

2. Human Resources

2.3 C-2SPDCST03 – Staff Professional Development, Conferences & Study Tours

Previous Policy Number – 9.13

PART A - Policy

Objective

The objective of this Policy is to set out how the Shire of Dandaragan (Shire) will encourage and support employees in their professional and career development as part of their employment with the Shire and to provide administrative guidelines to facilitate fairness and equity in the application of these general principles.

Policy Statement

The Council and Shire acknowledges that professional development is an important factor in personal job satisfaction, workplace productivity, reward and recognition, and plays an essential part in continuous improvement of the quality of its programs and services.

The Shire is committed to providing a supportive and rewarding environment for its employees and recognises that the quality, responsiveness, and professionalism of its workforce are linked to the further development of their skills and competencies.

This commitment will include providing employees with:

- The opportunity to plan and develop skills, knowledge and attributes that complement organisational and service area goals.
- The opportunity to participate in career development activities that extend and enhance their capabilities and capacity for advancement within the organisation.
- The opportunity to attend relevant professional organisation conferences.
- The opportunity to participate in relevant study tours
- Equity of access to professional development opportunities.

Professional Development opportunities and requirements are an integral component of the annual Performance Review process. Employees are encouraged as part of the performance review process to take an active role in their own ongoing professional and career development and to apply their learning to its most effective use.

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PART B

Management Procedures

Application

This Policy and Management Procedure applies to all Shire staff.

Definitions

For the purposes of the Policy and these Management Procedures:

Conference/Professional Development	is defined as an activity conducted by a professional body or legitimate interest group to provide professional interaction and networking designed to improve work related knowledge and skills
Staff	refers to individuals employed by the Shire at officer, managerial and executive management level, including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	refers to a process of ensuring continual professional and relevant-skills related development. Certain professional societies and associations have a formal CPD system, requiring recording of events attended and activities undertaken as evidence of mandatory CPD

Eligibility

Except where an Employment Contract provides otherwise for a particular staff member, the following eligibility criteria shall apply:-

- All members of staff, other than casuals, employed on a continuing or fixed-term basis are eligible to apply for conference and seminar attendance, provided they have been employed by the Shire for a continuous period of greater than twelve months.
- Attendance at conferences/seminars should have been identified as a learning and development requirement as part of the annual performance review.
- Approval shall be withdrawn should a member of staff tender their resignation from the Shire subsequent to approval being granted but prior to the attendance at the Conference / Seminar.

Members of staff who are due to retire from the Shire will not normally be entitled to apply for approval to attend a conference or seminar.

Interstate Conferences

Attendance at interstate conferences and/or seminars shall be limited to Executive Managers and the CEO, unless extenuating circumstances apply.

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Attendance at State and Federal Professional Conferences

- 1.1 Members of the Designated Senior Staff are encouraged to attend the Annual State Conference relating to their profession.
- 1.2 Members of the Designated Senior Staff may attend bi-annually, the Federal Conference relating to their profession. (Note: where the officer's professional organisation does not convene a State Conference the officer is encouraged to attend the organisations Federal Conference, annually).
- 1.3 The Chief Executive Officer is authorised to approve the attendance of staff at State and Federal Professional Conferences subject to budget and in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - (a) The Chief Executive Officer is to ensure that attendance at the conference will be beneficial to the officer and/or the Council.
 - (b) The officer is to provide a report on the issues, outcomes, etc. of the conference to colleagues at the next available staff meeting.
 - (c) Budget authority and funding arrangements are to be considered.
- 1.4 Funds for attendance at State and Federal Professional Conferences may be provided specifically where known in each annual budget or provided for generically under the provision for staff training.

International Conferences

Attendance at international conferences and/or seminars shall be limited to Executive Managers and the CEO, unless extenuating circumstances apply.

Any such request for attendance at an international event will require Council approval. The proposal to Council should include:

- the proposed participant(s);
- the objectives for attending the event, including the anticipated quantifiable benefits for the Shire;
- details of the funds available in the budget to cover the anticipated expenses associated with attendance at the event; and
- the overall total cost of accommodation, travel, registration, and any other costs associated with the specific conference/seminar.

Presentations by Shire Staff at Conferences

From time to time Shire staff may be invited to present at a conference / seminar. In such an event staff members must contact the conference/seminar organisers to discuss the monetary contribution that the organisers will make towards the cost of presenting at the conference (including but not limited to travel, accommodation and registration costs). Any attendance by Shire staff for the purposes of presenting at conferences/seminars will require the CEO's approval prior to any papers of applications etc being submitted for consideration.

Any such request will require the submission of a proposal to the CEO which includes:

- the objectives for attending the event and, including the anticipated quantifiable benefits for the Shire;

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- the proposed participant(s);
- the presentation topic;
- details of the monetary contribution that the conference organisers will make;
- details of the funds available in the budget to cover the anticipated expenses associated with attendance at the event; and
- the overall total cost of accommodation, travel, registration, and any other costs associated with the specific conference.

Special Provision

To provide an opportunity to network with Federal Ministers, Members of Parliament and/or Senior Departmental Officers on issues affecting this Council, the Chief Executive Officer and the Shire President may attend an appropriate interstate conference that can incorporate a visit to Canberra on an annual basis.