

Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors Policy

Policy Identifier:	GOV-016-P
Approved by:	General Meeting
Date of Approval:	10 June 2020
Effective Date:	10 June 2020
Review Date:	10 June 2023
Version:	14

Head of Power

The establishment of this policy is consistent with s250 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

“Section 250 Requirement to adopt expenses reimbursement policy or amendment

(1) A local government must adopt an expenses reimbursement policy.

(2) A local government may, by resolution, amend its expenses reimbursement policy at any time.”

The policy objective is aligned with the local government principles in section 4, *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act).

Policy Objective

To ensure the payment of legitimate and reasonable expenses incurred by Councillors for discharging their duties and responsibilities and to provide facilities to Councillors for those purposes, while ensuring Councillors are not financially disadvantaged as a result of carrying out their official duties.

The policy is also aimed at reflecting the community's expectations about the extent of a Councillor's duties and responsibilities and its expectations about the resources and reimbursement provided to Councillors from the public funds.

Note: This Policy does not deal with the provision of remuneration, nor does it cover non-business related expenses or facilities incurred by other people, including a Councillor's partner.

Policy Statement

Redland City Council, through its Corporate Plan is committed to enriching community lifestyles and making a positive difference in our customers' lives through the services we provide. We are forward thinking, engaged and strive to maintain the highest standards of service to ensure we are delivering real value.

Council is committed to ensuring Councillor's entitlements under a range of facilities for discharging their duties and responsibilities as Councillors as outlined below:

- A dedicated office for each Councillors' use.
- Access to corporate meeting rooms.
- Shared administrative support.

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- Computer and communications equipment (generally consistent with that provided to the Executive Leadership Team). Limited private use of computer equipment and telephones is permitted providing that the use is lawful and that the use is appropriate (would not bring Council or the Councillor into disrepute, e.g. pornography, gambling, operating a business).
 - Stationery and printing. This excludes use for personal promotion.
 - Newspapers and journals (shared access).
 - Personal protective equipment.
 - Insurance, including: public liability, professional indemnity, personal accident and travel insurance (domestic and international).
 - Newsletters. Council may publish divisional newsletters up to four times per year. None will be published in the period of three months prior to a local government election.
 - Parking space for a motor-vehicle.
 - Salary sacrificing into superannuation, subject to Australian Taxation Office rulings and any other relevant policy.
 - Salary sacrificing to lease a motor-vehicle.
 - Vehicle: Councillors may select one of the following options:

Option 1	Council Vehicle	Vehicle selection will be made in accordance with the Staff Passenger Vehicle Fleet Policy POL-2812	ATO log book (supplied by Financial Services) to be completed for three months outlining all business and private use. The percentage of private use calculated in the three month period will be used for the term to calculate the private use component to be paid by the Councillor on a fortnightly basis through payroll
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A Council vehicle approved for private use may be driven by any driver with a full class C licence, with the prior approval of the Councillor. Members of the Councillor's immediate family who are currently provisional drivers on 'P' plates may drive the vehicle, however the vehicle must not be driven by anyone on 'L' plates. Councillors will be expected to comply with Council's guidelines relating to motor-vehicle use to the extent that is relevant to their role, e.g. safety requirements and restrictions on the use of a fuel card.

Option 2	Private Vehicle Use	Claim reimbursement for business use of private vehicle	Mileage claim form to be completed for each business use instance, including the reason for travel. To be paid in accordance with ATO rates per KM on a fortnightly basis through payroll.
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Definitions

Term	Definition
Council Business	<p>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 and events 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceremonial openings of buildings or facilities • Fetes, festivals 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 relating to the business of council. • Any other meeting, event or function described in section 107(4) <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> under 'Insurance of Councillors', for example, attendance at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meetings of the local government or its committees that the Councillor is entitled or asked to attend. ○ Meetings for a resident of the local government area. ○ Conferences, deputations, inspections and meetings at which the Councillor's attendance is permitted by the local government. ○ Official functions organised for the local government. ○ 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. <p><i>* Participating in a community group event or being a representative on a board not associated with Council is not regarded as Council business.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimbursement of expenses legitimately incurred for discharging their duties and responsibilities as Councillors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parking charges relating to attendance at meetings and other functions. This includes paid parking related to travel to and from the islands. ○ Travel by air, other public transport, hire car or taxi. Air travel must be booked through Council's Travel Coordinator. Taxi vouchers, Go Cards and ferry/barge vouchers are available upon request. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Domestic air travel will be in economy class. International air travel may be in premium economy or business class where offered. ▪ The CEO or delegate may approve a Councillor's request to extend a business trip to include a private component subject to all the costs relating to the private component being paid for by the Councillor. ▪ International travel requires the prior approval of Council other than as detailed in GOV-016-SD Core & Industry Specific Training Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors (A4781453) ▪ The CEO or delegate may approve reimbursement of business-related expenses (within budget) incurred by a Councillor while on a privately-funded overseas trip. This is limited to costs incurred for travel, accommodation and the cost of attending a conference (if applicable). If a claim relates to a conference or other training, the Councillor's

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	<p>discretionary training budget shall be used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Travel to/from the islands. This does not include the cost of ferry/barge transport for a Councillor who lives on one of the islands and who is travelling between his/her home and the mainland. The Policy acknowledges the special needs for Councillors whose division and electoral duties include the Moreton Bay Islands (NSI, Coochiemudlo and SMBI) who are reasonably required to attend business related and community events, meetings and functions which are subject to transport and ferry times, and who may incur incidental accommodation and related expenses, which may be paid for in accordance with this Policy. ○ Accommodation associated with attending training, conferences, etc (must be booked through the Travel Coordinator). ○ Meals associated with overnight stays or full-day activities where a meal is not provided. ○ Professional development. 'Core training' and 'industry-specific training' are listed in GOV-016-SD Core & Industry Specific Training Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors (A4781453). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Councillors undertaking 'core and industry-specific training' will have the costs met by Council. Training that does not fall within either list will have the costs met by Council, using the Councillor's discretionary training budget until that fund is exhausted. ▪ The discretionary training budget for each Councillor is set at \$8,000 per term. The budget includes payment for costs associated with the training, e.g. travel and accommodation. The training must be approved in advance and the content must be relevant to the duties of a Councillor. ▪ Where the training involves attendance at a conference, the Councillor must present a report to a Council meeting within three months of their attendance. ○ Hospitality. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This includes Councillors attending events and functions as a representative of Council. This also includes Councillor attendance at events where they have been invited solely or mainly due to their role as a Councillor, albeit not in an official capacity. Examples include: fundraising events (for charity), festivals, celebratory dinners (for community groups/members) and other community events. This does not include any event, whether fundraising or not, intended to promote a candidate for election to any level of government; ▪ Reasonable costs incurred will be reimbursed. Minor expenditure to pay for raffle tickets is acceptable, however any prizes won will be returned to be redrawn or will become the property of Council. Requests from the community for donations of gifts for raffle prizes, etc. will not be refunded. ▪ A shared pool of funds, set each year in the budget, will be used for reimbursing Councillors' hospitality expenses. Other examples of expenses that are not covered include: personal costs associated with being away from home, e.g. kennel fees, in-flight movies, hotel mini bar; and the payment of infringements. • Mayor's entitlement to a corporate credit card due to of the larger number of transactions due to the role. The same rules apply to its use as are applied to employees with a corporate credit card. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Councillor travelling on business internationally may apply to be issued with a corporate credit card for the period of travel. These cards may only be used to pay for expenses that can be claimed under this policy provided. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tax receipts are provided for each claim. If a tax receipt is lost, a statutory

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	<p>declaration will be required prior to reimbursement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No expenses related to any election campaign (not just local government) may be claimed. ▪ Reimbursement of expenses relating to motor-vehicles, see the 'Provision of Facilities' section above. ▪ Authorisation of the provision of facilities and the reimbursement of expenses to any Councillor is by the CEO or his/her delegate. <p>The CEO or delegate may use discretion to determine a request that falls outside of this policy, making any decision in accordance with the policy objective.</p>
Complaint	Includes information or matter. See definition provided by s48A(4) of the <i>Crime and Corruption Act 2001</i>
Contact details	Includes a direct telephone number, email address and postal address to enable confidential communications
Corrupt Conduct	see s15 of the <i>Crime and Corruption Act 2001</i>
Deal With	Means refer the Complaint, information or matter to the CCC Manage the Complaint as directed by the CCC See the Act Schedule 2 Dictionary for a more detailed definition
Nominated Person	Means the persons nominated by Redland City Council to manage and report Complaints of corrupt conduct by a public official to the CCC
Public Official	Means the Chief Executive Officer

Associated Documents

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Redland City Council Procurement Manual

Income Tax Assessment Act 1997

Taxation Rulings issued by the Australian Taxation Office

Responsibilities for Use, Care and Maintenance of Council's Passenger Fleet Vehicles Guideline ([A214552](#))

Responsibilities for Use, Care and Maintenance of Council's Passenger Fleet Vehicles Procedure ([A805643](#))

Fuel Card Use Guideline ([A214600](#))

Document Control

Only Council can approve amendments to this document by resolution of a Council Meeting, with the exception of administrative amendments which can be approved by the relevant ELT member. Refer to *Policy Instrument Development Manual* for an explanation on administrative amendments ([A4063988](#)).

Any requests to change the content of this document must be forwarded to relevant Service Manager(s).

Approved documents must be submitted to the Corporate Meetings and Registers Team for registration.

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Version Information

Version number	Date	Key Changes
6	October 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of reference to DLG published guideline
7	May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amalgamates policy and guideline into a single document Redefinition of training categories Simplification of facilities and reimbursement types Broadening of options relating to vehicle expenses
8	November 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change reflects the additional travel and accommodation needed for Councillors who travel to and from Islands.
9	March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annexure A – deleted item 10 (Australian Local Government Women’s Association – National Conference) from industry-specific training (already listed under core training). Relocated item 11 (Australian Local Government Women’s Association – Queensland State Conference) from industry-specific training to core training.
10	May 2017	<p>Minor Administrative changes to include additional Core and Industry Specific training requirements as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 2, under ‘Reimbursement of Expenses’, inserted c. ‘International travel requires the prior approval of Council other than as detailed in Attachment A’ Page 6 in Attachment A Inserted dot points 11-13 Page 7 in Attachment A Inserted dot point 10
11	July 2017	<p>Minor administrative change to remove reference to small grants programme which was incorrect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 3 in section 7 item (b) removed statement “Applicants can use Council’s small grants programme for such requests.”
12	October 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to vehicles options for Councillors and the inclusion of a definition of business use.
13	November 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing clause 13 column 3 reference by deleting and replacing the terms to state ‘vehicle selection will be made in accordance with the Staff Passenger Vehicle Fleet Policy POL-2812’; Deleting reference to the reimbursement of Council landline and mobile phones as this provision is redundant under the existing capped telecommunication arrangement; and Noting the change to the Policy POL-3076 only relates to these provisions of and reimbursement in relation to vehicles and does not deal with other policy items or vehicles wraps that remain in-force under the current Policy POL-3076 provisions until reviewed by Council.
14	October 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates as required under policy framework review: