

Training – Elected Members Policy

Keywords: Councillors, Training, Seminars, Conferences, Meetings

Corporate Plan:	<i>Training is provided to enable Elected Members to carry out duties based on the Corporate Objectives and Business Activities of the Council.</i>
Classification:	<i>Executive Services – Elected Members – “Training – Elected Members”</i>
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Next Review Due:	<i>(Regs: Within 12 months of the General Elections 2026)</i>
Responsible Officer(s):	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
Council File Reference:	<i>Council Policies (P)</i>
Applicable Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1999 – Section 80A Reg. 8AA of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2013</i>
Relevant Policies:	<i>Code of Conduct Elected members and Committee Members</i>
Related Procedures:	<i>This Policy is not subject to Public Consultation</i>
Delegations:	<i>N/A</i>

1. Purpose

Berri Barmera Council is committed to providing training and development activities for its Council Members, including the mandatory training requirements under the LGA Training Standards, and recognises its responsibility to develop and adopt a policy for this purpose under section 80A of the Local Government Act.

Following the amendment to the Local Government Act and the Local Government (General) Regulations 2013 in November 2014, this policy incorporates the new requirements for Council Members to undertake mandatory training within the first year of election to office, which complies with the *LGA Training Standards* as defined in regulation 8AA of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2013.

2. Definitions

Council	means Berri Barmera Council
Mandatory Training for Elected Members	as a South Australian council, our council members are required to undergo mandatory training within their first year of office and again before the mid-term point (November 2024)
CEO	means Chief Executive Officer

3. Principles

To ensure Council Members are offered opportunities to undertake the required training in accordance with the LGA Training Standards and any other appropriate training and development activities relevant to their roles and functions. This Policy applies to all Council Members, who each have an obligation to abide by this Policy.

4. Policy Statement

Framework for Policy:

4.1. Training & Development Plan

Council will develop and adopt a Training & Development Plan so as to ensure that activities available to all Council Members comply with the Regulations and contribute to the personal development of the individual and the achievement of the strategic and good governance objectives of Council.

Particular emphasis will be given in the Training & Development Plan to the participation of all Council Members in the development of a new team following a general election as well as the orientation of first time Council Members.

In preparing its Training & Development Plan the Council will utilise a range of strategies to identify the needs of Council and match these needs against its strategic and good governance objectives. In particular, the Council, in consultation with Council Members who have been re-elected for another term on Council, will undertake a 'gap analysis' to identify the appropriate modules within the *LGA Training Standards* that should form the basis of the required training for returning Council Members.

Council will determine whether this Training Plan will operate during the entire term of the Council Member (and be reviewed annually) or developed and adopted on an annual basis.

Council will collect information regarding the training and development needs of Council Members and how it will plan for the delivery of training by:

- Survey/questionnaire
- Workshops

Council recognises that in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities to the community Council Members will need specific training and refresher courses about their legislative and governance roles and functions. The LGA Training Standards consist of the following modules:

- Module 1: Introduction to Local Government - Role and function of Council Members
- Module 2: Behaviour
 - Values, Ethics & behaviour (*Technical*)
 - Values, Ethics & Behaviour (*Behavioural*)
 - Communication Skills
 - Leadership skills (*Strategic Thinking & Change Management*)
 - Leadership Skills (*Resilience*)

- Module 3: Civic
 - Introduction to Local Government
 - Effective council meetings
 - Council meeting procedures
 - Representing council decisions
- Module 4: Strategy & Finance
 - Integrated strategic management planning and performance
 - Strategic risk management & oversight
 - Financial management (*Managing public funds, rating and other revenue sources and funding plan*)
 - Financial management (*Financial terminology and understanding financial statements and reports*)

With further information available on the courses via the Local Government Association training website <https://training.lga.sa.gov.au/elected-members/legislative-courses/>

Council Members who are new to Council will be required to undertake all four modules. Returning Council Members will undertake the appropriate modules identified through a 'gap analysis' of their skills and training needs

Council recommends that returning Council Members should, as a minimum, undertake modules 2 and 4 as a refresher. Councils will determine whether the 'gap analysis' will be by 'self assessment' or some other approach.

Other training issues will emerge that are directly related to specific service areas and other community issues and address environmental, social and economic challenges facing the community.

It is recognised that a range of delivery methods will be required to support the training needs of Council Members, including:

- In-house workshops, seminars and briefing sessions conducted by the Council with appropriate staff, trainers and guest speakers;
- Attendance at workshops, seminars and conferences offered by training providers and industry bodies including the Local Government Association of SA, Local Government Managers Australia, other industry bodies and/or private providers offering courses for Members to gain new skills and knowledge and to network with other Council Members;
- Printed material, including training booklets and discussion papers, that may be distributed for information;
- On-line self-paced learning;
- Webinar or electronic sessions and
- CD Rom/DVD information.

Council's Training & Development Plan will include the agreed delivery method to respond to the needs of Council Members identified during the development of the training plan.

4.2. Annual Budget Allocation

A budget allocation will be provided to support the training and development activities undertaken by Council, and progress against expenditure of the budget allocation will be reported on a quarterly and annual basis.

Council determines the size of its budget allocation, which may change annually, depending on the nature of issues for which training, and development activities may be required to be offered as part of the annual budget deliberations. For example, following a general election there will be a requirement for additional sessions on induction, team building and direction setting.

All training undertaken by Members will be recorded in the Council Allowances and Benefits Register, which will be updated as required to reflect attendances.

4.3. Attendance at Training Programs and Record-keeping

The Training and Development Plan will determine the nature of training to be made available however access to training programs not directly conducted by the Council will require approval upon application and must link to the training plan unless otherwise agreed by the Council. Application forms are available from the Executive Assistant. Following attendance at a training program or activity, individual Council Members are required to prepare a report outlining the nature of the training program/activity and the benefits gained through attendance along with feedback on ideas to enhance the program/activity.

The CEO will keep a record of all training attended, but particularly the mandatory training requirements. Failure to complete the mandatory training requirements in the relevant time frame amounts to a breach of the Council Members Code of Conduct.

Where training and development activities are a result of a Council resolution, Members are asked to provide a report to Council, for information only.

4.4. Payments/Reimbursements

The reimbursement of expenses for training purposes must be approved by the Council consistent with its Training and Development Plan or through a separate resolution endorsing attendance at the training program/activity.

Where approval has been granted by Council for attendance at a training program/activity a member may seek reimbursement of expenses in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act and Regulations.

4.5. Provision of Training and Development Programs

Where considered appropriate and beneficial, training and development programs will be held in the region in conjunction with adjoining and regional Councils of the Riverland (Riverland G3 Alliance) and Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association.

4.6. Annual Reporting

Council's Annual Report will include information regarding Council's Training Program, the nature of matters raised in the Training and Development Plan, attendances by Members and expenditure allocated and used for training of Council Members.

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