



Randwick City
Council
a sense of community

GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Councillor Training and Development Policy

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate Randwick City Council's commitment to best practice and leadership in local government, ensuring that the mayor and councillors have access to training and educational opportunities which will assist them to develop and maintain the skills and knowledge required to effectively perform their civic role and responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1993* ('the Act').

2. Scope

This policy applies to all councillors of Randwick City Council, including the mayor.

3. Policy

Statement of commitment

Randwick City Council is committed to developing an induction and ongoing professional development program for the mayor and councillors to ensure they are able to successfully fulfil their statutory roles and responsibilities.

As part of this program, the general manager will work with the mayor and each councillor to develop a professional development plan that identifies and addresses the specific gaps in skills and knowledge that the mayor and councillors and/ or Council has recognised as needing attention.

Induction program

Randwick City Council will develop an induction program for new and returning councillors as well as a supplementary program for the mayor to ensure they are provided all the information they need to effectively fulfil their roles in the first few months of Council's term and feel confident in their ability to do so. The induction program will cover:

- their roles, responsibilities and formal obligations
- what the council does and how the council operates, including an overview of integrated planning and reporting and land-use planning
- their financial management responsibilities
- the key issues and tasks for the new council
- the legislation, rules, principles and political context under which councils operate
- Council's organisational structure and the roles and responsibilities of staff
- key Council policies and procedures they must comply with
- the role of Council meetings and how to participate effectively in them
- the support available to the mayor and councillors and where they can go to get more information or assistance,
- how to speak to the media appropriately and effectively, and
- information on the process for electing the mayor (where applicable).

In the case of the mayor, the program will also cover:

- the role and responsibilities of the mayor as leader of the council, including ceremonial functions
- how to chair Council meetings
- the roles and functions of regional and other external bodies Council is a member of
- how to oversee the general manager, including understanding recruitment processes and leading performance reviews
- how to lead Council's integrated planning and reporting, and
- how to manage code of conduct complaints about the general manager.

The mayor and councillors must have a working knowledge and understanding of these areas by the end of the induction program.

The induction program will also include activities to help the governing body establish itself as a cohesive and collaborative team focused on a common purpose with shared values and goals.

Activities will aim to ensure mayors and councillors, as a governing body, understand the need to:

- build relationships with each other based on trust and mutual respect
- contribute to a positive and ethical culture within the governing body
- encourage and facilitate collaboration with each other
- work towards consensus as members of the governing body for the benefit of the community
- win concessions without damaging relationships within the governing body
- champion and communicate the council's vision and strategic plans as a cohesive team
- respect the diversity of skills and experiences on the governing body, and
- communicate and uphold the decisions of Council in a respectful way, even if their own position was not adopted.

Activities should also help the mayor, as the leader of the governing body, to:

- act as a stabilising influence and show leadership, and
- promote a culture of integrity and accountability within Council and when representing Council in the community and elsewhere.

The mayor and councillors must attend all induction sessions when first elected. Returning councillors (including the mayor) must also attend all induction sessions to ensure the effective and cohesive operation of the governing body.

Randwick City Council will evaluate the induction program at the end of each Council term to determine whether it has achieved these outcomes, and to identify and address areas for improvement.

Assessment of skills and knowledge

The minimum skills and knowledge required of councillors to perform their roles and responsibilities effectively are listed at the end of this policy. Council will conduct a needs analysis prior to each new term to determine whether this list is appropriate and whether it reflects Council's needs.

An assessment will be made of the skills and knowledge each councillor brings to their role against these minimum requirements to identify any gaps that their professional development plan should address.

To identify any gaps, Council will obtain this information through activities such as self-assessments, questionnaires, councillor feedback, observations during Council meetings and workshops and interviews.

Ongoing professional development

A professional development plan will be developed for the mayor and each councillor to address the gaps identified. The plans will include:

- the outcome of Council's needs analysis
- the knowledge and skills the councillor or mayor brings to their roles
- the development needs of each councillor or mayor and the priority given to each development need
- how the knowledge or skill will be developed (i.e. on-the-job training, mentoring, internal training, external training, briefing session etc.), and
- operational information such as timeframes for development, who is responsible for organising training/development, approval processes and estimated costs.

Training activities may include:

- in-house workshops and briefing sessions conducted by the council with appropriate staff, trainers and guest speakers
- attendance at external training courses and events, for example, seminars, conferences and workshops
- practical on-the-job training printed materials such as training booklets mentoring and/or online training resources.
- attendance at forums or events that strengthen and promote historical, cultural, economic and educational ties

The professional development plans are to be developed in consultation with the mayor, each individual councillor and the governing body as a whole, and the general manager.

Randwick City Council will evaluate the professional development program at the end of each council term to assess whether it was effective in assisting the mayor and councillors to develop the skills and knowledge listed in Council's needs analysis.

Responsibilities

The mayor and each councillor are responsible for making themselves available to attend any development activities identified in the professional development plan. The mayor and all councillors must make all reasonable endeavours to attend and participate in the induction sessions and professional development activities arranged for them during the term of the council.

[Identify the role or responsible staff member] is responsible for planning, scheduling and facilitating induction and professional development sessions for the mayor and councillors in consultation with the general manager.

The general manager has overall responsibility for Randwick City Council's induction and professional development program.

Notification of induction and professional development activities to the mayor and councillors

The mayor and councillors will be provided with as much notice as possible for upcoming induction and professional development activities.

Budget

An annual budget allocation will be provided to support the training and professional development activities undertaken by the mayor and councillors. Expenditure will be monitored and reported quarterly.

Approval of training and/or expenses

The mayor and councillors are encouraged to identify professional development opportunities and may seek approval from the general manager to attend any such activities.

Approval of training and payment and reimbursement for expenses relating to a councillor's registration and attendance at training, will be determined in accordance with Randwick City Council's Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy.

Reporting

Council's corporate services department will maintain data pertaining to councillor induction and professional development activities and attendance. The general manager of Randwick City Council will:

- report to the first Council meeting held after the induction program is delivered the activities offered to the mayor and each councillor as part of the induction program, and whether or not they participated in them
- report to the first Council meeting held after 30 June each year identifying the professional development activities offered to the mayor and each councillor in the year to 30 June and whether or not they participated in them, and
- publish these reports on Council's website.