

## COUNCIL 12. 4. 2012

### 18. COUNCILLOR TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT

<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager Regulation & Democracy Services, DDI 941-8462
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Democracy Services Manager
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#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report seeks Council endorsement of a proposed addition to the Schedule of Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Rules; specifically to provide the ability to carry over unspent funds on a case by case basis from councillor discretionary training/development budgets in any one financial year for the next twelve month period.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Each year the Remuneration Authority approves for each local authority a schedule of elected member allowances and expenses. This schedule includes provisions for elected member travel and attendance at conferences, courses and seminars.
3. Under this schedule, Councillors currently are provided with a discretionary allocation of \$4,000 per annum from travel and conference budgets, to be used for conferences, courses, seminars and training that they choose to attend. Any event chosen must contribute to a Councillor's ability to carry out Council business. Expenditure for this purpose is required to have prior approval by the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor) and the Chief Executive. The relevant excerpt from the schedule is attached as **Attachment 1**.
4. Funding for these discretionary allocations of \$4,000 has consistently not been fully utilised. Councillors are not, however, able to automatically carry over any unspent funds from one year to the next. This would be advantageous if there is an opportunity to attend a course that is directly relevant to core governance competencies, but exceeds \$4,000. While such courses are rare, one example is the Institute of Directors' Director Development Programme, which is a course that covers the role, duties, skills and knowledge required for competent directorship in New Zealand. The costs of this week long residential course are approximately \$8,000. That could be funded from a Councillor's discretionary allocation over a two year period, but a carry-over of the unspent allocation from one year would need to occur.
5. To provide greater flexibility for such situations, it is proposed that the Council adopt a position that any unspent funds from Councillor discretionary training/development budgets in any one financial year be carried over for the next twelve month period, provided that:
  - (a) The purpose is for any one training course that is directly relevant to core governance competencies/skills and that exceeds \$4,000
  - (b) Approval for the course is granted by both the Mayor (or the Deputy Mayor) and the Chief Executive
  - (c) Approval for the carry-over of funds for attendance at such courses is given by the Mayor (or the Deputy Mayor) and the Chief Executive.
6. This position can be formalised through its inclusion in the Schedule of Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Rules.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

##### **Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2009-19 LTCCP budgets?**

7. Yes. In the past 3 years the total budget of \$52,000 Councillor discretionary allocation of \$4,000 for training has not been fully utilised: 28 per cent spent in 2008/09, 23 per cent in 2009/10, 7 per cent in 2010/11 (note: the earthquakes had an impact on level of training undertaken), and 9 per cent in the year to date 2010/11.

**18 Cont'd**

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?**

8. Yes, there are none.

**ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS**

**Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2009-19 LTCCP?**

9. The recommendations are relevant to the Democracy and Governance group of activities, specifically City Governance and Decision-making.

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES**

**Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?**

10. Not applicable.

**CONSULTATION FULFILMENT**

11. The Remuneration Authority has been informally approached to gauge its views, and staff have been advised that it is comfortable with the proposed approach. The wording of the Council's Schedule of Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Rules will be amended prior to being submitted to the Authority for approval for the 2012/13 year, along with any other proposed changes at that time.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council approve the insertion of the following wording in the Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Rules in relation to the Councillor discretionary allocation of \$4,000 for training:

5. Any unspent funds from Councillor discretionary training/development budgets in any one financial year may be carried over for the next twelve month period, provided that:
- (a) The purpose is for any one training course that is directly relevant to core governance competencies/skills and that exceeds \$4,000
  - (b) Approval for the course is granted by both the Mayor (or the Deputy Mayor) and the Chief Executive
  - (c) Approval for the carry-over of funds for attendance at such courses is given by the Mayor (or the Deputy Mayor) and the Chief Executive.

**Excerpt from Schedule of Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Rules  
(1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012)**

**Councillors**

1. All Councillors are provided with a discretionary allocation of \$4,000 per annum from the relevant travel and conference budgets, to be used for conferences, courses, seminars and training that they choose to attend.
  - (a) This amount is non-transferable and is to cover course fees, travel, accommodation and meals.
  - (b) The conference, course, seminar or training event selected must contribute to the Councillor's ability to carry out Council business.
  - (c) Councillors wishing to utilise this discretionary funding for attendance at such events are required to obtain the prior written confirmation from both the Mayor (or the Deputy Mayor) and the Chief Executive that the conditions set out above have been met.
2. In the case of Councillors who are Chairs of Council Committees and wish to attend conferences, courses, seminars and training that is directly relevant to the business of their Committees:
  - (a) such expenditure does not fall within the discretionary funding referred to in paragraph 1 above, and costs of up to \$2,000 for such attendance will be met from general travel budgets.
  - (b) attendance at such events will require the prior written approval from both the Mayor (or the Deputy Mayor) and the Chief Executive.
3. The prior approval of the Council is required for:
  - (a) Any fact finding travel by Councillors outside Christchurch for the purpose of inspecting or evaluating initiatives, facilities or operations which may be of benefit to Christchurch City.
  - (b) Any travel by Councillors as part of a Sister City Delegation, where the cost of such travel is not wholly covered by the host city.
4. The exception to Council approval being required for 3(a) and (b) above is where all of the costs of travel are being met privately or by another party.