

Payment of Councillor Allowances, Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy

(Policy Number – L-GOVPOL001)
(Policy Type – Council)

1 Aim

The Payment of Councillor Allowances, Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy (this Policy) aims to ensure that Councillors are provided with adequate and reasonable reimbursement of expenses and the provision of facilities which enables them to carry out their civic responsibilities.

The primary purpose of this Policy is to set guidelines in respect of payment of expenses incurred by Councillors in carrying out their duties of office and to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993 (the Act)*.

2 Policy Statement

This Policy details the payment of Councillor allowances, expenses and the provision of facilities to ensure there is no misunderstanding or confusion in relation to claiming expenses associated with undertaking the role of Councillor.

This Policy also considers attendance at conferences, training and seminars which aim to assist Councillors in continuing their professional development in their roles as elected members.

3 Policy Detail

Purpose	Description
Councillor Allowances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In accordance with Regulation 42 of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulations 2015</i>, and Section 340A of the Act, Council will pay the annual allowance payable, monthly in arrears. Regulation 42 specifies the quantum of allowances payable to Councillors, Mayors and Deputy Mayors. Regulation 42 establishes an indexation process so that allowances are reviewed and adjusted if appropriate each year. <p>In accordance with Section 340A of the Act, an individual Councillor may determine not to receive all or part of the</p>

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	<p>prescribed allowance. Notification of such a decision is to be provided to the General Manager in writing, any such notification cannot be retrospective.</p>
Travelling Expenses	<p>Council will pay a kilometre reimbursement allowance in respect of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to and from the Councillors home, or to and from the Councillors place of work, where the travel is necessary to attend a formal Council meeting, Special Meeting or a scheduled Workshop session; • Travel to and from the Councillors home, or to and from the Councillors place of work, where the travel is necessary due to being appointed as a representative of the Council; • Travel undertaken by the Mayor while undertaking Council related business; • Travel upon authorised business of the Council, outside the Council area but within Tasmania; and • To and from any authorised seminar/conference. <p>Council will pay any kilometre claim for the use of a private vehicle at the rate prescribed by the Australian Taxation Office.</p> <p>A Councillor shall not claim kilometre reimbursement where the expense would otherwise have been incurred as a result of private travel and/or business.</p> <p>Councillors are encouraged to access a Council vehicle when travelling away from the municipal area. A reimbursement will not apply for travel, where alternative arrangements have been made by the Council, however the Councillor has determined to make their own travel arrangements.</p>
Telephone	<p>Council will provide a mobile phone for the use of the Mayor with all reasonable costs being met by the Council.</p> <p>A Councillor can submit a claim for reimbursement of telephone and internet costs directly associated with undertaking their role as a Councillor.</p>

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Care of Dependent	Should the need arise, Council will reimburse on presentation of receipts, the cost of reasonable care by a registered carer of any person for whom the Councillor is the nominated primary carer, and where care is required to allow the Councillor to attend to their duties of office.
Stationery and Office Supplies	Councillors will be provided with Council business cards.
Provision of Facilities and Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mayor will be provided with access to appropriate office facilities at the Council Office, including the provision of information technology and telephone services. Administrative support will also be provided to the Mayor as deemed appropriate. • All Councillors will be provided with a mobile device, (laptop/iPad), to enable communication such as email, and remote access to meetings and workshops where it has been deemed appropriate. The conditions of use of any provided IT equipment will be in accordance with the Council policy. • Council documents including agendas, minutes and workshop information will be provided via electronic means as the first preference. • A Council office, if necessary, will be available for Councillors to download Council documents using the Council's WiFi. <p>Any equipment provided by the Council remains the property of Council and is to be returned at the end of each term of office.</p>
Conferences and Seminars	<p>Conferences, training and seminars are to be relevant to the activities of Council and the training and professional development needs of the Councillors. Equity is to be considered between Councillors in relation to attendance at conferences, training and seminars.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will pay on behalf of Councillors all registration, accommodation and out-of-pocket expenses (where supported by receipts) in respect of attendance at any seminar or conference, directly related to the role of

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	<p>Councillor, inside Tasmania.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each year the Council will include a budget allowance for the attendance of Councillors at conferences and seminars. Any Councillor wishing to attend a conference, training or seminar within Tasmania is to seek the approval of the General Manager prior to any registration being made. No reasonable request will be refused providing there are budgeted funds available. • The Mayor shall be entitled to attend the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly each year as Council's representative. • A request from a Councillor to attend an interstate or international conference or seminar will require formal approval of the Council. In circumstances where approval is granted, Councillors are to provide a written report to the Council on their return from the event.
Meals	<p>When appropriate, Council will provide meals for Councillors attending meetings.</p> <p>From time to time the Council may conduct formal and/or informal civic receptions/functions/dinners. At the Mayor's discretion the costs associated with the attendance of a Councillor at a civic reception/function/dinner and that of their partners will be met by the Council.</p>
Insurance	<p>Council will provide appropriate insurance coverage to Councillors, whilst travelling to and from meetings and carrying out duties on behalf of the Council, including but not limited to, public liability, professional indemnity and personal accident.</p>
Mayoral Expenses	<p>Council will meet the reasonable expenses of office incurred by the Mayor in carrying out the responsibility of that office.</p> <p>In the instance where the Mayor cannot represent Council, and in the event where the Mayor has determined Council requires representation, the Mayor may request the Deputy Mayor or another Councillor attend on Council's behalf, in which case the Council will reimburse the cost of attendance on the presentation of receipts.</p>

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Claim Procedure	<p>Claims for reimbursement of expenses incurred in accordance with this Policy shall be made to the General Manager no later than three (3) months after the expense has been incurred.</p> <p>All claims will be submitted in writing on the prescribed form and must include receipts where available relating to the claim.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the above, any expenses of a personal nature (e.g. entertainment, movie hire and mini bar), will not be eligible for reimbursement and shall remain the responsibility of the Councillor.</p> <p>Where in the opinion of the General Manager, a question arises as to whether a claim for a reimbursement of expenses, or any part, is ineligible under this Policy, or the claim is unreasonable or does not serve the interests of Council, the claim may be refused and reasons provided to the Councillor in writing. If the Councillor is not satisfied with the decision of the General Manager, they can request the claim and the General Manager's refusal be referred to the Council in Closed Session for review.</p>
Reporting	<p>To provide transparency and accountability, a report will be tabled at Council on a quarterly basis detailing the total payments in respect of each Councillor for each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor allowances • Travelling expenses • Telephone expenses • Care of dependents • Conferences and seminars • Other expenses

4 Associated Documents and References

4.1 Local Government Act 1993 Reference

This Policy is made in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015*, specifically:

- Section 25(5) of the Act which sets out that Schedule 5 has effect with respect to the office of Councillor.
- Schedule 5 requires Council to adopt a policy in respect of payment of expenses incurred by Councillors in carrying out the duties of office.
- A councillor is entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable expenses in accordance with the policy adopted in relation to:
 - (a) any prescribed expenses; and
 - (b) any other expenses the council determines appropriate.
- A council may decide to provide support services, facilities and equipment on loan to a councillor on any conditions it considers appropriate.

The items prescribed include:

- (a) telephone rental, telephone calls and use of the internet; and
- (b) travelling; and
- (c) care of any person who is dependent on the councillor and who requires the care while the councillor is carrying out his or her duties or functions as a councillor; and
- (d) stationery and office supplies.

4.2 Strategic Plan Reference

The Latrobe Council Strategic Plan provides the following Advocacy and Leadership objective:

To provide consistent, accountable, transparent and effective governance of the Council.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL: 13 June 2023 Minute: 12.1

EFFECTIVE DATE: 13 June 2023

ADMINISTERED BY: General Manager

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its relevance in terms of community needs and expectations and Council goals, targets, budget and statutory requirements.