



NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

POLICY MANUAL

COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCES, TRAVELLING AND OTHER EXPENSES

Originated Date: Adopted 5 April 1993-Min. No. 12/93 (as Policy 4)

Amended Date/s: Revised 3 May 1999 – Min. No. 196/99
Revised 13 March 2001 – Min. No. 099/01
Revised 7 February 2005 – Min. No.44/05
Revised 19 December 2005 – Min. No.422/05
Revised 16 August 2010 – Min. No. 207/10
Revised 23 June 2014 – Min. No. 144/14
Revised 17 August 2015 – Min. No. 222/15
Revised 12 December 2016 – Min. No. 361/16

Applicable Legislation: Section 340A of the *Local Government Act 1993*,
Schedule 5 Section 1 of the *Local Government Act 1993*
Reg. 42(2) of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2005*

Objective To reimburse Councillors travelling and other expenses so that electors are not deterred by cost from seeking a position in Council.

Administration: Governance

Review Cycle/Date: Next review 2019

1. COUNCILLOR'S TRAVELLING EXPENSES

- 1.1 Travelling expenses will apply from each Councillor's place of normal residence to the authorised destination and return.
- 1.2 Reimbursement is to be paid quarterly on the closest pay run to 1 day of April, July, October and January each year.
- 1.3 For the purpose of the "Corporation's business solely" the following policy is to apply:
- i) Travelling inside the Council area to attend a meeting of Council or a Committee of Council Meeting, deputation, inspection or tour in respect of which notice has been given to attend, provided such travelling originates and concludes at the Councillor's normal residence, or his normal place of work, as the case may be.
 - ii) Travelling outside the circumstances of (i) above, either generally or specifically up to 2,000 km per annum in excess of which Council to consider claims submitted.
 - iii) Travelling upon business of the Council outside the Council area in compliance with a resolution of the Council.
 - iv) Travelling to and from any seminar/conference in compliance with a resolution or policy of Council.
 - v) Travelling to be paid at the rates prescribed for the Tasmanian Public Service.

2. COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

For each term of office, Council will provide each councillor with

(1) A CAPITAL COST ALLOWANCE

- a) a capital cost allowance up to a maximum of \$3,440 for purchase of a mobile phone, an ipad / printer/ scanner, a computer (loaded with an appropriate operating system and Microsoft Office suite) and a filing cabinet to assist them in performing his/her duties,
- b) the capital cost allowance will be paid upon evidence of the purchase of equipment.



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or

(ii) AN ANNUAL LEASE ALLOWANCE

- a) an annual lease allowance up to \$860 per annum to offset the usage of existing personal communication equipment as listed above;
- b) the annual lease allowance will be paid on the following pro-rata basis:

\$430	per annum for computer usage
\$120	per annum for printer/scanner/ipad
\$ 90	per annum for mobile phone
\$ 80	per annum for filing cabinet
<u>\$140</u>	per annum for support
\$80	per annum

when a Councillor provides personal communication equipment, which has not been funded previously by Council, for Council use.

Should a Councillor resign or the term of office be terminated prior to the normal four year term, then a pro-rata refund of the capital cost allowance may be payable by that Councillor (this shall be in the form of a cash refund or an equivalent deduction from any allowance payable to the Councillor under Section 7).

The capital cost allowance/ annual lease allowance to be indexed annually on 1 November based on Hobart CPI at the end of the preceding financial year.

3. TELEPHONES

Council will reimburse Councillors for the cost of access charges for voice mail, telephone rentals, the cost of a separate line for internet access and the documented calls attributed to their role as a Councillor (where second lines are installed, all calls will be reimbursed on the dedicated line as calls associated with their function as a Councillor).

As soon as contact numbers for separate telephone lines, mobile phones, and/or faxes are available details will be circulated in Council documentation.

4. EXPENSES INCURRED FOR CHILD OR DEPENDANT CARE

Council will reimburse a Councillor for necessary, reasonable expenses in relation to care of any child or dependant of the Councillor, incurred whilst carrying out the duties of office, including:

- Attendance at Council and Council Committee meetings.
- To attend meetings arising as a result of a Councillor being appointed by Council to an internal or external body or committee except where the body or committee reimburses relevant child care expenses incurred by the Councillor.
- Upon inspections or business within the Council area, provided such inspections or business are undertaken in compliance with resolutions of the Council.
- To attend to business of the Council, outside the Council area, in compliance with a resolution of Council.
- Attend any seminar/conference in compliance with a resolution or policy of Council.
- Upon inspections or business as arranged by the General Manager or Departmental Managers.
- Claims will be paid upon presentation of a receipt from a licensed care provider as well as evidence of entitlement or non-entitlement to the Commonwealth Government Child Care Benefit Scheme or other applicable scheme. Any entitlement is to be off-set against the hourly rate charged by the registered care provider.
- At the General Manager's discretion, care may be paid at an hourly rate of \$20/hour when no licensed provider is available (evenings for example).
- Care costs are not eligible for reimbursement if care is provided by a person who normally or regularly lives with the councillor or is a member of the Councillor's immediate family.
- All claims must detail the date and time care was provided and the business of council it related to.



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- Council will not reimburse any claims that are more than 3 months old.
- Care expenses will, unless there are exceptional circumstances, be paid in arrears.

5. INSURANCE

Council will provide personal accident insurance on the lives of Councillors and their accompanying partners/spouses for the time being whilst travelling to and from and attending Council meetings or on Council business, whether authorised or not and shall include the attendance at Council Functions which a Councillor is expected to attend.

Schedule of Benefits

Capital Benefit	\$200,000
Weekly Benefit – Injury	Up to \$2,000
Weekly Benefit – Illness	Not insured
Weekly Benefit Period	Up to 104 weeks
Age Limit	Up to 75 years

Excluded period of claim – Weekly Benefit for 7 days.

Aggregate limit of liability for all claims \$2,000,000.

Perils Insured – Bodily injury caused by an accident and solely and independently of any other cause except illness directly resulting from, or medical or surgical treatment rendered necessary by, such injury, occasions the death or disablement within twelve calendar months from the date of the accident by which such injury is caused.'

6. CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

Council will make a budget allocation each year to reimburse delegates registration, travel costs and accommodation expenses ('mini-bar' expenses limited to \$10 per day). Partners will be reimbursed for meals at state conferences and the 'major dinner' at Federal conferences.

The budget will be allocated to the following conferences:

- LGAT & LGMA conference to be attended by up to 6 councillors
- ALGA conference attended by Mayor & Deputy Mayor
- Australian Roads conference attended by 1 councillor
- 'Other' conferences and seminar sessions as approved.

Attendance to all conferences, seminars and training sessions with a cost in excess of \$150 are to be in compliance with a resolution of the Council, except on emergency situations, where approval must be given by a unanimous approval from Council Executive.

Following attendance of a conference by any councillor, a report must be submitted to Council setting out the relevance to local government, and the benefits that can be further investigated by Council. Where two or more councillors attend a conference, a joint report may be submitted.

7. COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES

7.1 The Council shall pay allowances in accordance with Section 42 and Schedule 4 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015*.

7.2 The increase in allowances payable to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors take effect on 1 November each year.

NOTE:

In accordance with *Section 340A(2A) of the Local Government Act 1993*, the General Manager is obliged to pay Councillors the prescribed allowances. The Act states:



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- i) A Councillor is entitled to prescribed allowances.
- ii) A Mayor and Deputy Mayor are entitled to prescribed allowances in addition to any allowances referred to in subsection (i).
- iii) A Councillor, Mayor or Deputy Mayor may decide not to receive part or all of an allowance.
- iv) A decision under subsection (iii) is to be written by notice to the General Manager of the relevant Council.

7.3 Allowances will be paid either fortnightly upon request to the Corporate Services Manager or on a quarterly basis and paid in the closest pay run to 1 day of April, July, October and January each year.

In accordance with Section 340A(3) and (4) of the *Local Government Act 1993* should a Councillor determine that he/she does not wish to accept all/part of the prescribed allowance or salary sacrifice to a Superannuation Fund, notification is to be provided to the General Manager in writing.

If a Councillor wishes to donate his/her entitlement to a charity or not for profit organisation then he/she shall be entitled to do so, and this does not require any disclosure by Council.

8. CLAIM FOR EXPENSES

8.1 Claims for travelling expenses or reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in accordance with this policy shall be made to the General Manager not later than three (3) months after the claim has been incurred and shall be submitted on the prescribed form. Claims are preferred on a monthly basis.

8.2 Purchases or payment of expenses by the Mayor and Councillors on a Northern Midlands Council corporate credit card must be in accordance with Council's Business Credit Cards Policy and Procedures.

8.3 Where, in the opinion of the General Manager, a question arises as to whether a claim for reimbursement of expenses is ineligible under this policy, or the claim appears unreasonable or does not serve the interests of Council, the General Manager shall refer the matter to Council for decision and policy guidance.

NOTE:

Council is encouraged to regularly review and revise this Policy. It is incumbent upon the General Manager and Councillors themselves to provide Council with this opportunity by referring claims, even historically accepted claims, to Council for policy consideration. The General Manager should endeavour to refer the matter without disclosing the identity of the individual who submitted the claim.

9. STATIONERY

Council, shall upon request, provide Councillors with standard stationery held or obtained generally for the organisation's requirements. Requests for stationery will be by way of the completion of a requisition presented to the General Manager.

10. SECRETARIAL ASSISTANCE

Council will provide a reasonable level of word processing assistance to enable elected members to carry out their official duties. The General Manager will have discretion in determining the extent of assistance which can be provided.

