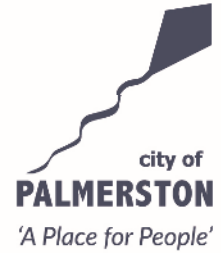


ELECTED MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT EVENTS, FORUMS AND CONFERENCES



COUNCIL POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, consistent and cost-conscious framework for Elected Members regarding attending events, forums and conferences that are funded or subsidised by Council.

PRINCIPLES

Council recognises that events, forums and conferences provide an opportunity for Elected Members to represent Council and their community, engage with stakeholders and undertake professional development.

To promote transparency and accountability in the use of Council resources, this policy ensures that expenditure on events, forums and conference is appropriate, justifiable and delivers a clear benefit to Council and the community.

This policy also supports broad participation by Elected Members in local community and stakeholder events at minimal cost to Council, and equitable decision-making regarding attendance at significant events requiring travel, accommodation or substantial expenditure.

DEFINITIONS

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

TERM	DEFINITION
Elected Member	Individuals elected to Council. For the purposes of this policy, Elected Member refers to Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.
Significant event	Events, forums and conferences that include those held outside the Palmerston area and surrounds (for example in Alice Springs or interstate); or require travel, accommodation and other significant expenses; or attract substantial registration or conference fees.
Local event	Occurs within the local Palmerston or surrounding area, has a ticket cost of \$150 or less or are free to attend, and does not require travel or accommodation.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Objectives

- 1.1. This policy aims to:
 - 1.1.1. Ensure Council is appropriately represented at events, forums and conferences, particularly those held outside the Palmerston area or interstate.
 - 1.1.2. Ensure attendance delivers tangible benefit to Council and the community.
 - 1.1.3. Achieve cost savings by limiting Council-funded attendance at higher-cost events to a small, representative group of Elected Members.
 - 1.1.4. Promote fairness and transparency through rotation of attendance at significant events over the Council term.
 - 1.1.5. Encourage Elected Members to prioritise use of their Professional Development or Extra Meeting allowances where appropriate.
- 1.2. Attendance at events, regardless of cost, remains subject to Council policies and appropriate use of funds, transparency and reporting requirements.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all Elected Members of Council and attendance at events, forums, conferences and similar functions where:
 - 2.1.1. Council is requested to fund or subsidise attendance; or
 - 2.1.2. Council is required to approve attendance due to cost, travel or representation considerations.
- 2.2. This policy does not restrict Elected Members attending events, forums or conferences at their own cost.

3. Local events

- 3.1. Elected Members are encouraged to participate in local events that support community engagement, collaboration and relationships with local organisations.
- 3.2. Council will seek to support broad participation at these events within available budget.
- 3.3. Council-appointed delegates to external committees and organisations are approved to attend conferences, forums, training sessions or similar events that are directly related to their appointed role, where the total cost to Council does not exceed \$150 per event.
 - 3.3.1. Elected Members are encouraged to utilise their Professional Development Allowance for attendance.

4. Significant events, forums and conferences

- 4.1. Attendance at significant events, forums and conferences must be approved by Council.
- 4.2. Attendance at significant events, forums and conferences that require travel and accommodation or attract substantial registration or conference fees will be limited to:
 - 4.2.1. the Mayor or a nominated representative if the Mayor is unable to attend
 - 4.2.2. up to two Councillors.
- 4.3. For significant events, Elected Member representation will consider:
 - 4.3.1. Previous attendance at similar events

- 4.3.2. A rotational basis over the 4-year Council term
- 4.3.3. Budget availability
- 4.3.4. Impact on the ability for Elected Members to attend other events.
- 4.4. Elected Members are encouraged to utilise their Professional Development Allowance to attend events, forums or conferences that can increase their knowledge and skillset in accordance with Council policies.

5. Attendance

- 5.1. If an Elected Member is unable to attend an event, forum or conference where a ticket has been purchased for them it may be offered to another Elected Member.
- 5.2. Other than non-attendance due to health reasons, a minimum of 24 hours' notice must be given for low-cost events or three business days for higher-cost events to allow for cancellation, reallocation of the ticket or recovery of costs where possible.

6. Attendance by partners or guests

- 6.1. Where an Elected Member is invited to attend an event in their official capacity, attendance by a partner, spouse or guest is only permitted where it does not incur any additional cost to Council.
- 6.2. If a partner, spouse or guest ticket is offered complimentary as part of the invitation, for example, as part of a conference partner program, the Elected Member may accept the invitation on that basis.
- 6.3. Any additional costs associated with a partner, spouse or guest attendance, including tickets, travel, accommodation, meals or other expenses, are to be met personally by the Elected Member.
- 6.4. Council will not arrange, reimburse or administer these costs.

7. Records management

- 7.1. Elected Member attendance at significant events, forums and conferences funded by Council will be recorded in a register.
- 7.2. The register will be reported on to Council when attendance at significant events, forums and conferences is being considered.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Policy
- Code of Conduct for Elected Members

REFERENCES AND RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 2019* (NT)

POLICY DETAILS

OWNER	Chief Executive Officer	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Governance
APPROVAL DATE	21 April 2026	NEXT REVIEW DUE	Term of 12 th Council
RECORDS NUMBER	682576	COUNCIL DECISION	11/0341