

Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors

Policy Objective

The objectives of this policy are 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 Redland City Council; and
- ensure that all Councillors have the facilities and other support necessary to perform their civic duties.

Policy Statement

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 2009* and *Guidelines for Councils: Reimbursement of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Mayors and Councillors* (Guidelines) issued by the Chief Executive of the Department of Local Government.

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.

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. The annual report must also include particulars about the expenses incurred by, and the facilities provided to each Councillor.

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

For details about entitlements in regard to the payment or reimbursement of councillor expenses and the provision of facilities for councillors, refer to *GL-3076-001 Guideline – Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors*.

Failure to comply with this policy and guidelines, or misappropriation of expenses or facilities, may constitute 'misconduct' and/or be an offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1899*.

CMR Team use only

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Scope

This policy provides for:

- payment of expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by the Councillors in the 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 forms of Councillor remuneration, nor does it provide reimbursement for non-business related expenses unless specifically stated.

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 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 -

- 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) *Local Government Act 2009* under 'Insurance of Councillors', for example, attendance at:
 - 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; and
 - official functions organised for the local government;and
- 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.

'Councillors' means all Councillors, including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

'Civic duties' means Council business.

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'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 in a list that Council resolves that all, or one or more 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.

Related Policies/Legislation/Documents

- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Local Government (Operations) Regulation 2010*
- *Local Government (Finance, Plans & Reporting) Regulation 2010*
- *Guidelines for Councils: Reimbursement of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Mayors and Councillors (Department of Local Government)*
- *GL-3076-001 Guideline – Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors*
- *Redland City Council Procurement Manual*
- *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*
- *Taxation Rulings issued by the Australian Taxation Office*

Reporting Requirements

- Disclosure of publicly funded overseas travel – Annual Report
- Domestic and international travel – Council reports and Annual Report (international only)
- 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 – Annual Report
- 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 – Annual Report
- A copy of POL-3076 Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors – Annual Report and Council's website
- Changes to POL-3076 – advertised in local newspaper on the Council's website

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GL-3076-001 Part A

Guideline - Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors

**Guideline to
'Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors'
Policy (POL-3076)**

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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 Redland City Council.

Councillor remuneration is not covered by this document. Councillor remuneration is in accordance with the determination of the Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal.

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

Wherever practical, 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.

Council may, by resolution, approve international travel for Councillors where Council considers it appropriate to promote or represent Redland City for a local government purpose.

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 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.

1.2. Professional Development

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

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1.2.1. Mandatory Training

Councillors must attend training where the Council resolves that all Councillors, or a class of councillors (e.g. newly elected Councillors), or a specified number of Councillors are to attend training courses, conferences, seminars or workshops 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. A list of courses, conferences and similar opportunities which will constitute mandatory training will be determined by Council resolution from time to time.

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), prior approval is required from the Mayor or the CEO or the CEO's delegate.

The funding limit for discretionary training is \$5,000 for each Councillor during their four (4) year term in office. The funding will be annualised for budgetary purposes.

1.3. Travel Costs

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

All Councillor travel arrangements must be in accordance with this *Guideline Part 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 kilometre allowance based on log book details to substantiate their claim, subject to Section 10 of Part B of this Policy.

Business-related travel between the mainland and islands (and between the islands) within Redland City will either be reimbursed or Councillors may obtain tickets in advance from the Travel Coordinator. This includes business-related inter-island travel for a councillor who is a resident of one of the islands.

For a Councillor whose place of residence is on North Stradbroke, Coochiemudlo, Russell, Lamb, Macleay or Karragarra Islands, the Councillor is not entitled to claim ferry or barge transport as business-related travel between home and the Council offices in Cleveland (commuter use). The cost of ferry/barge travel would be met by Council in the following circumstances:

- The Councillor had to travel to the mainland for Council business on a day that he/she would not ordinarily travel to the Council offices in Cleveland for work, e.g. weekends, public holidays or meeting-free days; or
- The Councillor was required to make a further return trip to an island for Council business during a work day, having already travelled from the island to the mainland at his/her expense.

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Such claims should be assessed on their merits and decisions should accord with the principles of the Policy (POL-3076). Given the relatively high cost of vehicular barge travel, every reasonable effort should be made to use the passenger ferry where alternative land transport options are readily available, including the use of a Council vehicle on the islands (see para. 2.4 below).

1.4. Accommodation

When attending conferences, Councillors must take advantage of any cost savings available from any package provided by conference organisers and, therefore, stay in the recommended accommodation unless prior approval has been granted by the Mayor, the CEO or the CEO's delegate. In all other cases, Council must decide what legitimate accommodation costs will be reimbursed.

Refer to *Part 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.

Refer to *Part 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 paid is:

- \$500.00 per annum for each councillor; and
- \$6,000.00 per annum for the Mayor.

Where the Mayor has delegated the attendance at a function on the Mayor's behalf to another Councillor, any costs incurred by that Councillor for that function are to be charged against the Mayor's hospitality expenses account.

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 1.1 and 1.2 above.

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

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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*

Council provides office accommodation and access to meeting rooms for Councillors.

The standard of Councillor office accommodation is as approved by Council. In general, rooms provided for Councillor contact with Divisional constituents will be located at Council offices.

Furniture and fittings for Councillor offices will be of a standard to allow Councillors to adequately undertake their roles.

2.1.1. *Secretarial Support*

Councillors are provided with two full-time Personal Assistants to service the Councillors as a group.

In addition to a Personal Assistant, the Mayor is entitled to a full-time Secretary under Council's usual terms of employment and an Executive Officer. The Executive Officer's position is to manage, coordinate and plan the Mayor's workload and resourcing across Councillors' and Mayor's support staff in accordance with the allocated budget, as well as supervising other staff; and to provide other specialist support to the Mayor.

Staffing is usually sufficient to enable adequate coverage when any one of the aforementioned staff is on leave.

2.1.2. *Computer for Business Use*

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

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

2.1.3. *Land Line and Internet Access*

Councillors are provided with:

- a. a landline telephone within Council offices;

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- b. Internet access for business use within or outside of Council offices on Council provided equipment, including supported social media sites (in accordance with relevant legislation, policies, guidelines and procedures); and
- c. where wireless coverage is not available at a Councillor's home, reimbursement for private ADSL connection (or equivalent) will be considered where there is a genuine business need.

2.1.4. Fax/Scanner

Councillors are provided with a facsimile/scanner for business use at the Councillors' office.

2.1.5. Printer, Photocopier, Paper Shredder

Councillors are provided with a printer, photocopier and paper shredder for business use at the Councillors' office.

2.1.6. 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.

2.1.7. Publications

Councillors can access copies of relevant legislation books and journals considered necessary for undertaking their duties either through approved websites or the Council's corporate or public library services.

2.1.8. Other Administrative Necessities

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

2.1.9. Advertising

Council will not reimburse or provide funds, services or facilities solely or mainly for the purposes of advertising by, or the self-promotion of Councillors.

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2.1.10. *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, e.g. printing, postage and venue hire.

2.2. **Maintenance Costs of any Council Owned Equipment**

Council will cover all ongoing maintenance costs associated with Council owned equipment to ensure it is operating for optimal professional use (subject to proper usage and standards of care).

2.3. **Name Badges and Safety Equipment**

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 a name badge.

2.4. **Motor Vehicles**

Councillors are able to use a vehicle from the Council car pool for business-related usage on North Stradbroke Island or the Southern Moreton Bay Islands subject to vehicle availability and in accordance with the existing car pool use procedures.

2.5. **Vehicle Parking**

Council will provide parking facilities for Councillors at the location of the Councillors' offices.

2.6. **Telecommunication Needs**

Councillors will be provided with a mobile telephone device such as a Blackberry to a similar standard as that provided to Council managers.

Council will pay for all costs associated with the business use of these devices. This equipment may be used for personal use. A deduction of \$11.50 per pay period (fortnight) will be made from each Councillor's remuneration to reflect the private usage component. This figure may be varied from time to time by amendment of this Guideline by resolution of Council.

2.7. **Insurance Cover**

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

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2.8. Provision of Meals

Councillors will be provided with light meals and morning and afternoon teas if they are required to attend statutory or other formal Council meetings or workshops that extend over these meal periods.

2.9. Councillor Newsletters

Four newsletters per year may be produced on the Council's corporate stationery and distributed within the appropriate electorate. No newsletters will be allowed at Council cost during the period three months prior to a Council election.

2.10. Salary Sacrificing

Councillors will be eligible to salary sacrifice items in addition to superannuation in accordance with relevant Council Policies and Guidelines and the Australian Taxation Office Rulings as amended from time to time.

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GL-3076-001 Part B

**Guideline - Councillor Travel and Accommodation
Procedures**

**Guideline to
'Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities for Councillors'
Policy (POL-3076)**

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1. General conditions - Councillor Accommodation and Travel

All Councillor air travel and accommodation requires prior approval by the Mayor, the CEO or the CEO's delegate.

All air travel and/or accommodation requirements will be coordinated through the Travel Coordinator, Corporate Acquisitions and Facilities Group subject to authorisation.

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.

Travel and accommodation arrangements will not be booked until the Travel Coordinator receives a completed Travel Request form with all required approvals and travel details.

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 Council's Travel Coordinator 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 Mayor, the CEO or the CEO's delegate is responsible for:

- approving expense reimbursements in accordance with this Policy;
- approving all Councillor accommodation and travel for which reimbursement will be sought.

Travel Coordinator 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;
- 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

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 prior approval of the Travel Coordinator. Councillors must not negotiate travel rates directly with travel suppliers. All such requests must be processed through the Travel Coordinator.

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4. Approval

All Councillor travel requires the approval of the Mayor, the CEO or the CEO's delegate (except international travel which requires the approval of Council). All travel requests from a Councillor must state the relevance of such event to the Council and as far as practicable estimate the full cost of attendance. Upon approval, the Councillors' Personal Assistant should ensure any necessary registration forms, a copy of the approval or Council resolution if applicable, and the Travel Request Form are completed and forwarded to the Travel Coordinator as soon as practicable.

Where Councillors are appointed by the Council as Council's representative (or delegate) on State or Federal committees or Government associations, all travel and accommodation associated with the Councillor's fulfilment of that role will be approved (as above) without the need for a further report to Council.

5. Processing Travel Requests

A completed Travel Request form, accompanied by the following must be received before a booking is processed:

- the approval, and
- conference documentation and registration details if applicable.

Verbal or email notification of intention to travel will not be acted upon and is not considered valid notice.

Except in genuine emergencies, the Travel Coordinator shall process all travel and accommodation arrangements, including associated registrations.

Unless specifically requested to the contrary, the Travel Coordinator will arrange bookings that best fit the preferred options and are most advantageous to Council. All itineraries will be confirmed with the Councillor before bookings are confirmed. No alterations will be accepted after confirmation of bookings, except under extenuating circumstances as approved by the relevant authorising officer.

Requests for travel and/or accommodation must be lodged with the Travel Coordinator with sufficient time to take advantage of "early bird" and advance booking discounts. Confirmation of travel or accommodation cannot be guaranteed for late requests. As a guide, international travel requests should be received no later than 6-8 weeks before the date of departure, and domestic travel requests should be made no later than 3 weeks before the date of departure.

6. 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.

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7. Class of Travel

The standard of air travel for councillors travelling on Council business is as follows:

- For domestic air travel of duration 3 hours or less, the class of travel shall be economy;
- For domestic air travel of duration greater than 3 hours, the class of travel shall be business; and
- For international travel, the class of travel shall be business.

Where available, Councillors may be required to travel by a premium economy class instead of business class. Councillors may upgrade to a higher class of travel if there is no additional cost to Council.

8. 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.

9. Accommodation

Accommodation arrangements for Councillors must comply with the provisions of Part A of this Guideline. Conference accommodation packages are to be used where it is economically feasible to do so.

The authorising person may approve 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 in the Redlands 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 authorising person may approve such costs giving consideration of the home location, driving times and participation requirements of the Councillor.

Wherever practical to do so, Council will book and pre-pay 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. It is the Councillor's responsibility to seek reimbursement of legitimate expenses upon return. Reimbursement will not be approved without original receipts, except in extenuating circumstances upon submission of a statutory declaration.

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Accommodation meeting the general standards applicable for domestic travel will apply to international travel arrangements.

Prepayment of all accommodation is preferred, however, it is acknowledged that some countries do not permit this. In such cases, an appropriate travel advance may be made to assist in meeting accommodation costs.

10. Use of a Motor Vehicle to Attend Events

It is not permitted to use a vehicle to attend an event where airline travel is the most efficient form of travel.

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.

11. Hire Cars

The requirement for a hire car should be identified at the time of seeking approval for attendance. Any subsequent need for a hire car must be submitted for approval by the authorising person.

12. Taxi and Cab Charge Vouchers

Cabcharge vouchers are available from the Travel Coordinator. Councillors are encouraged to use this facility as an alternative to seeking reimbursement for taxi costs. Any unused vouchers must be returned to Council's Travel Coordinator immediately upon return to Council. Liability for any misuse or loss of vouchers rests with the traveller.

The use of Cabcharge vouchers for travel between Redland and Brisbane is not permitted unless approved by the authorising person in advance of the travel and shown to be more beneficial than other options available. Similarly, reimbursement of these fares will not be considered unless prior authorisation is given.

Cabcharge must only be used to attend official Council functions. Incidental, non-business related travel while attending an event must be met by the Councillor.

13. Meals and Incidentals

Domestic Travel

A prior night's accommodation shall only be approved where travel to the event on the day of commencement is not practical. Similarly accommodation on the night of the final day of an event will only be approved where travel home that day is not practical.

Where a Councillor is required to travel, the Councillor is entitled to reimbursement for the reasonable cost of meals and expenses, i.e. breakfast, lunch and dinner.

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Incidentals will be paid for each full day (overnight) the councillor is required to be away from home. This reimbursement 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 Guideline.

Subject to the discretion of the approving officer, a Councillor may extend a domestic business trip to include non-business activities provided that this is at no additional cost to Council, i.e. the Councillor meets additional meal, accommodation, travel and other expenses that would not have been incurred otherwise.

International Travel

For international travel, a travel advance may be paid which must be reconciled on the Councillor's return. Actual 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 \$200 per day may be paid to cover eligible business related expenses including meals and incidental expenses.

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

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

A corporate credit card may be issued in lieu of a travel advance (see section 20 below). This is preferred to cash advances.

Subject to the prior approval of Council, a Councillor may extend an international business trip to include non-business activities provided that this is at no additional cost to Council, i.e. the Councillor meets additional meal, accommodation, travel and other expenses that would not have been incurred otherwise.

14. 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. All claims under \$55.00 may be made through petty cash.

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. Approved claims for reimbursement shall be presented to the Travel Coordinator for processing.

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15. In-Room Internet Connection for Business Purposes

Where in-room internet connection is required for undertaking Council business, reasonable connection costs may be claimed on completion of travel against receipts.

16. Hospitality Expenses

Hospitality expenses may only be paid in accordance with the Expenses Reimbursement and Provisions of Facilities for Councillors Policy and Guideline (POL-3076 and GL-3076-001).

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; and
- approval by the appropriate authorising person.

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

- Alcohol;
- Babysitting fees;
- Kennel fees;
- 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
- Reading materials

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

17. 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.

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Reimbursement of legitimate 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 and processing.

18. Travel Insurance

Council has travel insurance arrangements in place, including medical and luggage components that covers all employees and Councillors on authorised Council business, conferences, courses, etc.

19. Accompanying Partners and Personal Travel Arrangements

All travel and accommodation for partners of Councillors must be arranged and paid by the Councillor. Personal arrangements may be booked through Council's contracted supplier if desired. The supplier will invoice the Councillor prior to departure. Council will not pay for any private travel expenses.

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

20. Credit cards

A credit card may be made available for Councillors to meet overseas travel expenses. Credit cards will be issued with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer. The credit card should only be used for business expenses directly related to the Councillor's attendance at the event.

Examples of appropriate costs are: accommodation (where Council's pre-payment is not acknowledged or honoured by the hotel), missed flights (where contact with Council's travel services provider is not possible) or where specific instruction is received from Council's Travel Coordinator to use the card to meet business related expenses.

Personal expenses which are not reimbursable under this Guideline must not be charged to the card.

A Statement of Expenses form (including all receipts) must be used to reconcile all credit card expenditure. This must be approved by the authorising person and provided to Council's Travel Coordinator within seven days of completion of the travel.

Credit cards must be returned to the Travel Coordinator for safe storage when not in use.

21. Councillor Reporting Arrangements

Councillors shall, on their return, present a report to a General Council Meeting summarising the conference and course content highlighting areas of interest and/or benefit to Council. The responsibility for submission of the report rests with the Councillor leading any delegation. The report must be presented to Council within two months of return from the conference.

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