

Central Coast Council

Councillor Induction and Professional Development Policy



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Revision: 2

Policy No.: CCC092

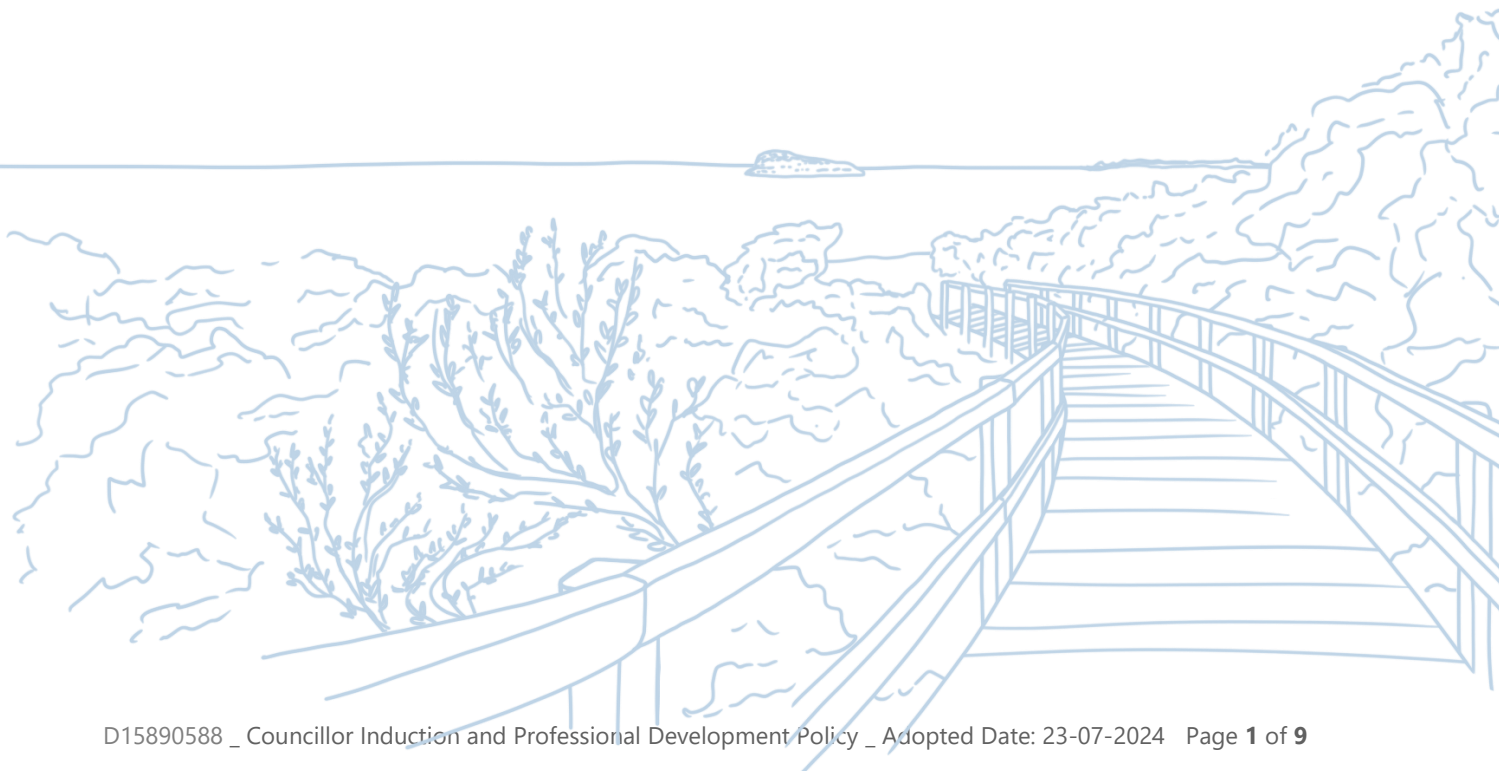


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1. Policy Objectives

- 1.1. The purpose of this Policy is to demonstrate Council's commitment to ensuring that the Mayor and Councillors have access to a robust induction program and ongoing professional development 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)*.
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2. Policy Scope

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all Councillors of Central Coast Council, including the Mayor.
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3. Policy Statement

- 3.1. Council is committed to ensuring the Mayor and Councillors have access to an induction program and ongoing professional development to assist them in performing their civic responsibilities.
 - 3.2. Council is committed to developing an induction and ongoing professional development program for the Mayor and Councillors to ensure they can fulfil their statutory roles and responsibilities. As part of this program, the Mayor and each Councillor will have a professional development plan that identifies specific gaps in their capabilities (i.e., their knowledge, skills and attributes) and identifies professional development activities to build these capabilities.
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4. Induction Program

- 4.1. 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.
- 4.2. The induction program will cover:
 - 4.2.1. An orientation to Council facilities and the local government area;
 - 4.2.2. An overview of the key issues and tasks for the new Council including Council's community strategic plan, delivery program, operational plan, resourcing strategy and community engagement plan;
 - 4.2.3. The legislation, rules, principles and political context under which councils operate;
 - 4.2.4. The roles and responsibilities of Councillors and the Mayor;
 - 4.2.5. Council's organisational structure, workforce management strategy and the roles and responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer and Council staff;

- 4.2.6. What Council does and how it operates, including an overview of integrated planning and reporting, land-use planning, natural resource management, financial management and asset management by Council;
- 4.2.7. Key Council policies and procedures Councillors must comply with including Council's Code of Conduct;
- 4.2.8. The role of Council meetings and how to participate effectively in them;
- 4.2.9. The support available to the Mayor and Councillors and how they can access more information or assistance; and
- 4.2.10. Information on the process for taking the oath of office and electing the Mayor at the first Council meeting (where applicable).

4.3. In the case of the Mayor, the program will also cover:

- 4.3.1. How to be an effective leader of the governing body and the Council;
- 4.3.2. The role of the Chair and how to chair Council meetings;
- 4.3.3. The Mayor's role in integrated planning and reporting;
- 4.3.4. The Mayor's role and responsibilities under the Code of Conduct;
- 4.3.5. The Mayor's role and responsibilities in relation to the Chief Executive Officer's employment;
- 4.3.6. The Mayor's role at regional and other representative bodies; and
- 4.3.7. The Mayor's civic and ceremonial role.

4.4. The Mayor and Councillors must have a working knowledge and understanding of these areas by the end of the induction program.

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

- 4.5.1. Identify how they would like to work together as a team and identify a common vision for the governing body;
- 4.5.2. Build relationships with each other based on trust and mutual respect that facilitate collaboration;
- 4.5.3. Contribute to a positive and ethical culture within the governing body;
- 4.5.4. Work towards consensus as members of the governing body for the benefit of the community;
- 4.5.5. Develop respectful negotiation skills and manage alternative views within the governing body without damaging relationships;
- 4.5.6. Understand what supports or undermines the effective functioning of the governing body;

- 4.5.7. Respect the diversity of skills and experiences on the governing body; and
 - 4.5.8. Communicate and uphold the decisions of Council in a respectful way, regardless of their personal positions.
 - 4.6.** Activities should also help the Mayor, as the leader of the governing body, to:
 - 4.6.1. Act as a stabilising influence and show leadership;
 - 4.6.2. Promote a culture of integrity and accountability within Council and when representing Council in the community and elsewhere.
 - 4.7.** The Mayor and Councillors, including those re-elected to office, must attend all induction sessions.
 - 4.8.** 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.
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5. Ongoing Professional Development Program

- 5.1.** An individual ongoing professional development plan will be developed for the Mayor and each Councillor to address any gaps in the capabilities (i.e., the knowledge, skills and attributes) needed to effectively fulfil their role.
- 5.2.** Each professional development plan will span the Council's term, and identify professional development activities that the Mayor or Councillor will participate in.
- 5.3.** Professional development activities will be prioritised according to need and approved by the Chief Executive Officer where Council funds are required in accordance with Council's [Councillor and Expenses and Facilities Policy](#).
- 5.4.** The Mayor and Councillors are expected to complete all the activities included in their professional development plan.
- 5.5.** Professional development activities will, wherever possible, follow the 70/20/10 principle. The 70/20/10 principle requires that:
 - 5.5.1. 70% of learning activities are provided via learning and developing from experience, for example, on-the-job training, self-directed learning, developmental roles, problem solving, exposure and practice.
 - 5.5.2. 20% of learning activities are provided via learning and training through others, for example, personal or professional networks, coaching, mentoring, feedback, memberships and professional associations.
 - 5.5.3. 10% of learning activities are provided via learning and developing through structured programs, for example, training courses, external or in-house workshops, seminars, webinars and other e-learning and

briefing sessions conducted by Council, external training providers or industry bodies.

- 5.6. The timing of professional development activities for the Mayor and Councillors will be designed in a way that does not overload Councillors with learning activities in the early part of Council's term. The timing will reflect what knowledge and skills Councillors and the Mayor need at various points in Council's term to undertake their roles.
 - 5.7. The Mayor and Councillors will be provided with as much notice as possible for upcoming induction and professional development activities.
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6. Budget

- 6.1. An annual budget allocation will be provided to support the induction and professional development activities undertaken by the Mayor and Councillors as outlined in the [Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy](#). Expenditure will be monitored and reported quarterly.
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7. Approval of Training and/or Expenses

- 7.1. Professional development activities that require Council funds are to be approved by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with Council's [Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy](#).
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8. Evaluation

- 8.1. 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 capabilities required to fulfil their civic roles.
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9. Responsibilities

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 9.1. The Mayor and each Councillor are responsible for making themselves available to attend any development activities identified in the professional development plan.
- 9.2. 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.
- 9.3. The Director Corporate Services or their delegate is responsible for planning, scheduling and facilitating induction and professional development activities for the Mayor and Councillors in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer.

- 9.4. The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for Council’s induction and professional development program.

Reporting

- 9.5. The Chief Executive Officer will publicly report each year in Council’s annual report and other sources:

9.5.1. The name of the Mayor and each individual Councillor that completed Council’s induction program (where an induction program has been delivered during the relevant year).

9.5.2. The name of the Mayor and each Councillor who participated in any ongoing professional development program during the year.

9.5.3. The number of training and other activities provided to the Mayor and Councillors during the year as part of a professional development program.

9.5.4. The total cost of induction and professional development activities and any other training provided to the Mayor and Councillors during the relevant year.

Records management

- 9.6. Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this protocol in accordance with Council’s [Information and Records Management Policy](#).

10. Policy Definitions

Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> (NSW).
Council	means Central Coast Council.
Professional Development	means the advancement of skills and expertise to succeed in the role of a Councillor through continued education.

11. Policy Administration

Business Group	Corporate Services
Responsible Officer	Director Corporate Services
Associated Procedure (if any, reference document(s) number(s))	
Policy Review Date	Four years from date of adoption unless legislated otherwise
File Number / Document Number	D15890588
Relevant Legislation (reference specific sections)	This Policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local Government Act 1993
Link to Community Strategic Plan	Theme 4: Responsible Goal G: Good governance and great partnerships R-G4: Serve the community by providing great customer experience, value for money and quality services.
Related Policies / Protocols / Procedures / Documents (reference document numbers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information and Records Management Policy ▪ Code of Conduct ▪ Procedures for the Administration of the Code of Conduct ▪ Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy ▪ Delegations Register

12. Policy Authorisations

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
TBA	Authorised to procure training and development activities for Councillors in accordance with this Policy.	Director Corporate Services Unit Manager Governance Risk and Legal Section Manager Governance Section Manager Councillor and Democratic Services Team Leader Civic Support

13. Policy History

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	8 July 2019 Minute No. 619/19	To assist Councillors in meeting their obligations to acquire and maintain skills necessary to perform the role of a Councillor and to support them in performing their civic duties, a <i>Councillor Professional Development Policy</i> has been developed.
2	23 July 2024 Minute No. 275/24	Periodic review, and update to new policy template.