

Councillor Information Seminar Program

3.5 HOURS

Pre-start	Registration
30 mins	Introduction
	<p>After initial protocols, this session highlights the importance of a councillor's role in a contemporary context, the elements of a successful council and the role of the Department of Local Government in supporting high performance in the local government sector. It outlines the purpose of the seminar in providing the information and tools to help councillors perform well in an increasingly important and complex role.</p>
55 mins	Roles, Responsibilities and Relationships: the new 3 'Rs'
	<p>This session includes a brief overview of the system and legislative framework within which councillors operate. It discusses a councillor's roles and responsibilities as well as those of others within the local government sector, including the Department and the Local Government and Shires Associations. It examines key relationships and processes to ensure these are managed effectively. Also discussed is effective decision making and the key questions councillors should ask themselves to assess whether sufficient information is available to them to make decisions in an appropriate and informed way. The session includes two interactive exercises and discussion/question time.</p>
15 mins	Tea/Coffee Break <i>(here or in middle of next session)</i>
55 mins	Acting Ethically: applying the Code of Conduct
	<p>This session includes a discussion of the key mechanisms governing the conduct of council officials. It outlines the key principles underlying the Model Code of Conduct, their interpretation and application. It equips councillors with a means of assessing the ethical implications of actions and decisions and where to seek advice when uncertain. It provides a number of practical examples and case studies on relevant issues, with a particular focus on conflicts of interest, pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. The session includes two interactive exercises and discussion/question time.</p>
40 mins	Making the Most of Meetings
	<p>This session discusses the purpose of council meetings and how to adequately prepare for them. It outlines the legislative framework for meetings and highlights important elements of the Department's Meetings Practice Note. It runs through the types of meetings and some important rules to follow to ensure meetings are conducted fairly and appropriately to ensure ethical, sound and effective decision-making. The session includes one interactive exercise and discussion/question time.</p>
15 mins	Supporting Councillors and Conclusion
	<p>This session gives a brief overview of the elements of the Councillor Development Strategy and other resources to support councillors in the role, including through councillor expenses and facilities policies. It discusses how councils may work with councillors to identify and implement professional development programs to suit local needs and circumstances. It provides an opportunity for any final questions before the seminar is concluded.</p>

