

POLICY

1.6.15

FEES, EXPENSES AND FACILITIES FOR COUNCILLORS

2020/2021

DOCUMENT CONTENTS

1. **POLICY OVERVIEW** 3

2. **DEFINITIONS**..... 4

3. **FEES** 5

4. **EXPENSES** 5

 4.1. **Council and Committee Meetings** 5

 4.2. **Conferences, Seminars, etc.** 6

 4.3. **Training and Skills Development** 6

 4.4. **Civic and Ceremonial Functions** 6

 4.5. **Informal Functions, Staff and Councillor Send-Offs etc.** 6

 4.6. **Delegations, Meetings etc.** 6

 4.7. **Travel**..... 7

 4.8. **Miscellaneous** 7

 4.9. **Insurances** 7

 4.10. **Limits**..... 8

5. **FACILITIES** 8

 5.1. **Mayor** 8

6. **APPENDIX A: COUNCILLOR EXPENSE CLAIM FORM** 9

1. POLICY OVERVIEW

TITLE: Policy for Fees, Expenses and Facilities for Councillors

NUMBER: 1.6.15

ADOPTION: 20 August 2020
This Policy commences from the date of adoption by Council and replaces any other previous Policy.

PURPOSE This Policy is intended to ensure Councillors receive adequate and reasonable expenses and facilities to enable them to carry out their civic duties, and that they are provided in an accountable and transparent manner.

SCOPE This Policy applies to the fees, expenses and facilities for the Mayor and Councillors during the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

LEGISLATION AND OTHER REFERENCES *Local Government Act 1993*
Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
“Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities for Mayors and Councillors in NSW”, Division of Local Government, 2009
“Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW”, Office of Local Government, 2018

ICAC publications

REVIEW AND AMENDMENT This Policy is required to be reviewed annually to ensure it meets all statutory requirements and the needs of Council.
All changes approved through the review process are to be recorded.
This Policy may be amended or cancelled by Council at any time without prior notice or obligations.

HISTORY

Version	Details
1.6.1	Adopted 15 October 1993
1.6.1	Amended 18 October 2001
1.6.1	Adopted 14 February 2007 for 2006/2007
1.6.1	Adopted 21 June 2007 for 2007/2008
1.6.2	Adopted 15 May 2008 for 2008/2009
1.6.3	Adopted 21 May 2009 for 2009/2010
1.6.4	Amended 17 January 2010 for 2009/2010
1.6.5	Adopted 24 June 2010 for 2010/2011
1.6.6	Adopted 16 June 2011 for 2011/2012
1.6.7	Adopted 21 June 2012 for 2012/2013
1.6.8	Adopted 21 June 2013 for 2013/2014
1.6.9	Adopted 18 June 2014 for 2014/2015
1.6.10	Adopted 25 June 2015 for 2015/2016
1.6.11	Adopted 16 June 2016 for 2016/2017
1.6.12	Adopted 15 June 2017 for 2017/2018
1.6.13	Adopted 21 June 2018 for 2018/2019
1.6.14	Adopted 20 June 2019 for 2019/2020
1.6.15	Adopted 20 August 2020 for 2020/2021

2. DEFINITIONS

the Act: The *Local Government Act 1993*

civic functions: Also referred to as ‘functions of civic office’; functions that Councillors are required to undertake to fulfil their legislated role and responsibilities for Council that should result in a direct benefit for Council and/or for the Weddin Local Government Area (LGA)

expenses: Payments made by Council to reimburse Councillors for reasonable costs or charges incurred or to be incurred for discharging their civic functions. Expenses must be outlined in this Policy and may be either reimbursed to a Councillor or paid directly by Council for something that is deemed a necessary expense to enable them to perform their civic functions.
Expenses are separate and additional to annual fees.

facilities: Equipment and services that are provided by Council to Councillors to enable them to perform their civic functions with relative ease and at a standard appropriate to their professional role as Councillors.

the Regulation: The *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*

3. FEES

Annual fees for the Mayor and Councillors for 2020/2021 are as follows: -

Councillors	\$12,160
Mayor	\$26,530

There is no separate fee for the Deputy Mayor.

The above fees comply with the determination of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

4. EXPENSES

Reasonable costs or charges deemed necessary in enabling Councillors to perform their civic functions are set out below.

These expenses may be reimbursed to Councillors or paid directly by Council. Claims for reimbursement should be submitted within four weeks and include relevant receipts and tax invoices. A signed statement is to be submitted for any expenses not supported by detailed accounts. Monies paid in advance are to be fully reconciled within four weeks and any unused funds repaid to Council.

Council will be responsible for the expenses of Councillors incurred as part of attending meetings, official engagements and functions of which the Councillor is an authorised representative of Council. Expenses relating to a Councillor's spouse, partner or other accompanying person(s) will be the responsibility of the Councillor except where otherwise stated in this Policy.

Claims for a general expense allowance (e.g. \$100 per day) are not eligible for payment. Claims which would result in a private benefit from expenses and facilities are not eligible for payment unless specifically permitted under this Policy and the private benefit component is reimbursed to Council.

This Policy sets out approval arrangements for all expenses and facilities provided. Approval should be sought and gained prior to expenses being incurred. Approval for discretionary trips, attendance at conferences and/or for other significant expenses and facilities should, where possible be obtained at a full meeting of Council. Where this is not possible or appropriate, approval is to be given jointly by the Mayor and the General Manager. In the case of the Mayor seeking approval, it is to be given jointly by the Deputy Mayor or another Councillor and the General Manager. Approval sought from a single authority should be avoided.

If any disputes arise regarding the provision of expenses and facilities, the relevant claim is to be reviewed at a full meeting of Council.

4.1. Council and Committee Meetings

Reasonable expenses include:

- ❖ travelling expenses as set out below
- ❖ meal costs (excluding alcohol) to a limit of \$50 per meeting

4.2. Conferences, Seminars, etc.

Attendance is to be approved by Council, preferably in advance. The relevant budget for 2020/2021 is \$20,000. A written report is to be submitted to Council on the aspects of the conference relevant to Council business and the local community.

Reasonable expenses include:

- ❖ registration fees
- ❖ accommodation
- ❖ meal costs (excluding alcohol)
- ❖ travelling expenses as set out below
- ❖ necessary resources e.g. text or reference books
- ❖ cost of official dinner for spouse or partner at Local Government NSW Annual Conference

4.3. Training and Skills Development

Attendance is to be approved by Council, preferably in advance. The relevant budget for 2020/2021 is \$10,000. A written report summarising the training and/or skills development is to be submitted to Council.

Reasonable expenses include:

- ❖ registration fees
- ❖ accommodation
- ❖ meal costs (excluding alcohol)
- ❖ travelling expenses as set out below
- ❖ necessary resources e.g. text or reference books

4.4. Civic and Ceremonial Functions

This applies to Civic Receptions, Award Ceremonies, Citizenship Ceremonies, functions for charities formally supported by Council, out-of-area functions, hosting of visiting dignitaries and official delegations.

Reasonable expenses include:

- ❖ meal costs (excluding alcohol)
- ❖ meal costs (excluding alcohol) for spouses or partners (if invited) within NSW
- ❖ travelling expenses as set out below

4.5. Informal Functions, Staff and Councillor Send-Offs etc.

These expenses are at Councillors' own cost.

4.6. Delegations, Meetings etc.

This applies to nominated meetings of other organisations on behalf of Council, representing Council at nominated public meetings, meetings with Government Ministers or senior departmental officers.

Reasonable expenses include:

- ❖ accommodation
- ❖ meal costs (excluding alcohol)
- ❖ travelling expenses as set out below

4.7. Travel

Council will endeavour to provide a fleet vehicle for travel for 'official business', which includes:

- Council meetings;
- Council Committee meetings;
- Meetings of which the Councillor is the nominated Delegate;
- Section 355 Committee meetings;
- External Organisation/Committee meetings of which the Councillor is the nominated Delegate;
- Workshops convened by Council;
- Public meetings convened by Council;
- Training programs relating to the professional role of Councillors;
- Inspections within the Weddin LGA, undertaken according to a resolution of Council; and
- Attendance at a function or meeting of which a formal invitation to attend arises only as a result of their position as a Councillor and undertaken according to a resolution of Council, provided:
 - a) travel within the Weddin LGA utilises the most direct route as well as the most practicable and economical mode of transport, subject to any personal medical considerations.
 - b) a formal claim for reimbursement is lodged no later than four weeks after the expense was incurred.

Road and bridge tolls incurred during travel for official business are considered reasonable expenses.

Expenses incurred from the use of a Councillor's own vehicle are to be calculated using the return distance from the Councillor's home and the applicable rate per kilometre as prescribed in the *Local Government (State) Award* for private vehicle use, provided it exceeds 10km.

Air or rail fares within NSW are to be approved by both the Mayor and General Manager. In the case of the Mayor seeking approval, it is to be given jointly by the Deputy Mayor or another Councillor and the General Manager. Airport taxes incurred during approved air travel are considered reasonable expenses.

Applications for interstate or overseas travel must be made to Council in advance, with full details of the travel to be disclosed including itinerary, costs and reason for the travel. A detailed written report is to be submitted on return from approved overseas travel, which will be referred to in Council's Annual Report.

4.8. Miscellaneous

Reasonable expenses include:

- ❖ telephone calls and internet use for official business
- ❖ entry fees to official functions
- ❖ taxi fares
- ❖ parking fees
- ❖ personal gifts to host dignitaries if an official delegate to a major function
- ❖ limited legal assistance or expenses in accordance with Guidelines
- ❖ care arrangements e.g. for children or the elderly, in accordance with the Guidelines.

4.9. Insurances

Councillors are covered under Council's insurance policies for the following: -

- public liability (for matters arising out of Councillors' performance of their civic duties and/or exercise of their Council functions);
- professional indemnity (for matters arising out of Councillors' performance of their civic duties and/or exercise of their functions);
- personal injury while on Council business (Note: Councillors are not covered by Workers' Compensation payments or arrangements); and
- travel insurance for approved interstate and overseas travel on Council business.

All insurances are subject to limitations and/or conditions as set out in Council's insurance policies.

4.10. Limits

Claims in excess of the following amounts are to be referred to Council: -

- meal costs: \$50 per person
- regional accommodation costs: \$230 per night
- capital city accommodation costs: \$380 per night
- telephone calls and internet use: \$10 per day

5. FACILITIES

Equipment and services that are deemed necessary in enabling Councillors to perform their civic functions with relative ease and at a standard appropriate to their professional role as Councillors are set out below.

Council resources are not to be used for political purposes, and are to be returned immediately after the completion of Councillors' term of office, the cessation of civic duties, or as otherwise resolved by Council. Councillors may apply to purchase their used equipment at market price or written down value.

Council will provide the following facilities to assist Councillors in their civic functions: -

- ❖ use of office equipment (phones, fax, photocopier)
- ❖ use of internet
- ❖ secretarial and administrative support
- ❖ stationery, office supplies, postage, business cards and other consumables
- ❖ satchels
- ❖ use of non-dedicated Council vehicle
- ❖ meals and refreshments
- ❖ meals on evenings of Council meetings and official dinners, light refreshments at Committee and working party meetings
- ❖ corporate clothing and protective clothing and equipment (if required)
- ❖ access to an office
- ❖ iPad and wireless router


5.1. Mayor

In addition to the facilities, equipment and services provided to Councillors, additional facilities may be provided to a Mayor to recognise the special role, responsibilities and duties of the position both in the Council and in the community.

- furnished office with integrated computer (temporary office to be provided),
- mobile telephone linked to computer,
- dedicated motor vehicle, 6-cylinder sedan with private use at cost, available for other Councillors when not required.

Council's resources are not to be used for political purposes, and are to be returned immediately after the completion of their term of office, the cessation of civic duties, or as otherwise resolved by Council. Councillors may apply to purchase their used equipment at market price or written down value.

6. APPENDIX A: COUNCILLOR EXPENSE CLAIM FORM

COUNCILLOR EXPENSE CLAIM FORM							
		COUNCILLOR:					
		ADDRESS					
		CREDITOR NO.					
		JOB NO.					
CLAIM FOR THE MONTH OF:							
TRAVEL EXPENSE CLAIM							
DEPART			ARRIVE			MEETING	
Date	Time	Place	Date	Time	Place	DETAILS	KM
						TOTAL KM:	
Motor vehicle details							
Make/Model					Engine Capacity		Under 2.5L / Over 2.5L <small>(Cross out one that does not apply)</small>
OTHER EXPENSES				JOB NO.			
FARES AND PARKING FEES (attach receipts)							
Details:							
				\$			
ACCOMMODATION (attach receipts)							
Details:							
				\$			
MEALS a) per attached receipts							
				\$			
				\$			
TOTAL CLAIM:				\$			
Signature of Claimant:							
				/ /			
				Date			
				Authorized for payment:			
				General Manager/Director			
				/ /			

Further information: Council 02 63431212		✉ Email: mail@weddin.nsw.gov.au	
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