

ELECTED MEMBER ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES

COUNCIL POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy sets out Elected Members allowances and expenses payable to provide necessary support to effectively carry out their roles in Council. This policy covers allowances, benefits, and support to be provided to Elected Members.

PRINCIPLES

Council is committed to providing payment or reimbursement of allowances and expenses to Elected Members to carry out their official duties in an accountable, transparent manner that ensures the proper use of Council resources in the most efficient and cost-effective way.

The policy should allow for Elected Members to receive adequate and reasonable expenses and facilities to enable them to carry out their civic duties as elected representatives of their local communities and encourage members of the community to seek election as an Elected Member.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

TERM	DEFINITION
Allowances	Allowances provided in compensation to Elected Members in consideration and recognition of the time and effort spent in their roles on Council.
Elected Member	Individuals elected to Council. For the purposes of this policy, Elected Member refers to Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor
Mayor	Is the Principal Member
Deputy Mayor	Is the Council appointed Deputy Principal Member
Ordinary Elected Member	An Elected Member other than the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or, during the relevant period, an acting Mayor.

TERM	DEFINITION
Determination	Most recent Determination of Allowances for Members of Local Government Councils
Inclusion, Diversity and Accessibility	While inclusion, diversity and accessibility are often referred to in the context of people with lived experience of disability, these principles apply to many different groups within society, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people; people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, including newly arrived refugees and migrants; people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+); older people, children and young people; people with a disability; people experiencing homelessness; people experiencing mental illness; people who are socio-economically disadvantaged and people experiencing gender inequality.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Elected Member Allowances

- 1.1. Allowances are paid in accordance with the Determination of the Northern Territory of Australia Remuneration Tribunal.
- 1.2. Allowances (apart from Professional Development Allowance) are to be paid from 1 July each year on a monthly basis in arrears by electronic funds transfer to the Elected Member's nominated account.
- 1.3. Where an Elected Member is acting as Mayor in the absence of the Mayor the acting Mayor will be paid 100% of the Mayoral Allowance for that period.

2. Extra Meeting and Activity Allowance

- 2.1. For Ordinary Elected Members and Deputy Mayor this allowance may be paid by attending the following types of unpaid meetings (alternate members are only paid if the appointed member is not in attendance):
 - (a) Council Committee Meetings;
 - (b) Special Meetings of Council;
 - (c) Special Meetings of Council Committees;
 - (d) Council Advisory/Networking Group Meetings;
 - (e) Council workshops or briefings;
 - (f) Meetings of external agencies or organisations to which Council has formally appointed an Elected Member to represent the Council; and
 - (g) Meetings of the Australian Local Government Association and Local Government Association of the Northern Territory where the Elected Member is a delegate of the Council.
- 2.2. For Ordinary Elected Members and Deputy Mayor this allowance may be paid by attending the following types of unpaid activities (alternate members are only paid if the appointed member is not in attendance):
 - (a) Attendance at any functions representing the Mayor on official Council duties: and


- (b) Attendance at functions as an invited representative of Council and with Council's approval and clause 4.2.3.
- 2.3. Council approval is provided for Deputy Mayor and Ordinary Elected Members to attend the following functions as invited representatives of the Council:
 - (a) Civic events or functions convened by Council
 - (b) Functions where Council has secured tickets.
 - (c) External events where invited due to elected position therefore representing the Council.
- 2.4. Claims forms are to be submitted no later than the first week of the following month. Late claims will be paid the following month.
- 2.5. Extra Meeting and Activity Allowance claims for the financial year must be submitted by the last payment run for the end of financial year.

3. Professional Development Allowance

- 3.1. May be applied for on Council's approved form and submitted to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for approval.
- 3.2. May be expended in relation to attending or undertaking the following types of conference and training:
 - (a) Course study or other training course relevant to perform as an Elected Member;
 - (b) A conference, seminar, symposium, expo or other similar event on a topic or function directly related to local government, Council services, Council vision or duties relevant to being an Elected Member; or
 - (c) Training, mediation or counselling recommended or ordered as part of a decision relating to a Code of Conduct complaint.
- 3.8. Access to reimbursement is subject to:
 - (a) Being an Elected Member at the time when a claim for reimbursement is made; and
 - (b) Any changes in the maximum amount of professional development allowance available in the future financial year(s).

4. Elected Member Travel

- 4.1. Air travel is to be by reasonable means available, taking into consideration flight times, flight duration and dates available and shall not include business or first class. If air travel is required, it will be booked and paid by the Council.
- 4.2. Accommodation is to be by reasonable means available and will be booked and paid by the Council.
- 4.3. An Elected Member required to travel for Council business by Council resolution, is entitled to payment or reimbursement for reasonable expenses for necessary travel and accommodation.
- 4.4. Council will pay in advance any registration fees, accommodation deposits and airline tickets for approved Elected Member travel. Where this is not possible, a reimbursement equivalent to the fees or expenses will be paid subject to the provision of receipts.
- 4.5. Should car hire be required, any traffic infringement notices and fines are the individual responsibility of the driver of the vehicle.

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- 4.6. Elected Members may be accompanied by a spouse or partner subject to Council not incurring any additional expense.
 - 4.7. Meals and incidentals are to be in accordance with the ATO taxation determination. Meal allowances are not to be paid when the meal is included in the cost of the meeting, conference, or other event.
 - 4.8. All non-essential additional expenses such as telephone calls, room service or mini-bar supplies are the responsibility of the Elected Member. In the instance where there are no other options, exceptions may be applied to the CEO for approval.
 - 4.9. Where travel arrangements need to be changed or cancelled, the Elected Member must inform the CEO in writing as soon as possible to minimise any financial loss to Council.
 - 4.10. The CEO is to report any non-attendance at the next Ordinary Council Meeting.

5. Information Technology Capital Entitlement

- 5.1. Over the term of the Council term, each Elected Member is entitled to claim an Information Technology Capital Entitlement up to the value of \$2000 excluding GST to purchase equipment to carry out official duties (e.g. laptop, computer).
- 5.2. Reimbursement will occur from Council once a paid tax invoice has been received.

6. Ticket Events Entitlement

- 6.1. Council will pay the costs of approved ticketed functions which relate to Council business for Elected Members.
- 6.2. Approved ticket events are those jointly approved by the Mayor and CEO or by Council resolution.

7. Carer Expenses Entitlement

- 7.1. Childcare and carer services can be claimed where the care is reasonably required for an Elected Member to perform their role.
- 7.2. Elected Members who are the principal carer of a child or other elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family member will be entitled to reimbursement of carer's actual expenses or a maximum of \$30 per hour whichever is the lesser for attendance at official business.
- 7.3. Childcare expenses may be claimed for children up to and including the age of 14 years.
- 7.4. In the event of caring for an adult person, councillors will need to provide suitable evidence to the CEO that reimbursement is applicable. This may take the form of advice from a medical practitioner.
- 7.5. All claims for carers and childcare must be submitted on the appropriate reimbursement claim form with sufficient evidence from the provider or a statutory declaration from the Elected Member.
- 7.6. Reimbursement will occur on completion of relevant form and will not occur where carer is a relative or a business that the Elected member has some form of interest.

8. Inclusion, Diversity and Accessibility

- 8.1. The Council will meet reasonable additional expenses to assist an Elected Member with to perform their duties as an Elected Member in accordance with legislation, where the Elected Member requires assistance as it relates to Inclusion, Diversity and Accessibility principles and matters.

9. Council Resources

- 9.1. The following will be provided to Elected Members to assist in carrying out official duties:
- (a) A Council email address with calendar facility. An Elected Member's calendar shall be available to other Elected Members and staff in order to facilitate the smooth running of Council operations and as a record of their activities relating to undertaking official duties;
 - (b) Name badge;
 - (c) Electronic Business Cards and/or Business Cards;
 - (d) An Elected Members Portal with dedicated access to Council business papers;
 - (e) Through the CEO, Council staff will provide basic IT support including access to relevant systems and email accounts but will not be responsible for privately owned IT equipment;
 - (f) Council will provide postage for official correspondence through its internal mail services. Bulk mailing will not be provided;
 - (g) Elected Members wishing to use Council resources, such for photocopying and printing, must arrange for the use of these resources through the CEO. Council resources may not be used for personal documents or for circulars, publications or election material;
 - (h) Elected members shall not use Council facilities, resources (including staff) for personal reasons including furtherance of their political career.
 - (i) A framed Certificate of Service will be presented in Council meeting for Elected Members achieving 10 years of service, with subsequent certificates presented at five yearly intervals.

10. Mayoral Benefits

- 10.12. The Mayor is entitled to the following additional benefits to assist them in undertaking official duties:
- (a) Provision and maintenance of Mayoral Robes and Chain of Office;
 - (b) Mobile phone and suitable telecommunication plan;
 - (c) An office;
 - (d) Administrative assistance for official use;
 - (e) Provision and use of official Mayoral stationery; and
 - (f) Reimbursement for costs associated with attendance and participation at official functions where Council is represented.
- 10.13. The Mayor is entitled to the provision of a motor vehicle by Council and the provision of such motor vehicle will be provided at the discretion of the Mayor for the full term of the Council by either:



- 10.14. Use of a dedicated fully maintained vehicle (including fuel) provide by Council for official and private use within the Northern Territory. The type of vehicle will be equivalent to City of Palmerston executive fleet and approved by the CEO: or
- 10.15. A Vehicle Allowance as specified by the Determination.

11. Insurance

- 11.1. Elected Members will receive the benefit of insurance cover subject to the wording, limits, excesses and terms and conditions specified in Council's insurance policies for the following:
- (a) Personal Accident;
 - (b) Professional Indemnity and Public Liability;
 - (c) Motor Vehicle (limited); and
 - (d) Councillors and Officers Liability.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Community Plan
- Code of Conduct for Elected Members and Committee Members
- Council Policy Breach of Code of Conduct by Elected Member

REFERENCES AND RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 2019* (NT).
- Determination of Allowance for Members of Local Council, Northern Territory Of Australia Remuneration Tribunal.

POLICY DETAILS

OWNER	CEO	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager Finance and Governance
APPROVAL DATE	20 June 2023	NEXT REVIEW DUE	20 June 2027
RECORDS NUMBER	544031	COUNCIL DECISION	10/886