

1003 Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Mayor and Councillors

Statutory Policy



PURPOSE

- 1) The purpose of this policy is to set the parameters to authorise payment of reasonable expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by Councillors; and provide facilities including administrative support to assist Councillors when discharging their duties and responsibilities having regard to local circumstances.
- 2) This Policy applies to the Mayor and Councillors and is made pursuant to section 250 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

SCOPE

- 3) This policy provides for:
 - a) Payment of expenses reasonably incurred, or to be incurred, by Councillors in the course of discharging their civic duties as Councillors; and
 - b) The provision of facilities to Councillors for that purpose.
- 4) This policy does not provide for salaries or other forms of Councillor remuneration.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Official Council business	business conducted on behalf of, and/or approved by Council, where a Councillor is required to undertake certain tasks to satisfy legislative requirements or achieve business objectives for the Council. Official Council business should result in a benefit being achieved either for the local government and/or the local community.
Civic duties	means official Council business.
Councillors	for the purposes of this Policy, the reference to Councillor includes the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
Expenses	expenses relate to actual expenses deemed necessary and required for the business of Council. In addition, expenses are payments reasonably incurred, or to be incurred, in connection with Councillors discharging their duties. The expenses may be either reimbursed to Councillors or paid direct by Council. Expenses are not included as remuneration. Expenses specifically excludes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the purchase of alcohol (unless authorised at the sole discretion of the Mayor); and • any fines incurred while travelling in Council-owned vehicles or privately-owned vehicles when attending to Council business.
Facilities includes property)	(also real facilities provided to Councillors are the “tools of trade” required to enable them to perform their duties with relative ease and at a standard appropriate to fulfil the community expectation of their role. May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • office space and meeting rooms • smartphone of approved/supported platform • internet access • stationery • access to photocopiers • printers • publications • name badges • safety equipment for use on official business. e.g. safety helmet /boots/high visibility shirt/vest.

Term	Definition
Procedures	means the Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Mayor and Councillors Procedures.

POLICY

OBJECTIVES

- 5) The objective of this Policy is to:
- Ensure compliance with statutory requirements relating to the payment or reimbursement of legitimate business expenses;
 - Enable the provision of facilities and support for Councillors to carry out their civic duties and responsibilities as elected representatives of Council; and

PRINCIPLES

- 6) This policy aims to ensure accountability and transparency in the reimbursement of expenses incurred by the Mayor and Councillors. This policy is aligned to the principles underpinning the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act), that is:
- Transparent and effective processes and decision-making in the public interest;
 - Good governance of, and by, local government; and
 - Ethical and legal behaviour of Councillors and local government employees.

POLICY STATEMENT

- 7) Expenses reimbursed will be paid to Councillor's through administrative processes approved by Council's Chief Executive Officer subject to the terms and any limits outlined in Procedure Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Mayor and Councillors.
- 8) Council will pay or reimburse Councillor expenses subject to the terms and limits contained within the Procedure, for:
- Official Council business;
 - Professional development;
 - Travel costs, accommodation and meals (when travelling for official Council business);
 - Hospitality; and
 - Cab charge and public transport.
- 9) Council may provide Councillors with facilities and administrative support where appropriate, to carry out official Council business subject to the terms and limits contained within the Procedure.
- 10) Council may decide to cover costs incurred through any inquiry, investigation, hearing or legal proceeding into the conduct of a Councillor, or arising out of or in connection with, the Councillor's performance of their functions. Councillors may be covered under Council insurance policies while discharging civic duties. Specifically insurance cover may be provided for public liability, professional indemnity, Councillor's liability, personal accident, international and domestic travel insurance.
- 11) Spouses, partners and family members of Councillors are not entitled to reimbursement of expenses or to have access to facilities allocated to Councillors.
- 12) Failure to comply with this policy or misappropriation of expenses or facilities may be a breach of the *Local Government Act 2009*, *Councillor Code of Conduct* and/or an offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1899*.
- 13) Council may amend this policy at any time by Council resolution.

Approval and Authorisation

- 14) The payment or reimbursement of expenses and the provision of facilities for Councillors is subject to Council approval where necessary (e.g. for travel), and budget provisions.
- 15) Where practicable, Council officers will provide facilities and manage the payment of expenses (before the expense is incurred) on behalf of Councillors.
- 16) Any claims for reimbursement of expenses are to be endorsed by the Mayor before seeking approval from the CEO (or delegate).

Reporting

- 17) Council's Annual Report must contain:
 - a) A copy of the resolutions made during the financial year in relation to adoption of an expenses reimbursement policy (s.185(a) *Local Government Regulation 2012*);
 - b) The expenses incurred by, and the facilities provided to, each Councillor during the financial year under this policy (s.186(1)(b) *Local Government Regulation 2012*); and
 - c) Any overseas travel made by a Councillor including (s.188 *Local Government Regulation 2012*):
 - i) The name of the Councillor;
 - ii) The destination of the overseas travel;
 - iii) The purpose of the overseas travel;
 - iv) The cost of the overseas travel; and
 - v) Any other information about the overseas travel the local government considers relevant.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

18) *Local Government Act 2009*

Local Government Regulation 2012

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 19) Related documents are:
 - a) Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Mayor and Councillors Procedures.
 - b) Councillor Code of Conduct
 - c) Entertainment and Hospitality Policy and Procedures

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Chief Executive Officer

APPROVAL DATE

23 February 2022

REVIEW DATE

February 2026 (4 yearly review)

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Meeting	Approval Date	History
1	General	18/01/2011	New
2	Policy & Planning	02/04/2013	Revised
3	Policy & Planning	01/03/2017	Revised
4	General	23/02/2022	Revised