# Council Policy NB-P-07
# Councillor Induction and Professional Development Policy

## Policy Statement

Northern Beaches 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 (ie their knowledge, skills and attributes) and identify professional development activities to build these capabilities.

## Principles

### Induction program

Northern Beaches 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 at a minimum:

- an orientation to Council facilities and the local government area

- 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

- the legislation, rules, principles and political context under which Councils operate

- the roles and responsibilities of Councillors and the Mayor

- Council's organisational structure, workforce management strategy and the roles and responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer and Council staff

- 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

- key Council policies and procedures Councillors must comply with including the code of conduct

- 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, and

- information on the process for taking the oath of office and electing the Mayor at the first council meeting (where applicable).

- In the case of the Mayor, the program will also cover:

  - how to be an effective leader of the governing body and the Council

  - the role of the Chair and how to chair Council meetings

  - the Mayor's role in integrated planning and reporting

  - the Mayor's role and responsibilities under the code of conduct

  - the Mayor's role and responsibilities in relation to the Chief Executive Officer's employment

➢ the Mayor's role at regional and other representative bodies, and

➢ the Mayor's civic and ceremonial role.

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 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. Activities will aim to ensure Mayors and Councillors:

- identify how they would like to work together as a team and identify a common vision for the governing body

- build relationships with each other based on trust and mutual respect that facilitate collaboration

- contribute to a positive and ethical culture within the governing body

- work towards consensus as members of the governing body for the benefit of the community

- develop respectful negotiation skills and manage alternative views within the governing body without damaging relationships

- understand what supports or undermines the effective functioning of the governing body

- 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, including those re-elected to office, must attend all induction sessions.

Northern Beaches 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.

Ongoing professional development program

An individual ongoing professional development plan will be developed for the Mayor and each Councillor to address any gaps in the capabilities (ie the knowledge, skills and attributes) needed to effectively fulfil their role.

Each professional development plan will span the Council's term, and identify professional development activities that the Mayor or Councillor will participate in. 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 Expenses and Facilities policy. The Mayor and Councillors are expected to complete all the activities included in their professional development plan.

Professional development activities will, wherever possible, follow the 70/20/10 principle. The 70/20/10 principle requires that:

- 70% of learning activities are provided via learning and developing from experience – for example, on-the-job training, selfdirected learning, developmental roles, problem solving, exposure and practice

- 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, and

- 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 the Council, external training providers or industry bodies.

The timing of professional development activities for the Mayor and Councillors will be designed in such a way so as to 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.

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

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.

Executive Manager Governance and Risk is responsible for planning, scheduling and facilitating induction and professional development activities for the Mayor and Councillors in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for Northern Beaches Council's induction and professional development program.

Budget

An annual budget allocation will be provided to support the induction and professional development activities undertaken by the Mayor and Councillors. Expenditure will be monitored and reported quarterly.

Approval of training and/ or expenses

Professional development activities that require Council funds are to be approved by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with Northern Beaches Council's Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy

Evaluation

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.

Reporting

The Chief Executive Officer of Northern Beaches Council will publicly report each year in Council's annual report:

- 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)

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

- the number of training and other activities provided to the Mayor and Councillors during the year as part of a professional development program, and

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

## Scope and application

This policy applies to all councillors of Northern Beaches Council, including the Mayor.

## References and related documents

- Policy Framework

- Local Government Act 1993

- The Office of Local Government's Councillor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines 2018

- Appendices:

  ➢ Local Government Capability Framework and self-assessment template

  ➢ Template – individual professional development plan

## Definitions

*Councillor:* a person elected or appointed to civic office as a member of the governing body of Council who is not suspended, including the Mayor

*Chief Executive Officer:* the person referred to in the Local Government Act 1993 as the general manager of a council and, in the case of the Northern Beaches Council, means the person referred to as the Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Beaches Council and includes their delegate or authorised representative

## Community Strategic Plan

This Council policy relates to the Community Strategic Plan Outcome of:

- Good governance - Goal 19 Our Council is transparent and trusted to make decisions that reflect the values of the community.

## Responsible Officer

Executive Manager Governance and Risk

## Review Date

November 2027

## Revision History

| Revision | Date | Status | TRIM Ref |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 19 Dec 2019 | Council Adopted | 2019/504847 |
| 2 | 8 Nov 2023 | Policy Review | 2019/504847 |

| Policy number | Date | Detail | |
|---|---|---|---|
| NB-P-07 | 19 December 2023 | Adopted by Council | 2019/504847 |

**Appendix 1: Local Government Capability Framework and Self-assessment Form**

| Instructions: |
|---|
| 1.      Give yourself a rating against each attribute. |
| 2.      Add up your self-assessment scores to identify areas of strength and improvement. |
| 3.      Consider targeting professional development towards those areas identified for improvement. |
| 4.      Review and complete your Professional Development Plan. |
| 5.      Purple text is applicable to the Mayor only |

| Capability Assessment: |
|---|
| **Rating scale:** |
| 5 Excellent, 4 Good, 3 Average, 2 Needs Improvement, 1 Unsatisfactory |

| Reference: |
|---|
| Local Government Capability Framework |

| Capabilities | Rating |
|---|---|
| **1.    Personal attributes** | |
| **1.1. Manage self** | **/25** |
| 1.1.1 Talks to the Mayor/Councillor, General Manager and other Councillors about own role and responsibilities and seeks feedback. | |
| 1.1.2 Pursues responsibilities with energy, drive and commitment. | |
| 1.1.3 Manages own time effectively, balancing demands in line with Council priorities. | |
| 1.1.4 Shows awareness of own strengths and areas for growth. | |
| 1.1.5 Looks for and takes opportunities to develop knowledge and skills as a Councillor. | |
| 1.1.6 Honest examines personal motivation and capability as mayor. | |
| 1.1.7 Reflects on and integrates feedback, showing a capacity and willingness to modify own behaviours. | |
| **1.2. Display Resilience and Adaptability** | **/30** |
| 1.2.1 Is flexible and willing to change their mind in light of new information. | |
| 1.2.2 Stays calm and objective in challenging situations. | |
| 1.2.3 Advocates constructively for an idea or position, even in the face of strong, contrary views. | |
| 1.2.4 Listens when challenged and seeks to understand criticisms before responding. | |
| 1.2.5 Stays positive and perseveres in the face of resistance or setbacks. | |
| 1.2.6 Accepts public feedback and responds in a thoughtful and considered way. | |
| 1.2.7 Reads situations quickly and shows leadership in times of crisis. | |

| Capabilities | Rating |
|---|---|
| 1.2.8 Acts as a stabilising influence in challenging and emotionally charged situations. | |
| **1.3. Act with Integrity** | **/30** |
| 1.3.1 Is open, honest and consistent in words and behaviour. | |
| 1.3.2 Tells the truth and admits to own mistakes. | |
| 1.3.3 Maintains confidentiality. | |
| 1.3.4 Takes steps to clarify ethical issues and seeks advice when unsure what to do. | |
| 1.3.5 Follows the Code of Conduct, legislation and policies applicable to Councillors/Mayors. | |
| 1.3.6 Speaks out against illegal and inappropriate behaviour and perceived conflicts of interest. | |
| 1.3.7 Helps councillors understand their obligations to comply with the codes of conduct, legislation and policies. | |
| 1.3.8 Identifies and discusses ethical issues with other councillors. | |
| 1.3.9 Promotes a culture of integrity within council and in dealings external to council. | |
| **1.4. Demonstrate Accountability** | **/20** |
| 1.4.1 Prepares appropriately for Council Meetings. | |
| 1.4.2 Acts in the public interest and observes the highest standards of personal conduct at all times. | |
| 1.4.3 Takes responsibility for fulfilling the role of Councillor/Mayor to the best of their ability. | |
| 1.4.4 Is transparent in actions and decision making, declaring potential conflicts. | |
| 1.4.5 Is transparent in actions and decision making, declaring potential conflicts. | |
| **2. Relationships** | |
| **2.1. Communicate and Engage** | **/30** |
| 2.1.1 Clearly communicates ideas and arguments. | |
| 2.1.2 Adjusts tone, pace and message for different audiences. | |
| 2.1.3 Listens when others are speaking and asks appropriate, respectful questions. | |
| 2.1.4 Shows sensitivity to cultural, religious and other individual differences when interacting with others. | |
| 2.1.5 Uses communication channels that are suitable for the diversity in the community. | |
| 2.1.6 Creates opportunities for people to engage with Council and contribute to public disclosure and debate. | |
| **2.2. Community and Customer Focus** | **/30** |
| 2.2.1 Keeps up to date on current issues affecting the community. | |
| 2.2.2 Shows pride in and talks positively about the community and region. | |
| 2.2.3 Commits time and energy to serving the community. | |
| 2.2.4 Works towards social, environmental and economic sustainability in the community/region. | |

| Capabilities | Rating |
|---|---|
| 2.2.5 Collects and uses broad community feedback to identify opportunities for improvement. | |
| 2.2.6 Builds effective relationships with a range of people who reflect the diversity in the community. | |
| **2.3. Work Collaboratively** | **/25** |
| 2.3.1 Shares information with other Councillors about community issues, stakeholders and activities. | |
| 2.3.2 Is respectful of Council staff and receptive to their advice. | |
| 2.3.3 Shows respect for the diversity of skills and experience on the governing body. | |
| 2.3.4 Initiates collaborative forums on issues facing the community. | |
| 2.3.5 Works together with stakeholder networks for the benefit of the community and region. | |
| 2.3.6 Encourages councillors to work collaboratively. | |
| 2.3.7 Builds a productive working relationship with the general manager and the governing body. | |
| 2.3.8 Supports positive relations between the general manager and the governing body. | |
| 2.3.9 Builds a partnership between council and external stakeholders that are of strategic value to council. | |
| 2.3.10 Facilitates and supports strategic collaboration with other councils to benefit the broader region. | |
| **2.4. Influence and Negotiate** | **/25** |
| 2.4.1 Uses understanding of political processes and networks to develop a negotiation strategy. | |
| 2.4.2 Listens to contrary points of view and endeavours to find common ground. | |
| 2.4.3 Influence others with a fair and considered approach and sound arguments. | |
| 2.4.4 Avoids starting from an entrenched position and is willing to give and take. | |
| 2.4.5 Wins concessions without damaging relationships. | |
| 2.4.6 Establishes and maintains relationships outside council in order to find common ground and further council's position. | |
| 2.4.7 Anticipates points of contention and plans negotiations accordingly. | |
| 2.4.8 Steers discussion and debate towards achieving an acceptable outcome. | |
| **3. Results** | |
| **3.1. Plan and Prioritise** | **/25** |
| 3.1.1 Identifies and pursues critical priorities and sets aside less critical activities. | |
| 3.1.2 Contributes to setting clear performance goals that include quality measures. | |
| 3.1.3 Considers Council performance reports and rollover of projects when making new plans. | |
| 3.1.4 Considers the impact of changes, eg. Government policy/economic conditions and budgets, on strategic plans. | |

| Capabilities | Rating |
|---|---|
| 3.1.5 Incorporates sound risk management principles into strategic planning. | |
| 3.1.6 Works with the general manager to translate strategic direction into a delivery program and operational plan | |
| 3.1.7 Monitors progress against the delivery program and operational plan | |
| 3.1.8 Considers council's current and potential future role within the community and region when planning | |
| **3.2. Think and Solve Problems** | **/20** |
| 3.2.1 Gathers and investigates information from a variety of sources. | |
| 3.2.2 Asks questions to get to the heart of the issue and define the problem clearly. | |
| 3.2.3 Considers the broader context and long-term impacts of policy options. | |
| 3.2.4.   Works with others to assess options and identify appropriate solutions. | |
| **3.3. Create and Innovate** | **/20** |
| 3.3.1 Thinks about issues and opportunities from different viewpoints. | |
| 3.3.2 Looks for non-obvious solutions. | |
| 3.3.3 Encourages independent thinking and new ideas from others. | |
| 3.3.4 Explores innovative solutions with long-standing community wide impact. | |
| **3.4. Deliver Results** | **/15** |
| 3.4.1 Monitors and provides advice on the delivery of customer/community focused services. | |
| 3.4.2 Instigates and champions initiatives to deliver community outcomes. | |
| 3.4.3 Identifies and addresses potential risks to the achievement of Council goals. | |
| 3.4.4 Engages with senior staff about strategies to improve council performance | |
| **4.    Resources** | |
| **4.1. Finance** | **/30** |
| 4.1.1 Uses basic financial terminology appropriately. | |
| 4.1.2 Makes informed contributions to debate about the allocation of financial resources. | |
| 4.1.3 Demonstrates respect for public funds and the obligation to manage Council resources responsibly. | |
| 4.1.4 Is aware of financial risks and strategies to manage and minimize these. | |
| 4.1.5 Is able to discuss implications of Council's long term financial plan, audited financial statements and budget reviews. | |
| 4.1.6 Identifies and supports opportunities to generate revenue and attract investment. | |
| 4.1.7 Promotes the role of sound financial management and its impact on council effectiveness | |
| **4.2. Assets and Tools** | **/25** |

| Capabilities | Rating |
|---|---|
| 4.2.1 Engages in strategic planning to ensure the organisation's assets support delivery of the strategic plan. | |
| 4.2.2 Makes informed contributions to debate about the allocation of assets to community priorities. | |
| 4.2.3 Supports asset risk minimization strategies, plans and outcomes for Council. | |
| 4.2.4 Promotes the role of councils as custodians of community assets. | |
| 4.2.5 Ensures asset management decisions consider long term financial sustainability. | |
| 4.2.6 Promotes the role of sound asset management and its impact on long term financial sustainability | |
| **4.3. Technology and Information** | **/10** |
| 4.3.1 Uses a range of technologies to communicate and engage with the community. | |
| 4.3.2 Supports the introduction of new technologies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council. | |
| **4.4. Procurement and Contracts** | **/10** |
| 4.4.1 Exercises commercial acumen in reviewing and approving Council contracts and tenders. | |
| 4.4.2 Makes decisions on Council tenders according to value for money, probity and community benefits. | |
| **5.    Civic Leadership** | |
| **5.1. Represent Communities** | **/20** |
| 5.1.1 Makes themselves available to discuss issues and Council activities with members of the community. | |
| 5.1.2 Seeks to understand the range of views on complex issues in the community. | |
| 5.1.3 Raises issues that are important to constituents with Council. | |
| 5.1.4 Treats all people in the community impartially and champions their right to be heard. | |
| 5.1.5 Uses a variety of approaches to gather views from a range of individuals and organisations | |
| 5.1.6 Advocates for local interests in dealings with external stakeholders, including other sectors and governments | |
| **5.2. Inspire Direction and Purpose** | **/20** |
| 5.2.1 Demonstrates passion, enthusiasm and personal dedication to Council's vision for the community. | |
| 5.2.2 Champions the community strategic plan and communicates the way forward. | |
| 5.2.3 Encourages community involvement in Council planning processes. | |
| 5.2.4 Communicates the context and parameters surrounding Council strategies and plans. | |
| 5.2.5 Communicates purpose and plans using a variety of channels to reach many audiences | |
| 5.2.6 Regularly communicates progress against the community strategic plan | |
| **5.3. Govern Responsibly** | **/25** |

| Capabilities | Rating |
|---|---|
| 5.3.1 Contributes constructively to debate in Council. | |
| 5.3.2 Works towards consensus as a member of the governing body. | |
| 5.3.3 Contributes to a positive and ethical culture within the governing body. | |
| 5.3.4 Participates responsibly in exercising Council's employer functions in relation to the General Manager. | |
| 5.3.5 Acts in a way that preserves the health and safety of people in the Council workplace. | |
| 5.3.6 Leads constructive council meetings with a view to reaching a consensus. | |
| 5.3.7 Cultivates a positive and ethical culture within the governing body | |
| 5.3.8 Works with general manager to ensure legal and regulatory frameworks are applied consistently by council. | |
| 5.3.9 Sets clear performance standards for the general manager and monitors progress | |
| 5.3.10 Regularly discusses performance with the general manager and addresses performance issues early | |
| **5.4. Make Quality Decisions** | **/30** |
| 5.4.1 Makes considered decisions on merit in the public interest. | |
| 5.4.2 Considers information about the context and regulatory environment before making decisions. | |
| 5.4.3 Considers financial and budget implications, including value for money, in making decisions. | |
| 5.4.4 Explains Council decision making process to constituents. | |
| 5.4.5 Communicates the decisions of Council in a respectful way, even if own position was not adopted. | |
| 5.4.6 Assists the community to understand Council decisions in context, considering priorities and constraints. | |
| 5.4.7 Ensures council works through issues, considering all relevant information, before making decisions | |
| 5.4.8 Ensures council considers financial and budget implications in making decisions | |

# Appendix 2: Individual Professional Development Plan Template

| Name: | Position: |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| **Period of Development Plan:** | |
|  | |

| Add a X into each capability area that is relevant | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Development activities already undertaken** | | | | |
| **1.1  70 percent on the job learning** | | | | |

| Council Meetings | Capability area | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **Personal Attributes** | **Relation-ships** | **Results** | **Resources** | **Civic Leadership** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Councillor Briefings | Capability area | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **Personal Attributes** | **Relation-ships** | **Results** | **Resources** | **Civic Leadership** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

| Committee / working group participation | Capability area | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **Personal Attributes** | **Relation-ships** | **Results** | **Resources** | **Civic Leadership** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

| Ward meetings | | Capability area | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Personal Attributes** | **Relation-ships** | **Results** | **Resources** | **Civic Leadership** |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
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| Civic events | **Date** | Capability area | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Personal Attributes** | **Relation-ships** | **Results** | **Resources** | **Civic Leadership** |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

## 1.2   20 percent learning and development through others

| Conferences and networking | **Date** | Capability area | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Personal Attributes** | **Relation-ships** | **Results** | **Resources** | **Civic Leadership** |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

## 1.3   10 percent learning activities

| Councillor induction program | **Date** | Capability area | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Personal Attributes** | **Relation-ships** | **Results** | **Resources** | **Civic Leadership** |
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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |

| 2. Individual Development Plan: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Actions** | **Cost** | **Target Date** | **Priority** | **Date completed** |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |