

## Question on Notice

No. 809

Asked on 17 August 2022

**MR D PURDIE** asked the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure (HON S MILES) –

QUESTION:

Will the Deputy Premier outline specifically what systems and/or procedures are in place within the Department of Local Government to provide advice to Mayors and Councillors around conflicts of interest?

ANSWER:

Both the *Local Government Act 2009* and the mandatory Model Meeting Procedures provide detail on how conflicts of interests are managed in council meetings. Whilst conflicts of interest are defined in legislation, it is acknowledged that in practice Councillors will, and do, need assistance in both identifying what is a conflict of interest and in determining how any conflicts should be handled.

Officers from the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning provide regular training to local governments. During 2021-22, the department carried out “refresher” training sessions for local governments. These sessions focus on the key areas of integrity and conflicts of interest and are sessions which are individually tailored to meet the needs of each local government. They are an opportunity for councillors to ask departmental staff specific questions around the identification and management of conflicts of interest. During 2021-22, there were 19 workshops attended by 204 Councillors, Mayors and council employees. These workshops are continuing this financial year.

Resources are available on the department’s website at [Councillor information | State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning](#), and in the departmental Learning Management Systems online portals for Councillors, Mayors and council staff. The Local Government Learning Centre and LG Central both provide training courses, information and fact sheets to support appropriate decision-making in relation to conflicts of interest. LG Central has recently been launched by the department, with the intent being that it provides a single point for Councillors and council staff to access training tools.

The department also appoints regional advisors to each local government to assist Councillors and council staff to work through the complexities of identifying and managing conflicts of interest. I encourage Councillors and council staff to contact these advisors with specific queries about conflicts of interest and they will be happy to provide verbal or written advice in response.