

Name:	Elected Member Allowances and Expenses		
Type:	Council Policy		
Owner:	Chief Executive Officer		
Responsible Officer:	Governance and Strategy Manager		
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1 PURPOSE

This policy sets out Elected Members allowances and expenses payable to provide necessary support to effectively carry out their roles in Council. This policy covers allowances, benefits, and support to be provided to Elected Members.

2 PRINCIPLES

Council is committed to providing payment or reimbursement of allowances and expenses to Elected Members to carry out their official duties in an accountable, transparent manner that ensures the proper use of Council resources in the most efficient and cost effective way.

3 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
Allowances	Allowances provided in compensation to Elected Members in consideration and recognition of the time and effort spent in their roles on Council.
Elected Member	Individuals elected to Council. For the purposes of this policy, Elected Member refers to Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Aldermen
Ordinary Elected Member	An Elected Member other than the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or, during the relevant period, an acting Mayor.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Elected Member Allowances

- 4.1.1 Allowances are set annually by Council as part of budget deliberations.
- 4.1.2 Allowances (apart from Professional Development Allowance) are to be paid from 1 July each year on a monthly basis in arrears by electronic funds transfer to the Elected Member's nominated account.
- 4.1.3 Where an Elected Member is acting as Mayor in the absence of the Mayor the acting Mayor will be paid 100% of the Mayoral Base and Electoral Allowance for that period.

4.2 Extra Meeting Allowance

- 4.2.1 For Ordinary Elected Members this allowance may be paid by attending the following types of unpaid meetings (alternate members are only paid if the appointed member is not in attendance):
 - (a) Council Committee Meetings;
 - (b) Special Meetings of Council;
 - (c) Special Meetings of Council Committees;
 - (d) Council Advisory/Networking Group Meetings;
 - (e) Council workshops or briefings;

- (f) Meetings of external agencies or organisations to which Council has formally appointed an Elected Member to represent the Council; and
 - (g) Meetings of the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory where the Elected Member is a delegate of the Council.
- 4.2.2 Extra Meeting Allowance payable per Extra Meeting is set annually by Council as part of budget deliberations and published on the Council website.
- 4.2.3 Extra Meeting Allowance may be claimed where substantial travel of at least four hours (including any transit time) occurred to attend an Extra Meeting on a different day the meeting was held.
- 4.2.4 Elected Members must attend at least 75% of the duration of an Extra Meeting to be eligible to claim.
- 4.2.5 Claims forms are to be submitted by the second working day in the month following the meeting. Late claims will be paid the following month.
- 4.2.6 Extra Meeting Allowance claims for the financial year must be submitted by the last payment run for the end of financial year.
- 4.3 Professional Development Allowance**
- 4.3.1 May be applied for on Council's approved form and submitted to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for approval.
- 4.3.2 May be expended in relation to attending or undertaking the following types of conference and training:
- (a) Course study or other training course relevant to perform as an Elected Member;
 - (b) A conference, seminar, symposium, expo or other similar event on a topic or function directly related to local government, Council services, Council vision or duties relevant to being an Elected Member; or
 - (c) Training, mediation or counselling recommended or ordered as part of a decision relating to a Code of Conduct complaint.
- 4.3.3 If an Elected Member is attending a training course that exceeds the professional development allowance available in the current financial year within the term of the Council:
- (a) Any remaining professional development allowance in the current financial year may be expended to partially pay for the training course with the Elected Member personally paying the additional costs; and
 - (b) An Elected Member may apply to be reimbursed for the additional costs of the training course against the professional development allowance in future financial years.
- 4.3.4 Access to reimbursement is subject to:
- (a) Being an Elected Member at the time when a claim for reimbursement is made; and
 - (b) Any changes in the maximum amount of professional development allowance available in the future financial year(s).
- 4.4 Elected Member Travel**
- 4.4.1 Air travel is to be by the most reasonable means available, taking into consideration flight times, flight duration and dates available and shall not include business or first class. If air travel is required, it will be booked and paid by the Council.
- 4.4.2 Accommodation is to be by the most reasonable means available and will be booked and paid by the Council.

- 4.4.3 An Elected Member required to travel for Council business by Council resolution, is entitled to payment or reimbursement for reasonable expenses for necessary travel and accommodation.
- 4.4.4 Council will pay in advance any registration fees, accommodation deposits and airline tickets for approved Elected Member travel. Where this is not possible, a reimbursement equivalent to the fees or expenses will be paid subject to the provision of receipts.
- 4.4.5 Should car hire be required, any traffic infringement notices and fines are the individual responsibility of the driver of the vehicle.
- 4.4.6 Elected Members may be accompanied by a spouse or partner subject to Council not incurring any additional expense.
- 4.4.7 Meals and incidentals are to be in accordance with the ATO taxation determination. Meal allowances are not to be paid when the meal is included in the cost of the meeting, conference, or other event.
- 4.4.8 All non-essential additional expenses such as telephone calls, room service or mini-bar supplies are the responsibility of the Elected Member. In the instance where there are no other options, exceptions may be applied to the CEO for approval.
- 4.4.9 Where travel arrangements need to be changed or cancelled, the Elected Member must inform the CEO in writing as soon as possible to minimise any financial loss to Council.
- 4.4.10 The CEO is to report any non-attendance at the next Ordinary Council Meeting.

- 4.5 **Information Technology Capital Entitlement**
- 4.5.1 Over the term of the Council term, each Elected Member is entitled to claim an Information Technology Capital Entitlement up to the value of \$1,200 excluding GST to purchase equipment to carry out official duties (e.g. laptop, computer).
- 4.5.2 Reimbursement will occur from Council once a paid tax invoice has been received.

- 4.6 **Communication Entitlement**
- 4.6.1 Each financial year each Elected Member is entitled to claim a Communication Entitlement up to the value of \$800 excluding GST to carry out official duties (e.g. phone bills, internet connectivity).
- 4.6.2 This will be paid in arrears, in equal monthly instalments as a reimbursement on provision of evidence of expenditure.
- 4.6.3 Proof of evidence must include the Member's Name, or place of residence, or phone number.
- 4.6.4 Communication Entitlement claims for the financial year must be submitted by the last payment run for the end of financial year.

- 4.7 **Council Resources**
The following will be provided to Elected Members to assist in carrying out official duties:
 - (a) A Council email address with calendar facility. An Elected Member's calendar shall be available to other Elected Members and staff in order to facilitate the smooth running of Council operations and as a record of their activities relating to undertaking official duties;
 - (b) Name badge;
 - (c) Business Cards;
 - (d) An Elected Members Portal with dedicated access to Council business papers;

- (e) Through the CEO, Council staff will provide basic IT support including access to relevant systems and email accounts but will not be responsible for privately owned IT equipment;
- (f) Council will provide postage for official correspondence through its internal mail services. Bulk mailing will not be provided;
- (g) Elected Members wishing to use Council resources, such for photocopying and printing, must arrange for the use of these resources through the CEO. Council resources may not be used for personal documents or for circulars, publications or election material;
- (h) Elected members shall not use Council facilities, resources (including staff) for personal reasons including furtherance of their political career.
- (i) A framed Certificate of Service will be presented in Council meeting for Elected Members achieving 10 years of service, with subsequent certificates presented at five yearly intervals.

4.8 Mayoral Benefits

4.8.1 The Mayor is entitled to the following additional benefits to assist them in undertaking official duties:

- (a) Provision and maintenance of Mayoral Robes and Chain of Office;
- (b) Mobile phone and suitable telecommunication plan;
- (c) An office;
- (d) Administrative assistance for official use;
- (e) Provision and use of official Mayoral stationery.
- (f) Use of a dedicated fully maintained Council vehicle for official and private use within the Northern Territory; and
- (g) Reimbursement for costs associated with attendance and participation at official functions where Council is represented.

4.9 Insurance

4.9.1 Elected Members will receive the benefit of insurance cover subject to the wording, limits, excesses and terms and conditions specified in Council's insurance policies for the following:

- (a) Personal Accident;
- (b) Professional Indemnity and Public Liability;
- (c) Motor Vehicle (limited); and
- (d) Councillors and Officers Liability.

5 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 *Community Plan*
- 5.2 *Code of Conduct for Elected Members and Committee Members*
- 5.3 *Council Policy Breach of Code of Conduct by Elected Member*
- 5.4 *Professional Development Allowance Application Form*
- 5.5 *Extra Meeting Allowance Claim Form*

6 REFERENCES AND RELATED LEGISLATION

- 6.1 *Local Government Act*
- 6.2 *Ministerial Guidelines 2: allowances for council members*