legislative requirements pertaining to member training or education. However, Council is strongly encouraged to develop a training programme and encourage continuing development programmes to support elected and appointed members in their role.

### **3. Definitions**

In this policy, the following definitions apply:

**Professional Development:** Includes personal development such as short courses, study tours, conferences, seminars, forums, readings, magazines and articles.

### **4. Application of Policy**

This Policy applies to elected and appointed members.

### **5. Policy**

The training made available to elected and appointed members will assist them in carrying out their local government duties. Training will be offered on a continual basis throughout the member's term.

The development and delivery of a continuing professional development programme for members has a number of phases including:

- Commitment to continuing professional development for members
- Training and development needs analysis
- Development of a training and development plan (including budget allocation)
- Delivery
- Evaluation

### **Commitment to Continuing Professional Development for Elected and Appointed Members**

Council will establish, maintain and promote their commitment to elected and appointed member training and development.

Member training and development should be seen as an investment to enhance the effectiveness of the Council's performance in achieving its goals (as for workforce development).

Training offered to members will be classified as:

- Imperative
- Desirable
- Developmental

#### **Imperative Training**

Training offered to members is considered **imperative** when:

- It is vital to the role of member
- Should be attended by all members
- Specific to the legislative and governance roles and functions such as:
  - Roles and responsibilities of elected and appointed members
  - Relationship between members, General Manager and staff
  - Meeting Procedures
  - Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct policies as adopted by Council
  - Good governance
  - Te Tiriti o Waitangi training
- Elected and appointed members should attend the matters listed as "**Imperative Training**" at least once every term.

#### **Desirable Training**

Training offered to elected and appointed members is considered "**desirable**" when:

- It is important to the role of member
- It is in the best interest of the member to attend.

Training may arise from time to time when it relates to the maintenance of good governance. It may include, but not limited to community issues which address environmental, social, cultural and economic issues and challenges:

- Financial Skills
- Planning Legislation

- Strategic Management
- Community Leadership
- Media Skills
- Handling Difficult People for Members
- Performance Management of Senior Staff.

Elected and appointed members should attend the matters listed as “Desirable Training” at least once every term.

### ***Skills and Knowledge Self-Assessment Tool***

The following list of key skills and knowledge areas will assist elected and appointed members to become more effective. This list will identify some possible training and developmental areas for members. Important skills:

- Leadership skills
- Relationship management
- Communication skills including negotiating, conflict resolution, advocacy and lobbying
- Presentation skills
- Problem solving and analytical skills
- Teamwork skills
- Organisational skills.

Knowledge of:

- Central and Local Government relationships
- How Local Government Councils operate
- Role of a member
- Member, General Manager and staff relationships
- Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interests
- Key aspects of the *Local Government Act 2002* and *Local Government Official Information and Management Act 1987*
- Environmental planning and assessment processes
- Whole of community representation
- Social justice principles
- Meeting regulations and procedures
- Strategic management planning and reporting, particularly Integrated.

Planning & Reporting

- Financial management requirements in the *Local Government Act 2002*
- Local Government regulation and reporting processes
- Asset management
- Knowledge of the demographic profile of the Council area and the social, environmental and economic issues facing the community.

### ***Developmental Training***

Training offered to elected and appointed members is considered “**developmental**” when it is aimed at further developing the skills or professional expertise of the member.

Elected and appointed members are encouraged to accept training classified as “**developmental**”. Such training may include, but not limited to:

- Attendance at LGNZ workshops whether public, in house, regional programmes or induction seminars
- Seminars and informal sessions conducted by Council with appropriate guest speakers and trainers
- Purchase of training booklets and discussion papers that could be distributed to members for information
- On-line training delivery
- Mentoring.

The following modules are those considered important for elected and appointed members' continuing development:

- Induction for Members
- Conflict of Interest and Model Code of Conduct
- Financial Skills
- Good Governance
- Planning Legislation Skills and Knowledge
- Effective Meeting Skills
- Strategic Management
- The Effective Chair in Local Government
- Elected and Appointed Members as Change Initiators
- Understanding Sustainability for Members
- Media Skills
- Advanced Media Skills
- Dynamic Presentation Skills
- Performance Management of Senior Staff
- Connecting with the Community
- Lobbying for Success
- Community Leadership
- Preventing Bullying and Harassment Training for Members
- Handling Difficult people for Members
- Speed Reading Skills for Members.

### ***Minimum Training Requirements***

The minimum requirements for member training are:

- Internal Member Induction Sessions
- Member Information Seminars as delivered by LGNZ.

### ***Notification to Elected and Appointed Members***

Elected and appointed members are encouraged to identify upcoming training programmes, and elected and appointed members may notify the Democracy and Governance Team of any training that they may wish to attend or that other members may be interested in attending and seeking subsequent approval.

### ***Approval of Training Payment of Expenses***

Approval for training and reimbursement for expenses relating to a member's attendance at training will be determined in accordance with Council's Elected and Appointed Member Expenses and Allowances Policy and PNCC Delegations Manual.

All elected and appointed members are entitled to request attendance of any conference, course, seminar or training event which contributes to the member's ability to carry out their Council role effectively.

For training:

#### **In New Zealand and less than \$2000**

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor or if one of those is unavailable the other acting conjointly with the Chairperson of the Finance & Audit Committee, can approve elected and appointed members training in New Zealand up to the value of \$2000.

#### **Overseas or greater than \$2000**

Council approval is needed for training courses in New Zealand greater than \$2000, or overseas.

Council has a fixed training budget for elected and appointed members.

### **Budget**

Each year, the Council will allocate a budget to support member training and development activities to be undertaken in the following year. Progress against expenditure of the budget allocation should be reported on a quarterly basis.

Council will need to determine the size of the budget allocation, which may change annually, depending on training needs. For example, when a new member is elected or appointed, there will be a need to budget for an induction programme.

### ***Recording and Reporting***

The data to be maintained will include:

- Courses, workshops or information sessions formally made available to members
- Classification of training made available under this policy
- members who have undertaken the training.

Members are to report back on their findings with a short report. This will be circulated as appropriate.

### **Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every three years.