



Payment of Councillors Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy

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Responsible Officer:	Director Governance, Recreation & Property Services
Strategic Plan Reference:	2.4 The organisation has a corporate culture that delivers quality customer service, encourages innovation and has high standards of accountability

1. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 1.1 This policy aims to ensure that Councillors are provided with adequate and reasonable expenses and facilities to enable them to carry out their civic responsibilities. In addition, the policy provides transparency in the way expenses and facilities are provided and clear accountability when expenses are claimed or Council provided facilities are used.
- 1.2 This policy also aims to provide procedures for the payment of Councillor expenses and to ensure that there is no confusion in relation to the claiming and payment of expenses by Councillors.
- 1.3 This Policy is consistent with the requirements of all Councillors under the “Councillors Code of Conduct Policy” to act honestly and to not make any improper use of their position, including to gain, or attempt to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for themselves or for any other reason or to cause, or attempt to cause, damage to the Council.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Councillor shall include the office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and may be construed as reference to either singular or plural as the case may be.

3. OBJECTIVE

- 3.1 To provide guidance to Councillors in the interpretation of the provision of reimbursement of expenses incurred whilst carrying out their duties as an elected member.

- 3.2 The *Local Government Act 1993* at Schedule 5, states:

1. Expenses

- (1) *A council, on or before 1 January 2006, is to –*

- (a) *adopt a policy in respect of payment of expenses incurred by councillors in carrying out the duties of office; and*

- (b) *make a copy of the policy available for public inspection.*

- (2) *A councillor is entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable expenses in accordance with the policy adopted under sub-clause (1) in relation to –*

- (a) *any prescribed expenses; and*

- (b) *any other expenses the council determines appropriate.*

2. Loan of services, facilities and equipment

- A council may decide to provide support services, facilities and equipment on loan to a councillor on any conditions it considers appropriate.*

4. SCOPE

- 4.1 This policy applies to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors as elected from time to time.

5. PROCEDURE (POLICY DETAIL)

5.1 Travelling Expenses

- 5.1.1 Other than in respect of the Mayor (refer 5.2 Mayoral vehicle), and subject to the prior provision of the supporting evidentiary documentation required by this Policy, the Council will pay to or on behalf of a Councillor an allowance towards necessary out-of-pocket expenses for conveyance in travelling. The amount payable will be up to a maximum of \$4,500 per financial year after which all travel costs will be met by the Councillor whether they are business or private in nature. This applies in respect of the following:

- i. to and from the meetings of Council, or meeting of any committee of Council, and other meetings where a Councillor has been delegated or authorised by Council to attend;
 - ii. upon inspections or business within the municipal area in compliance with a resolution of Council;
 - iii. upon inspections or business outside the municipal area where a Councillor has been delegated or authorised by the Mayor or Council to undertake such a function;
 - iv. upon inspections or business as arranged by the Chief Executive Officer; or
 - v. to attend any seminar, conference or training course in compliance with a resolution of Council; or
 - vi. travelling to and from meetings with residents and ratepayers in response to their request or problem.
- 5.1.2 The travelling allowance shall be paid in accordance with the motor vehicle rates prescribed by the Tasmanian State Service.
- 5.1.3 Travelling expenses shall not apply to travel, either inside or outside the municipal area, where alternative arrangements are made for travel and the Councillor has elected not to utilise these arrangements.
- 5.1.4 A Councillor shall not claim travel or other expenses for activities that are not directly related to current business to be considered by Council, or where the expenses would otherwise have been incurred as a result of private business.
- 5.1.5 In respect of each and every claim, in order to receive payment, a Councillor must provide a Mileage Log Form detailing:
- i. Date of travel
 - ii. Origin
 - iii. Destination
 - iv. Distance travelled
 - v. Purpose of trip
- together with a declaration stating that the amount claimed has been expended in the performance of their duties as a Councillor.
- 5.1.6 All claims must be lodged within 10 business days following the end of the month the expenses relate to.
- 5.2 Mayoral Vehicle
- 5.2.1 A motor vehicle will be provided for use by the Mayor. The vehicle is primarily for bona fide Council business both inside and outside of the municipal area. The vehicle may also be used by the Mayor for other incidental private mileage where it is convenient to do so, however the Mayor will keep a record of such usage and will reimburse Council at the rate prescribed in 5.1.2 above. The vehicle will usually be garaged at the Mayor's usual place of residence and any travel between the Mayor's residence and the Civic Centre will not be considered to be private use for calculation of any mileage reimbursement.
- 5.2.2 Other Councillors can arrange to use the vehicle if required to attend meetings/seminars/functions on behalf of the Council. Arrangements for the use of the vehicle are to be made with the Mayor.

5.3 Home Facilities

- 5.3.1 Council may provide each Councillor with ICT facilities. Where practicable the facility will be provided at the time of election to Council, and will be replaced in accordance with Council's normal replacement cycle. These facilities may be used by Councillors for purposes other than carrying out the duties of office.
- 5.3.2 The ICT facilities shall comprise a laptop/portable device together with backup and multi-function printer. Where necessary training will be provided in the use of the equipment and the software necessary for discharge of the duties of office. Each Councillor will be responsible for undertaking adequate backups and for restoring data in the event of hardware or software failure. Council will insure the equipment for loss and accidental damage.
- 5.3.3 Councillors are to sign an acknowledgement in accordance with the relevant Council Information Technology Policy prior to the installation of the computer equipment.
- 5.3.4 Council will reimburse the cost of a fixed home voice/internet service inclusive of usage charges up to a maximum of \$100 per month (if claimed). Where a portable computer/tablet with mobile data service is provided by Council, the maximum mobile service and data usage charges paid by Council will be \$100 per month. Any monthly excess usage charges are required to be reimbursed to Council.
- Where a Councillor chooses to use a non-Council provided portable computer/tablet for accessing Council business papers, Council will reimburse mobile data usage charges associated with the device (if applicable) up to a maximum of \$100 per month (if claimed).
- The maximum total value of electronic communications service and usage charges (both claimed and provided) is \$200 per month per Councillor.
- 5.3.5 All claims must be lodged within 10 business days following the end of the month the expenses relate to.
- 5.3.6 Upon the scheduled replacement of the equipment, or upon resigning or losing office, a Councillor may if it is acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer purchase all or part of the equipment at a mutually acceptable sum, such sum to be not less than market value. Otherwise the ICT facilities are to be returned to Council.

5.4 Meals

- 5.4.1 When appropriate, Council will provide meals for Councillors attending meetings.
- 5.4.2 Where required by the Mayor or in compliance with a resolution of Council to represent Council, a Councillor will be reimbursed for the cost of any attendance fee, meal or refreshment.

5.5 Conferences and Seminars

- 5.5.1 Council will pay to or on behalf of a Councillor the registration and out-of-pocket expenses, other than those paid in accordance with other clauses of this policy, in respect of attendances at any conference or seminar approved by the Mayor or in compliance with a resolution of Council.
- 5.5.2 A Councillor who is funded by Council to attend a conference or seminar is required to provide a brief written report to Council on matters of interest arising from the conference or seminar. By agreement where there is more than one Council representative in attendance, a consolidated report can be provided with those attending determining amongst themselves who will be responsible for coordinating the report preparation. The report is to be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer as soon as possible following the conference.

5.6 Other Expenses

- 5.6.1 Council will reimburse any necessary out-of-pocket expenses for attendance upon inspections or upon business of Council, but not donations or gratuities.

5.7 Provision of Support and Facilities

- 5.7.1 Council will provide secretarial support at the Civic Centre for the Mayor. This support will also be made available to the Deputy Mayor when acting in the capacity of Mayor.
- 5.7.2 Council will provide Councillors with meeting facilities at the Civic Centre.
- 5.7.3 Council will provide Councillors with business cards and stationery.

5.8 Dependent Person Care

- 5.8.1 Council will reimburse all reasonable costs necessarily incurred by a councillor in the 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. Reimbursement of costs will only be made in accordance with the purposes outlined in Section 5.1.
- 5.8.2 All claims for reimbursement of Dependent Person Care will be made on the appropriate claim form and include satisfactory evidence of the expense.

5.9 Insurance

- 5.9.1 Council will provide an insurance cover for a Councillor against personal injury, professional indemnity, and Directors and Officers liability, arising out of or in the course of carrying out by such Councillor of any business of Council or the performance by such Councillor of any function in their capacity as a member of Council.

5.10 Dispute Resolution

- 5.10.1 If in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, a claim for reimbursement of expenses is unreasonable or does not meet with requirements of this policy and agreement cannot be reached with the Councillor, the matter will be referred to Council for final decision.

5.11 Pro-rata Payments

- 5.11.1 Where a Councillor is appointed part way through a financial year their maximum amount allowable under sections 5.1 and 5.3.4 will be calculated on a pro-rata basis for that particular financial year.

6. GUIDELINES

- 6.1 Nil.

7. COMMUNICATION

- 7.1 Councillors of Kingborough Council.

8. LEGISLATION

- 8.1 Section 340a and Schedule 5 *Local Government Act 1993*. S43 Local Government (General) Regulations 2015.

9. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 9.1 Nil.

10. AUDIENCE

- 10.1 Kingborough Councillors.
- 10.2 Public.