

POLICY STATEMENT

NUMBER: GOV-001

TITLE: **Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Mayor and Councillors**

SECTION AND POSITION: Chief Executive Officer

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

- Local Government Act 1993
- Councillor Remuneration Policy
- Guidelines for Councils: Reimbursement of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Mayors and Councillors
- Procurement Policy and Purchasing Guidelines
- Local Government Finance Standards 2005
- Income Tax Assessment Act 1997
- Taxation Rulings issued by the Australian Taxation Office

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure compliance with community expectations and statutory requirements relating to the payment or reimbursement of legitimate expenses and provision of facilities for councillors while carrying out their duties and responsibilities as elected representatives of the Central Highlands Regional Council; and
- Ensure that all councillors have the facilities and other support necessary to perform their civic duties.

Strategic Priority	Leadership and Governance
Strategic Priority Outcome	A sustainable financial position that supports strategic priorities and delivers a high standard of community service
Performance Measures	Number of complaints received relating to the payment of expenses or the provision of facilities for councillors

SCOPE: This policy provides for:

- payment of expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by the councillors in the

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course of discharging their duties and responsibilities as councillors; and

- The provision of facilities to the councillors for that purpose.

This policy does not provide for salaries or other form of councillor remuneration (see Councillor Remuneration Policy).

PREAMBLE:

Council is committed to ensuring that councillors are provided with the facilities required to enable them to perform their duties.

Councillors should not be financially disadvantaged when carrying out the requirements of the role of councillor and should be fairly and reasonably compensated in accordance with statutory requirements and community expectations.

The payment and/or reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities for councillors:

- is to be open and transparent, prudent, responsible, acceptable to the community and in accordance with statutory requirements;
- based on ensuring economy and efficiency; and
- subject to budget provisions.

DEFINITIONS:

'Authorising person' is the person with delegated authority to approve expenditure or reimbursement for councillor expenses and facilities.

'Council business' means official 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 continuity for the Council. Council business should result in a benefit being achieved either for Council, the local government area or the community.

Council business includes functions that are a statutory requirement of the councillor's role or are officially recorded in minutes or other public records. This might also include, attending an event or function to perform official duties or as an official council representative, such as -

- ceremonial openings of buildings or facilities;
- fetes and carnivals;
- annual or presentation dinners;
- public meetings;
- private meetings arranged through official council channels (i.e. documented in official records or diary) for the purpose of conducting bona fide discussions of business of council; and
- any other meeting, event or function described in section 239 of the Local Government Act 1993 under *Insurance of Councillors* for example,

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attendance:

- At the meetings of the local government or its committees that the councillor is entitled or asked to attend, or at which the councillor has business for a resident of the local government's area; and
- At inspections or deputations, conferences and meetings at which the councillor's attendance is permitted by the local government; and
- At official functions organised for the local government; and
- On residents of the area for the purpose of local government business.

Gathering of information by a councillor necessary to inform him or her of an incident of interest to Council or which properly falls within the responsibility of Council and a councillor.

'Civic duties' means Council business.

'Councillors' include councillors, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

'Discretionary training' is any training that is not determined by Council as "mandatory".

'Expenses' refers to expenses described in the *Guidelines*.

'Facilities' refer to the facilities deemed necessary to assist councillors in their role as shown in the *Guidelines*.

'Mandatory training' is any training that Council resolves that all councillors must attend.

'Meal allowance' is the daily amount allowed for meals while travelling on Council business.

'Official capacity' refers to activities undertaken while on Council business.

'Public record' is any record created, received or kept in an official capacity.

'Representing Council'. A councillor is representing Council when Council resolves that the councillor is to attend an event or function as a representative of Council.

'Travel advance' is a cash payment paid in advance for anticipated expenses associated with travelling on Council business. A travel advance may include expenses for meals, accommodation and incidentals. All expenses must be reconciled at the return of the travel.

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POLICY:

The payment and/or reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities for councillors must only be for the actual cost of legitimate business use and only in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 (LGA) and the *Guidelines for Councils: Reimbursement of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Mayors and Councillors* (DLG Guidelines) issued by the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation.

Principles:

The policy complies with the Statement of Principles as set out in the DLG Guidelines:

- Reasonable expenses reimbursement to councillors
- Public accountability and transparency
- Public perceptions and community expectations
- No private benefit to be derived
- Equity and participation

Policy:

For details about entitlements in regard to the payment or reimbursement of councillor expenses and the provision of facilities for councillors, refer to *Attachment A: Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities*.

Council's annual report must contain a copy of the policy and a copy of any resolution made during the year authorising payment of expenses or provision of facilities to councillors.

Spouses, partners and family members of councillors are not entitled to reimbursement of expenses or to have access to facilities allocated to councillors.

Failure to comply with this policy or misappropriation of expenses or facilities may be a breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct and/or an offence under the Criminal Code 1899.

All monetary amounts detailed in Attachments A: *Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities* and B: *Guidelines for Council Expenses and Facilities* will automatically be increased when the DLG Guidelines are amended by Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation.

Policy Evaluation Process:

Central Highlands Regional Council must provide for public accountability and transparency by:

- Disclosure of overseas travel details in Annual Report;

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- Council reports on international travel activities;
- Resolutions made during the year authorising the payment or provision of remuneration;
- including expenses paid or facilities provided, to councillors or members of committees of the local government; and
- Particulars of the total remuneration paid or provided, including expenses paid or facilities provided, to each councillor during the year and the total superannuation contributions paid for each councillor during the year.

Changes to Policy

Central Highlands Regional Council may amend this policy by Council resolution following approval of the amendments by the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation.

ADOPTED: Approved by the Department of Local Government Sport and Recreation 2 May 2008 (amended 13 May 2008)

AMENDED:

**DUE FOR
REVISION:**

Version 1.02 21 April 2008

Attachment A

Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to provide information about the payment or reimbursement of expenses and the provision of facilities for councillors of the Central Highlands Regional Council, including the Mayor.

Councillor remuneration is not covered by this document. Councillor remuneration is in accordance with the determination of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal, as reflected in the Councillor Remuneration Policy.

Approval and authorisation

The payment or reimbursement of expenses and the provision of facilities for councillors is subject to Council approval where necessary (e.g. for travel), budget provisions and the authorisation of Council's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or the officer delegated that authority by the CEO.

Wherever practicable, council officers will provide the specified facilities and manage the payment of expenses on behalf of councillors. Any claims by councillors for reimbursement of expenses are to be authorised by the CEO or delegated officer.

1. EXPENSES

The following expenses refer to actual expenses deemed necessary for Council business. Councillors are only entitled to the expenses contained in the categories listed below.

1. 1. Council business

Where councillors are attending to Council business (refer to definitions) such as meetings, functions or other activities in an official capacity, Council will pay for the approved expenses associated with that activity.

The Mayor attends the following Conferences as the primary Delegate CQLGA, LGAQ & ALGA and may attend any other relevant Conference/Seminar/Workshop/Forums. The Mayor may be accompanied to these by the Deputy Mayor or other councillors.

The Council shall appoint the other delegates and/or attendees at the above conferences. Attendance by councillors at other Conferences/Seminars/Workshops shall be recommended by Council or senior officers in writing to the Council meeting.

Council may approve national and international travel for councillors where Council considers it appropriate to promote or represent Central Highlands Region for a local government purpose.

Attachment A: Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

1.1.1 Representing Council at events

Councillors may be required to attend a range of events and functions as part of their role in attending to Council business. Councillors may, for example, be required to attend significant sporting and other community events in an official capacity.

Where Council resolves that a councillor is required to attend an event or conference as a delegate of Council, Council will pay for expenses associated with attending that event.

Council will provide tickets to events for councillors for the purpose of addressing Council's advocacy strategy and to provide support for community social and economic development activities.

1.2. Professional development

The payment of expenses for professional development requires Council approval.

There are two categories of professional development for councillors – Mandatory Training and Discretionary Training

1.2.1 Mandatory training

Where Council resolves that all councillors or a class of councillors (e.g. newly elected councillors) are to attend training courses, seminars, conferences, workshops and/or forums for skill development related to a councillor's role, Council will meet all costs.

Examples of mandatory training may include training for councillor induction, code of conduct, meeting procedures and legislative obligations.

1.2.2 Discretionary training

Where a councillor wishes to attend a conference, workshop or training to improve skills relevant to their role as a councillor (other than mandatory training), Council approval is required to pay the expenses of the event.

The funding limit for discretionary training is \$5,000 for each councillor during their four (4) year term in office.

1.3. Travel costs

Councillors may incur travel costs for a number of reasons including attendance at Council meetings, travelling to conferences, training or workshops.

All councillor travel arrangements must be in accordance with *Attachment B: Councillor Travel and Accommodation Procedures*

In general, the most cost effective form of travel must be used. Councillors may request to travel using their own private vehicle for business purposes and claim a mileage allowance based on log book details to substantiate their claim.

Attachment A: Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

1.4. Accommodation

When attending conferences, councillors must take advantage of (any costs savings available from) any package provided by conference organisers and, therefore, stay in the recommended accommodation unless prior approval has been granted by Council. In all other cases, Council must decide what are legitimate accommodation costs that will be reimbursed.

Given the size of the Central Highlands Regional Council area, accommodation may be made available for councillors when attending to council business if it is impractical to return home for that evening. However any such accommodation must be authorised by Council; or for unforeseen reasons, by Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

Councillors will receive up to \$20.00 per day to cover incidental costs incurred while travelling and staying away from home overnight outside the Council area.

Refer to Attachment B: Councillor Travel and Accommodation Procedures for further details.

1.5. Meals

Councillors may claim for the reimbursement of each actual cost per meal when travelling for business related purposes which are outside the boundaries of the Central Highlands Regional Council.

Given the size of the Central Highlands Regional Council area, councillors may also claim for the reimbursement of each actual cost per meal when attending to council business if it is deemed reasonable. However any such reimbursement must be authorised by Council; or for unforeseen reasons, by Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

Alternatively, councillors may be paid a daily meal allowance of:

- Breakfast - \$19.60
- Lunch - \$20.05; and
- Dinner - \$34.55

Reasonable beverages, including alcohol, may be included as part of the meal reimbursement.

Where councillors claim for reimbursement, they may be provided with a cash advance for meals while travelling for business related purposes. Any advance must be reconciled with actual costs, supported by receipts.

Refer to Attachment B: Councillor Travel and Accommodation Procedures for further details.

1.6. Hospitality expenses

Where councillors incur hospitality expenses while conducting Council business, apart from official civic receptions organised by the Council, the maximum amount that may be reimbursed is:

- \$500.00 per annum for each councillor; and
- \$4,000.00 per annum for the Mayor.

Refer to Attachment B: Councillor Travel and Accommodation Procedures for further details.

Attachment A: Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

Hospitality expenses related to official receptions and other functions organised by council officers are met from relevant approved budgets.

1.7. Cab Charge and public transport

Councillors may claim for cab charge facilities or reimbursement for public transport tickets (rail, bus, ferry) to attend official Council functions only.

An approved function includes any function approved pursuant to sections 1.2.1 and 1.3. above.

Refer to Attachment B: Councillor Travel and Accommodation Procedures for further details.

2. FACILITIES

Facilities provided for councillors must be deemed necessary and required to assist councillors in their official capacity. In accordance with statutory provisions, Council may only provide councillors with the facilities listed below.

Council determines the reasonable standard for facilities for councillors. If a councillor chooses a higher standard of facility than that prescribed by Council, any difference in cost must be met by the councillor personally.

All facilities provided to councillors remain the property of Council and must be accounted for during annual equipment audits. The facilities must be returned to Council when the councillor's term expires, unless Council agrees to dispose of the facility in some other manner.

2.1. Administrative tools and office amenities**2.1.1. Office space and access to meeting rooms**

The Mayor has an allocated office in the Emerald office.

Council provides access to occasional office accommodation and meeting rooms for councillors to meet contact with constituents and the public. Such accommodation may be booked through the Customer Service Section.

2.1.2. Secretarial support

The Mayor's office will be staffed with an Executive Assistant shared with the Chief Executive Officer.

Limited secretarial support will be provided to councillors by the current secretarial support based in the office of the Mayor and CEO, and Deputy CEO.

2.1.3. Computer and Printer for business use

Councillors are provided with a laptop computer and printer for Council business use.

The standard of computer shall be similar to that available to council managers.

Attachment A: Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

2.1.6. Photocopier and paper shredder

Councillors are entitled to access photocopiers and paper shredders for Council business use at the various council offices. Access to domestic photocopiers/scanners may be provided for the home based offices, on request by councillors.

2.1.7 Stationery

Councillors are provided stationery for official purposes only, including, but not limited to:

- Pens and pen sets
- Paper
- Note paper
- Letterhead
- Business cards
- Envelopes
- 'With Compliments' slips

Council stationery is not to be converted or modified in any way and may only be used for carrying out the functions of the role of councillor.

Stationery does not include any form of advertising by council.

2.1.8. Publications

Councillors are provided access to copies of relevant legislation, books and journals considered necessary for undertaking their duties.

2.1.9 Other administrative necessities

Subject to Council approval, councillors may be provided with any other administrative necessities to meet the business of Council.

2.1.10. Advertising

Council will not reimburse or provide funds, services or facilities for the purposes of advertising for councillors.

2.1.11 Community consultation

Councillors may use facilities provided to correspond with community representatives for the purpose of clarifying issues that are relevant to their division or the city in general.

Where a councillor chooses to undertake further community consultation on a particular matter, in addition to that approved by Council, the councillor is responsible for those costs.

2.2. Home office

Councillors may be provided with home office equipment comprising a computer, facsimile machine, printer and internet access for Council business use only.

Attachment A: Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

2.3. Maintenance costs of any Council owned equipment

Council will cover all ongoing maintenance costs associated with fair wear and tear of council owned equipment to ensure it is operating for optimal professional use.

2.4. Name badge and uniforms

Councillors will be provided with any safety equipment such as overalls, safety helmets or glasses, as required, in their role.

Councillors will be provided with uniforms, equivalent to the in door staff Starter Kit and a Blazer, and a name badge if required.

2.5. Vehicles, fuel and parking**2.5.1 Vehicles**

The Mayor will be provided with a Council owned vehicle for official Council business.

The Mayor may elect to have private use of that vehicle, subject to reimbursement to council for expenses (see below) associated with the private use of the vehicle;

- (1) The expense for private use will be calculated such that the contribution by the councillor will meet the average Fringe Benefits Tax ("FBT") to be paid by Council in relation to vehicles supplied to councillors and used for private use and the running costs (fuel and maintenance) for the private use, where applicable.
- (2) The vehicle provided will be an executive vehicle or equivalent 4WD. If the vehicle is upgraded the additional cost will be met by the councillor, likewise should the standard of vehicle be downgraded the cost to the councillor will be reduced.

Should a Council owned vehicle be unavailable, the Mayor may choose to use his/her own vehicle, the amount reimbursed will be the actual amount (or equivalent mileage) expended by the councillor, validated by log book records. The amount to be reimbursed will be based on the mileage allowances recommended by the Australian Tax Office.

Councillors may either:

- (a) Utilise a Council owned vehicle for official Council business. A vehicle will be made available at each of the Council area offices. Should the vehicle be required, it should be booked through the area office; or
- (b) Use their own private vehicle for Council business purposes and claim a mileage allowance for the Council business use of the vehicle.

Should a councillor choose to use their own vehicle, the amount reimbursed will be the actual amount (or equivalent mileage) expended by the councillor, validated by log book records. The amount to be reimbursed will be based on the mileage allowances recommended by the Australian Tax Office.

Attachment A: Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

Council may approve the provision of vehicles for Deputy Mayor and councillors. Councillors may elect to have private use of that vehicle on the same basis as detailed above for the Mayor except that the standard of vehicle will be Holden Calais or equivalent for Deputy Mayor and Holden Commodore or equivalent for councillor.

2.5.2 Fuel

Fuel for a Council-owned vehicle used for official Council business, will be provided or paid for by Council.

2.5.3 Parking

Council will reimbursement of parking costs paid by councillors while attending to official Council business.

2.6. Telecommunication needs

Councillors may be provided with a mobile telephone. Where Council provides a mobile telephone or hand held device, Council will pay for all costs associated with the Council business use. Any personal calls made by the councillor must be reimbursed to Council.

If a councillor uses a personally owned mobile device, council may reimburse up to 50% of the costs incurred.

Where council does not provide a mobile telephone or hand held device, council may provide:

- (a) A home landline at the councillor's residence, including connection cost, monthly rental and call costs up to 50% of the total calls made. However, any STD or international calls made from the home telephone can only be reimbursed if a receipt and certification is provided by the councillor that the call was related to Council business; and,
- (b) Home internet access including monthly access fee and up to 50% of the package costs.

2.7. Legal costs and insurance cover

Council may decide, pursuant to Section 240 of the Local Government Act, to cover costs incurred through any inquiry, investigation, hearing or legal proceedings into the conduct of a councillor, or arising out of, or in connection with the councillor's performance of his/her civic functions. Council shall resolve on this matter on each and every occasion specifically.

Councillors will be covered under Council insurance policies while discharging civic duties. Specifically, insurance cover will be provided for public liability, professional indemnity, councillor's liability, personal accident and/or workers compensation, international and domestic travel insurance.

Attachment B

Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

1. General conditions - councillor accommodation and travel

All councillor air travel and accommodation requires prior approval by Council and authorisation by the Chief Executive Officer or delegate.

All air travel and/or accommodation requirements will be coordinated through the office of the Chief Executive Officer or delegate.

Council is committed to ensuring that travel and related services and products are procured as cost effectively and efficiently as possible using the Council's preferred travel suppliers.

Travel related expenses that do not comply with policy provisions will not be reimbursed. Requests for ineligible expense claims risk delays in processing, or partial or total forfeiture of reimbursement

All requests for travel (including associated registrations) should be made in sufficient time to take advantage of discounts and gain access to the widest range of accommodation and flights. Failure to do so will limit flight and accommodation options.

2. Responsibilities

Councillors are required to:

- process all travel related requests in a timely manner through the Chief Executive Officer's office so that available discounts are taken;
- make bookings in a timely manner so that available discounts are taken;
- obtain reimbursement for valid out of pocket expenses in a timely manner following completion of the journey;
- complete all necessary registration and travel request forms.

The Chief Executive Officer must:

- ensure the application complies with policy provisions;
- approve travel requests in a timely manner;
- implement systems of risk management to ensure that expenditure on travel is efficient, economic and appropriate;

the Officer coordinating the travel is responsible for:

- identifying 'best deals' and negotiating special rates with Council's preferred travel providers;
- providing advice to councillors in relation to travel services, policies and procedures;
- coordinating all travel requests to ensure bookings are made in a timely manner and that all requests are processed in accordance with Council's policy;

Attachment B: Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

- maintaining information on issues as accommodation, airfares, car hire and other related costs for the purpose of reporting to Council, as required.

3. Preferred travel provider

Council may appoint a preferred travel provider that processes all travel requests, negotiates discount air and accommodation rates and provides assistance to councillors on all travel related matters. All transport and related travel should be booked through this provider, however, where an alternative provides an overall saving to Council, this alternative may be used with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer's office. Councillors must not negotiate travel rates directly with travel suppliers. All such requests must be processed through the Chief Executive Officer's office.

4. Approval

All councillor travel requires the approval of Council or in unforeseen circumstance Mayor and Chief Executive Officer. All travel requests from a councillor must be submitted to Council and should identify the relevance of such event to the Council and as far as practicable indicate the cost of attendance.

Council will assess merit of councillor involvement in trade missions, business or economic development activities or sister city activities.

Where time does not permit the presentation of a report to Council and councillor's travel has been approved by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, a report of the delegated approval and the circumstances should be submitted to the next available Council Meeting.

Where councillors are appointed by the Council as Council's representative on State or Federal committees or Government associations, all travel and accommodation associated with the councillor's fulfilment of that role is deemed as approved without the need for a further report to Council.

5. Air travel

The most cost effective form of air travel will be used.

Council's contracted travel services provider is required to offer the "best fare" available at the time of booking. Therefore flights requested may not always be offered when asked to confirm the booking.

Electronic ticketing (ETicket) will be used for airline tickets where available.

6. Class of travel

The standard of air travel for councillors travelling on Council business shall be economy. Councillors may upgrade to a higher class of travel if there is no additional cost to Council.

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7. Flexible tickets

Where flexibility is required for return times or connecting flights, a suitably flexible ticket may be purchased with the approval of the authorising person.

8. Accommodation

Accommodation arrangements for councillors must comply with the provisions of Attachment A of the policy. Conference accommodation packages are to be used where it is economically feasible to do so. Alternative accommodation arrangements taking into account the total costs, location, value for money, convenience and traveller safety.

In determining accommodation locations and standards for all councillors, every effort will be made to minimise the total cost associated with attendance at the event. Travel time to the event, taxi costs, convenience and hotel services will be considered when booking accommodation. When practical and available, accommodation will be arranged within close proximity of the event venue.

Accommodation and associated expenses will not be paid for local events such as seminars, conferences etc. held within the boundaries of Central Highlands Regional Council and adjoining local government areas where it is reasonable to expect the councillor to travel to and from the event on the same day. However, the Chief Executive Officer may approve such costs giving consideration to the home location, driving times and participation requirements of the councillor.

Wherever practical to do so, Council will book and prepay all accommodation before departure. Council will not prepay any charges against the room except for accommodation and taxes where applicable.

All expenses incurred at the accommodation venue **other** than accommodation must be settled at the time of departure unless prior arrangements have been made with Council to have the account settled by purchase order.

It is the councillor's responsibility to seek reimbursement of legitimate expenses upon return. Reimbursement will not be approved without original receipts.

Accommodation meeting the general standards applicable for domestic travel will apply to international travel arrangements. Where a sister city relationship exists or international contacts with government or business agencies exist, the government or business agency may be contacted to assist with accommodation bookings to ensure suitability of location and standard.

Prepayment of all accommodation is preferred, however, it is acknowledged that some countries do not permit this. In such cases, an increase to the daily travel advance may be made to meet accommodation costs.

9. Use of a motor vehicle to attend events

Motor vehicles may only be used to attend local events. The use of a vehicle to attend an event where airline travel would normally be provided is not permitted unless approved by Council.

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Unless otherwise approved (e.g. for medical reasons), if a councillor chooses not to use Council provided or arranged travel to attend an event, the councillor is responsible for meeting all travel and accommodation expenses, during the period of travel to the event.

10. Hire cars

The requirement for a hire car should be identified at the time of seeking Council approval for attendance.

11. Taxi and cab charge vouchers

Any travel by taxi for Council business will be reimbursed by Council. Any taxi travel within the Central Highlands Regional Council area will not be reimbursed unless prior authorisation is given.

Incidental travel while attending an event must be met by the councillor.

12. Meals and incidentals

Daily allowances or cash advances for meals and incidentals will be paid in accordance with the provisions of the Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for councillors and Mayor Policy.

12.1 Domestic travel

For domestic travel, a daily meal and incidental travel allowance will be paid to councillors in lieu of actual cost reimbursement. Where a daily meal and incidental allowance is paid, the reimbursement of any other expense is subject to approval.

Where possible, payment will be paid into the councillor's nominated bank account as part of the normal pay cycle.

For domestic travel, the daily allowance will be calculated taking account of meals included in the event registration or provided in the travel package. Where a conference dinner or meal (including breakfast or lunch) is included in the registration, the respective allowance for that meal will be deducted from the total daily allowance. If the councillor chooses not to attend a provided dinner/meal, then the full cost of the alternative meal shall be at the councillor's expense.

For conference and course attendance where an overnight stay is required, the following example will be used as a guide.

Example:

A councillor travels to Sydney for a two-day conference commencing Monday morning and finishing Tuesday afternoon. Travel to Sydney on Monday morning is considered impractical. The councillor leaves on Saturday and returns on Tuesday night. The conference registration includes dinner on Monday night and lunches for both conference days but no breakfasts. Travel home on Tuesday is on a late afternoon flight departing before 6.00pm. The councillor is required to pay for accommodation on Saturday night and the following allowance will be prepaid:

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Sunday night dinner

Incidentals for Monday

Monday breakfast

Tuesday breakfast

No further claims for meals or incidentals will be accepted.

A prior night's accommodation shall only be approved where travel to the event on the day of commencement is not practical.

Incidentals will be paid for each full day the councillor is required to be away from home. This allowance will include such items as, laundry/dry cleaning, newspapers, phone calls, bus fares and other similar travel related incidental expenses not specifically covered in this policy.

Where a councillor is required to travel but no overnight accommodation is required, the councillor is entitled to reimbursement for the reasonable cost of meals and expenses as determined above. A prepaid allowance will not be made and all claims for part day travel expenses must be made on return from the *event* as an out of pocket expense claim.

12.2 International travel

For international travel, a travel advance may be paid which must be reconciled on the councillor's return. Actual Council business related costs will be reimbursed on presentation of original receipts.

Where a councillor is travelling on approved international travel, a travel advance of up to \$94.20 per day may be paid to cover breakfast, lunch and dinner and the incidental allowance per day for eligible Council business related expenses.

Alternatively, Council may consider issuing a credit card to a Councillor for the trip and acquit actual expenses incurred for Council business in accordance with the guidelines.

Acquittal of the cash advance for international travel is required within seven (7) days of travel completion. Councillors must keep a diary of all Council business related expenses including original receipts. The travel advance must be reconciled against actual Council business related costs incurred.

Claims without receipts will not be accepted. Any expenses above the travel advance will be reimbursed. Any overpayment must be repaid to Council.

13. Parking

Council will reimburse the cost of parking fees incurred in order to attend an event where councillors attend in their official capacity. Supporting receipts are required for reimbursement.

Where airport parking is used for the duration of an event, the cost of the parking shall be reimbursed upon presentation of receipts. Use of airport parking facilities shall only be used where it is economical to do so and after all other reasonable methods of transport to and from the airport have been considered.

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14. In-room internet connection for Council business purposes

Where in-room internet connection is required for undertaking Council business, reasonable connection costs may be claimed on completion of travel. However, it is preferred that councillors will use a wireless Internet card available by prearrangement through Council's Administrative Support Section.

15. Hospitality expenses

Hospitality expenses may only be paid in accordance with the Expenses Reimbursement and Provisions of Facilities for Councillors and Mayor Policy (see Attachment A 1.6).

Councillors must ensure that hospitality expenses are recorded and that their claim for expenses contains the following information:

- the circumstances;
 - the form of hospitality:
 - breakfast
 - lunch
 - dinner
 - gift
 - the cost;
 - original receipts;
 - the location;
- a list of attendees;

Expenses **will not** be reimbursed for personal items or costs unrelated to Council business; e.g.:

- Alcohol;
- Babysitting fees;
- Kennel fees;
- Occasional Airline club fees;
- Toiletries;
- Barber or hair stylist;
- Traffic infringements;
- In flight and in house movies;
- Tourism related costs;
- Mini bar purchases;
- Personal telephone;
- Social events; and

Attachment B: Guidelines for Councillor Expenses and Facilities

- Reading materials

As a guide, expenses not normally reimbursed at home, will not be reimbursed when travelling.

16. Expenses reimbursement process

Where practical, Council will pay all travel and accommodation expenses before departure, however, any claim for allowable expenses not covered by the advance may be made at the completion of travel.

Reimbursement of legitimate Council business expenses not covered by the incidental allowance must be made on the Out of Pocket Expenses Claim Form with original receipts and submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.

17. Accompanying partners and personal travel arrangements

All travel and accommodation for partners of councillors must be arranged by and paid by the councillor. Personal arrangements may be booked through Council's contracted supplier if desired. The supplier will invoice the councillor. Council will not pay for any private travel expenses. In the event costs have been incurred by Council for a councillor's partner, the councillor will reimburse Council.

Council will not arrange private travel for councillors or their partners except where the partner is travelling as an official delegate of Council.

18. Cancellation of travel and accommodation

If a councillor cancels travel previously planned and booked by the Council as part of official business for Council, then the councillor will be required to reimburse the Council the costs incurred. Submission to the Council to waiver the reimbursement would be required to avoid such costs being imposed.