



Council Policy

Council Expenses, Reimbursement, Support and Accountability Policy

July 2020

Adopted by Council on

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Council Policy

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1. Policy intent

The intent of this policy is to establish clear guidance for the following:

- Councillors and Members of Delegated Committees entitlements for reimbursement of reasonable bona fide out-of-pocket expenses incurred while performing the duties of a councillor.
- Councillors' and Members of Delegated Committees' entitlements to have reasonable bona fide expenses associated with performing the duties of a councillor paid on their behalf.
- Support and resources provided to Councillors to undertake their role.

2. Purpose/Objective

This Policy supports Councillors and members of delegated committees to perform their role, as defined under the Local Government Act 2020, by ensuring that expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of their role are reimbursed. This policy provides guidance on:

- Entitlements
- The circumstances under which Council will make payment for:-
 - reimbursement of travel expenses, child care expenses, carers expenses; and
 - Reimbursement of other expenses
- Reporting requirements
- Allowances paid to the Mayor and Councillors;

This policy is intended to ensure that Councillors and members of delegated committees are supported to perform their duties without disadvantage.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all Councillors of Bayside City Council; and
- members of delegated committees of Council.

Councillors duties are those performed by a councillor as a necessary part of their role, in achieving the objectives of Council as identified in section 3 of the Local Government Act 2020.



The duties and activities considered to be necessary or appropriate for the purposes of achieving the objectives of a Council include, but not limited to:

- Attendance at meetings of council and its various committees.
- Attendance at briefing sessions, workshops, civic events or functions convened by council.
- Attendance at conferences, workshops and training programs related to the role of councillor, mayor or deputy mayor.
- Attendance at meetings, events or functions representing council.
- Duties in relation to constituents concerning council business.
- Attendance at meetings with officers or any person, any matter relating to the City.

Members of delegated committees exercise powers of councillors, under delegation. This policy also applies to those members in the course of undertaking their role as delegated committee members.

The policy presumes Councillors are residents in the municipality, and any additional costs or expenses attributable to a Councillor's residence being outside the municipality are considered inappropriate for reimbursement in the absence of a prior Council resolution to the contrary.

Any cost or expense (or portion thereof) which should reasonably be borne by another entity, or for which another entity is reasonably liable, is outside the scope of this policy and shall not be paid or reimbursed by Council.

Councillors are entitled to access facilities, support and resources as described in this policy and the Local Government Act 2020.

4. Expenses

Councillors and members of delegated committees are entitled under section 40 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) to reimbursement of expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of their duties.

This policy ensures that the reimbursement of these expenses is in accordance with the Act and meets the Act's principles of public transparency; achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community; and ensuring the ongoing financial viability of the council.

Councillors and members of delegated committees will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses that are:

- bona fide expenses **and**
- have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the role councillor **and**
- are reasonable necessary for the councillor and member of a delegated committee to perform this role.

Expenses incurred by Councillors when acting in a private capacity will not be reimbursed or paid.



Carer and dependent relates expenses

Council will provide reimbursement of costs where the provision of childcare is reasonably required for a councillor or member of delegated committee to perform their role (section 41(2)(c)).

This applies to the care of a dependent, while the councillor or delegated committee member is undertaking their official duties and may include expenses such as hourly fees and booking fees, if applicable.

Council will provide reimbursement of costs where the provision of carer services is reasonably required when a councillor or delegated committee member who is a carer (see Definitions) incurs reasonable expenses in the performance of their duties (section 41(2)(d)).

Payments for carer and childcare services will not be made to a person who resides with the councillor or delegated committee member; has any financial or pecuniary interest with the councillor or delegated committee member; or has a relationship with the councillor, delegated committee member or their partner.

The policy is not intended to prescribe for every possible situation that may arise. Should a situation arise that is not adequately covered by this policy, the matter will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for determination.

5. Reimbursement of expenses incurred

A councillor or member of a delegated committee wishing to make a claim for reimbursement must undertake the following procedure:

Making the claim

1. All claims must be made on the approved expenses reimbursement form, available from the Governance Department.
2. Originals receipts must be attached for all claims (credit card receipts will not be accepted)
3. Where the provider of the goods or service is registered for GST a tax invoice must be obtained and provided (without this the GST component of the cost cannot be reimbursed)
4. Claims must be lodged with the Manager Governance by the last day of each month.
5. Reimbursement will be provided by electronic funds transfer direct to the councillor or member of a delegated committee.

6. Mayor and Councillor Allowance

Section 74 of the Act allows the Governor in Council to set allowances for the Mayor and Councillors.

The most recent Order in Council sets out specific annual Mayor and Councillor allowances based on three categories of Council. Bayside is known as a category 2 municipality therefore the range for a Mayor and Councillor allowance is limited to the category 2 range, plus the amount equivalent to the Superannuation Guarantee (currently 9.5%) where applicable.

Council will increase allowances in accordance with any adjustment factor gazetted by the Minister for Local Government each year, as required under the Act.

Mayor and Councillor allowances will be paid monthly in advance as at the date of the Annual Meeting or as advised by the Minister for Local Government and the allowances will be set following each municipal general election, or as reviewed by Council.

Mayor and Councillors' allowances are taxable income and Councillors should put in place their own processes for documenting claimable expenses. Any personal taxation implications from the receipt of allowances are the responsibility of individual Councillors.

Where the Mayor or a Councillor is granted a leave of absence from Council for a period of time, it is at the discretion of the Mayor or Councillor if they wish to suspend their Mayoral or Councillor allowance during the period of absence.

Councillors will be provided an amount equivalent to the superannuation guarantee. This amount may be paid into a superannuation account of the Councillors' choice or it may be taken as an addition to their allowance.

7. Travelling expenses and costs

Councillors are entitled to have paid by Council, or reimbursed, travelling expenses and costs within the scope of this policy for return travel within Victoria undertaken whilst discharging the duties of a Councillor.

Councillors may on occasion be given the opportunity of attending conferences, conventions, study tours, seminars, training courses and other events as a participant, presenter, delegate or official Council representative. The following section details the policy in relation to travel expenses and arrangements.

Private Vehicle Usage

Councillors using their private vehicles may claim expense reimbursement where such travel is in the course of conducting Council business.

The allowance payable to Councillors for use of their own private vehicle on Council business shall be in accordance with the rates prescribed in the Bayside City Council Enterprise Agreement as varied from time to time.



Councillors may be reimbursed for private vehicle travelling expenses associated with:

- Travel for inspections, functions, and external meetings associated with legitimate Council business.
- Travel for attendance at conferences, courses and seminars where such attendance has been authorised by Council.
- Travel to and from air, rail, or bus ports when embarking on interstate or international Council business.

To be reimbursed for use of their private vehicle, Councillors must provide adequate detail of:

- The purpose of the trip;
- Date and location;
- Kilometres travelled ;
- Where appropriate, receipts for tolls, parking and petrol; and
- Claims must be made on the official Travel claim form.

Private vehicle expense reimbursement for Councillors must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer or the Governance Manager and processed for payment by the Governance Manager.

Reimbursement claims for travel expenses must be lodged by the last day of each month following the occurrence of the expense.

Reimbursement will be provided monthly by electronic funds transfer.

Cab Charge Vouchers

Councillors may use cab charge vouchers for taxi travel on journeys associated with their civic duties.

Cab charge vouchers are available from the Governance Manager.

A record of Cab-Charge vouchers issued to councillors or a delegated committee member will be kept highlighting the date, time purpose of the use of the voucher, and cost of the trip once invoicing have been received.

Myki Card – Public Transport

A Myki card will be made available for Councillors business use only. Councillors are encouraged to use public transport for meetings and conferences to and within the Melbourne Central Business District.

Council Vehicles

Where practicable, and by prior arrangement through the Chief Executive Officer, a Council pool vehicle may be made available to Councillors, subject to availability for travel outside the municipality where use of private vehicles or other means of transport is not convenient or practicable.



Private travel in conjunction with Council travel

Councillors undertaking private travel arrangements in conjunction with any travel for the purpose of their duties as a Councillor must ensure that all costs incurred for private purposes are clearly delineated and that appropriate records including pre-departure itineraries are maintained.

Where any private travel and associated costs are included in a package ticket or arrangement, the Councillors must meet, or reimburse Council, the private proportion prior to departure.

Miscellaneous travel provisions

Travel should be undertaken by the most practicable mode and route possible taking into account factors such as duration and cost of travel and mode of transport, and where possible, minimising Council's carbon footprint.

The quantum of expenses paid by Council or reimbursed will be on the basis of the actual cost incurred and the form of transport used.

Where travel is by flight, the standard form of travel will be economy class.

Council will not reimburse Councillors for any infringements incurred for traffic or parking offences.

8. Communication equipment, expenses and costs

Councillors shall be provided with appropriate communications equipment to ensure that they can adequately and efficiently perform their role as a Councillor, which as a minimum will include:

- A smart mobile phone
- Laptop computer or equivalent
- Access to a copier/printer
- An internet connection (currently via iphone and laptop connection)
- Bookcase (if required)

The make, model and specifications of any communications equipment, the associated contracts or plans, and the replacement of any communications equipment shall be at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.

The above facilities remain the property of the Council and must be returned at the end of a Councillor's term of office, retirement or resignation.

Councillors also have access to a lounge area on the First floor Executive Wing which provides printer facilities, meeting table, and tea and coffee facilities.



Council provided communications equipment is to be used for Council related business activities however, it is acknowledged that on occasion, limited personal use may be made on communications equipment. It should be noted that Council subscribes to a capped data rate for both mobile and laptop, therefore determination of public and private use is within the capped rate.

The Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor will review councillors' communication equipment and will update equipment at:

- the commencement of each electoral term; and
- any stage during the electoral term where the organisation believes an update is appropriate.

Information Technology Support Service

A support service is available during normal working hours of 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday by contacting the IT Helpdesk on 9599-4640.

Access to Bayside City Council's network is available 24/7. However the system may be unavailable from time to time for routine maintenance. Notification of scheduled maintenance is sent via email.

An overview of equipment and training on the use of the equipment and software provided will be given when new Councillors are appointed to office.

Use of Council equipment

Use of Council provided equipment is for Councillor use only.

The information technology platform provided for Councillors is based on Bayside City Council licensed software, and to assist the efficiency of the information technology no additional software is to be loaded onto Council provided hardware, without the consent of the Chief Executive Officer.

Councillors have the responsibility to protect the equipment directly under their control, and in particular transport laptop and telephones securely, in the supplied carry case.

Anti-virus protection and detection software is installed on Council communication's equipment. Any suspected virus activity should be reported to the IT Helpdesk.

Councillors are required to contact the Helpdesk directly of any damage or malfunction of any equipment.

Email and Internet Usage

Use of email and internet is to be in accordance with the Bayside City Council Email and Internet Usage Guideline. Whilst the use of email and internet is primarily for conducting Council business incidental and occasional personal use is acceptable, as long as the use does not contravene any relevant laws, regulations, Council policies or the Bayside Councillor Code of Conduct.



All email on the Bayside network is the property of Bayside City Council. The email address supplied to Councillors is owned by Bayside City Council and will cease to exist at the end of the Councillor's term in office.

9. Corporate Information

All Councillors are responsible and accountable to keep complete, full and accurate records that adequately document Council business activities, or actions that support decisions made. This includes all forms of communications (hardcopy correspondence, facsimiles, emails, etc) addressed to, or received at home locations, or home email accounts.

All corporate correspondence, regardless of format, is to be registered within the Corporate Information Management system. Corporate correspondence should be forwarded to the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillors for registration.

Once the correspondence has been forwarded to the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillor, the Councillors may delete their copy of the corporate record.

10. Conferences, seminars, training and professional development

Conferences, seminars and training courses which impact on the role of Councillors generally and their ability to make contemporary informed decisions are held locally, interstate and internationally. Council will encourage all Councillors to attend conferences, which enhance their role and development as a Councillor, particularly those which focus on an individual Councillor's areas of specialisation or committee responsibilities.

Details of training courses, conferences and seminars which may be relevant and of interest to Councillors will be circulated to all Councillors and will be accompanied by details of registration costs and a course outline.

Should a Councillor express an interest in attending a particular training course or conference/seminar which does not exceed \$1,500 in total registration costs, (excluding travel and accommodation) the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Mayor, shall approve such attendance. All Councillors will be advised by memorandum indicating the Councillor attending the proposed conference/seminar.

Should a Councillor express an interest in attending a particular training course or conference/seminar which exceeds \$1,501 in total registration costs, and/or travel and accommodation, this will be reported to Council, with a recommendation for consideration by Council.

As a general guideline, each Councillor other than the Mayor will be limited to one (1) interstate conference per year.

Payment of registration fees for external conferences/seminars etc will be processed through the Governance Manager.



Where accommodation is required in connection with a conference, bookings will be made through the Governance Department.

Reimbursement of Expenses at Conferences

In accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 2020, Council will reimburse Councillors for necessary out of pocket expenses incurred during the conference/seminar attendance. Reimbursement will be on the basis of actual costs incurred and will be subject to the presentation of original receipts. Reimbursement of all expenses must be detailed on the required form and forwarded to the Governance Manager or the Chief Executive for approval and processing for reimbursement.

Where a Councillor is accompanied by a partner or spouse at a conference, the Councillor will incur all expenses associated with their attendance except where no difference in cost in accommodation is incurred, based on a standard double room

Reporting of Conference / Seminar Attendance by a Councillor

Following attendance at a conference a Councillor will be required to present either a verbal or written report to Council at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council under the item "Reports by Councillors". This is a report to the Council for purposes of public accountability, and the report must therefore be presented to the meeting in the published agenda or, provided as a verbal report to the meeting on matters arising out of the conference/seminar.

In accordance with Act details of all interstate and overseas travel will be recorded in Council's Register of Interstate and Overseas Travel which is available for public inspection.

Professional development programs/courses available to all Councillors.

Upon the commencement of each electoral term, a purpose designed induction program will be provided to all Councillors.

In addition to the Councillor Induction Program, Councillors will receive in-house governance training facilitated by officers or an external presenter.

Council will also provide access to the following professional development programs/initiatives:

- Meeting procedures
- Chairing of meetings
- Media training
- Governance Training e.g. Australian Institute of Company Directors courses
- Financial training
- Team building and interpersonal skills
- MAV/VLGA Councillor



All professional development expenditure should always be tested against the following criteria:

- Is directly relevant to the Councillor's role;
- Takes place and is able to be utilised during the Councillor's term of office.
- Is it in the interest of the community;
- Meets the budget determined by Council;
- Clearly offers and promotes public benefit as distinguished from private benefit;

Financial Allocation for professional development programs/courses.

An annual budget allocation, indexed to CPI, is available for all Councillors, subject to annual review as part of the Council budget approval process.

If a Councillor does not use their annual allocation, they cannot carry forward any outstanding allocation into the next financial year.

Any Councillor wishing to spend in excess of their allocation will require Council approval in advance.

The individual allocations are available for use at each Councillor's discretion to access reasonable professional development which can provide benefits to the individual Councillor in serving the Bayside community.

11. Representing Council

Each year, and from time to time, Council resolves to appoint Councillors to represent it on a number of specific organisations with the delegated authority of Council on appropriate matters.

For these organisations the nominated Councillors or their substitute are to be Council representatives at regular meetings of these organisations and any special events, with partners where appropriate.

Councillors are entitled to have paid by Council, or reimbursed, reasonable bona fide costs associated with representing Council on such organisations.

Where Council has not appointed a Councillor representative to a particular organisation or group, and Council receives an official invitation seeking Council representation at an event, Councillors shall be entitled to have paid by Council, or reimbursed, reasonable bona fide costs associated with representing Council at the event, if Council or the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor have determined that official representation is considered necessary, or appropriate to support the business or representational needs of Council.

Gifts in the form of hospitality must not be accepted by Councillors unless the Councillor is undertaking a civic duty. All gifts must be declared and declined.



12. Attendance by spouse / partner at seminars, conferences and civic functions and non-council functions

Attendance at any seminar, conference or civic function by a Councillor's spouse / partner shall be at the expense of the Councillor except where:

- prior approval has been given by Council or the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor; and
- attendance by a Councillor's spouse / partner is considered to be necessary or appropriate to support the business or representational needs of Council.

Where a Councillor's spouse / partner attends an approved seminar, conference or civic function, Councillors are entitled to have paid by Council, or reimbursed, their spouse or partner's;

- registration fees; and
- reasonable costs for meals and refreshments.

Councillors are entitled to have paid by Council, or reimbursed, the reasonable costs and expenses of their spouse or partner attending:

- functions held by Council; or
- functions held by other Victorian municipalities;
- where there is an agreed expectation of partners attending, i.e. spouse / partner of the Councillor is specified on the invitation.

Attendance at Dinners and other non-Council Functions

Council will meet the reasonable cost of a Councillor's attendance at non-council functions to which they have been invited where they are attending in their role as Councillors and where topics pertain to matters concerning local government or where local government representation is relevant to Council.

If an invitation to a relevant non-council function was not received and a Councillor wishes to attend, it will be at the Mayor's discretion and mayoral support will be sought via the Executive Assistant to the Mayor & Councillors.

Invitations outside these parameters must be paid for by the individual Councillor attending.

Fundraising and Charitable Events

Council will cover the cost of ticketed events for Councillors invited by written invitation to attend local fundraiser/charitable events, where the event benefits the City of Bayside.

The Director Corporate Services or Governance Manager in consultation with the Mayor, will determine appropriate events for Council to purchase 'a table', if invited to do so. A table will only be purchased if 50% or more of Councillors are able to attend. Councillor attendance must have a demonstrated benefit to the local community.



13. Facilities for the Mayor

As the leader and chief spokesperson for the City, the mayoral position requires a range of additional support services and facilities to those supplied to Councillors. As a consequence, the Mayor will be provided with the following:

Mayoral Vehicle

Council will provide to the Mayor a fully maintained vehicle (fully registered, maintained and fuelled) of a suitable standard in keeping with the role of the Mayor, having regard to community perception and environmental sustainability based on the following criteria:

- Operating efficiency – fuel efficiency and cost of fuel;
- Greenhouse Rating – assessment of the generation of CO₂ greenhouse gas by the vehicle;
- Air Pollution Rating – assessment of the level of air pollution produced by the vehicle;
- Safety – the level of occupant protection provided by vehicles in front and side crashes, with a minimum of four star safety rating; and
- Price – the cost to Council.

The vehicle shall be used by the Mayor to assist him/her in carrying out his/her official duties, and for private personal and family use during the Mayoral term. The use of the mayoral vehicle for interstate travel is at the discretion of the Mayor.

Eligible drivers include direct family member include spouse (or defacto) and children with a current, valid driver's licence or learner's permit (if accompanied by a fully licensed driver, being a direct family member), or a Councillor or a Council officer on the Mayor's behalf.

Comprehensive insurance cover is provided for all vehicles. Drivers are discouraged from leaving items of a personal nature in Council vehicles as only limited coverage exists for personal effects. In the event of a vehicle being involved in a motor vehicle accident, a \$1,500 excess is payable where the vehicle is driven by a non-Council driver under the age of 25 years.

The Mayor may choose not to accept a Mayoral vehicle and use his/her own vehicle. In the event the Mayor can receive reimbursement for use of the private vehicle associated with Mayoral duties via a mileage travel claim.

Whilst Council leases its fleet vehicles for a three-year period, the Mayoral vehicle shall be leased for a period not less than 2 years. All Councillors will be consulted prior to the vehicle being leased. This will ensure that costs and model selection in relation to mayoral vehicle changeover are not excessive and will be distributed over two years.

Mayoral Office

A suitably equipped and furnished office is available for the Mayor of the Day at the Corporate Centre, Royal Avenue Sandringham.



Secretarial Support

An appropriate level of secretarial support will be made available to assist the Mayor in performing his/her role.

Secretarial support may include but not be limited to preparation of correspondence, responding to invitations, co-ordinating mayoral and civic receptions, press releases, preparation of speeches, issue research and constituent/community contact activities.

The level of secretarial support shall be determined by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor.

14. Stationery

Each Councillor will be provided with an adequate supply of the following stationery to assist them in undertaking their role:

- Printer cartridges
- Personalised Business Cards.
- A4 plain paper
- Names tags for Councillors and spouse / partner

The supply of stationery will be co-ordinated by the Executive Assistant to the Mayor & Councillors. Council inscribed stationery is not to be converted in any way and may only be used for Council business matters (not electoral purposes).

15. Apparel

The Council shall, upon request, provide Councillors with protective clothing (such clothing as may be held in store and to meet the organisation's requirements) necessary to assist in carrying out the duties of office. This clothing is to be returned promptly upon the completion of the activity or duty.

This clothing shall be limited to wet weather pants and pullover, gumboots, winter jacket and/or hat, or other such clothing as may be held in store to meet the organisation's requirements, unless otherwise resolved by Council for a specific item(s).

16. Meeting / Functions Rooms

Subject to availability, meeting rooms owned and controlled by Council can be booked by Councillors, for meetings, interviews and other functions provided they are associated with Council business.



17. Civic Hospitality

All formal civic functions will be co-ordinated by the Governance Department and must be pre-approved by the Mayor. All official civic entertainment expenses will be met from the annual budget allocation approved as part of the Council budget.

Where Council meetings, functions or events are held at times that extend through normal meal times (6.30 – 8.00pm) Council will provide suitable meals for Councillors.

18. External Hospitality

It is recognised that Councillors, on occasions, may need to use external hospitality services when conducting Council business outside Council offices. Councillors will be reimbursed reasonable expenses incurred while entertaining visiting dignitaries or Council business guests on behalf of Council. The Chief Executive Officer must give prior approval to any such undertakings.

19. Couriers

Council will provide a courier service for delivery of Council Agenda and other papers to Councillors places of residence or work place (whichever is indicated by the Councillor) once a week or as required.

20. Insurance Policies

Councillors are covered under the following Council insurance policies while discharging, in good faith, the duties of civic office including attendance at meetings of external bodies as Council representatives:

- Public Liability;
- Professional Indemnity;
- Councillors and Officers Liability; and
- Personal Accident (anyone accompanying a Councillor at a Council function is covered).

It should be noted that Councillors are responsible for their own personal behaviour / accountabilities when attending Council authorised functions and are subject to their own personal liability.

The Council will pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any claim made against a Councillor arising from Council business where Council has a liability.

Councillors need to be mindful that Council's insurance policies cannot cover a Councillors' own private liability responsibilities.

21. Health Initiatives

Councillors will have access to free annual influenza vaccinations



22. Legal Expenses

Council will not cover any personal legal expenses incurred by a Councillor.

23. Parking Entitlements

Two reserved parking spaces will be available for Councillors at the Corporate Centre, Royal Avenue Sandringham. Additionally, a reserved car parking space will be available for the Mayoral Vehicle at the Corporate Centre.

Councillors will be issued with a Corporate Centre Car Parking sticker and an additional Beach car-parking sticker.

The Councillor / Corporates Centre Car Parking sticker does not allow vehicles to park in designated areas such as, loading bays, bus zones, no stopping areas, mail zones, clearways, disabled bays, taxi zones or school drop off zones.

Councillors will be provided access to a secure bicycle shed at the Corporate Centre on request.

Councillors may claim reimbursement of parking fees incurred on Council business by completing a Councillor expense reimbursement claim form and providing appropriate receipt documentation. Where parking metre/ticket machine expenses are incurred on Council business and a receipt is not available, a reimbursement claim form should be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.

Should a Councillor or Mayor incur a Parking Infringement Notice, it will not be waived or reimbursed. However, where a Councillor believes a legitimate grievance exists regarding a PIN a formal letter of request together with an accompanying explanatory statutory declaration should be forwarded to the Chief Executive of the relevant Council, for consideration. Any infringement incurred in the course of their duties will not be reimbursed by Bayside City Council or any representation on a Councillors behalf will be made.

24. Building Access

Each Councillor will receive a security access pass to the Corporate Centre, Royal Avenue Sandringham tailored to the needs and times required by Councillors, which will provide access to meeting rooms on the ground floor, Councillors' lounge and the Mayor's Office.

25. Councillors with Disabilities

Council will provide additional civic support, facilities and equipment for any Councillor with a disability to enable that Councillor to freely perform his or her civic duties.

26. Cultural Diversity

In acknowledging and respecting cultural diversity, Council will respect and accommodate those requirements necessary for a Councillor to undertake their duties.



27. Council Elections and Exclusions

Councillors must not use Council provided materials and/or facilities for election purposes. This applies to their own candidature or in assisting the candidature of others. Reference should be made to the Councillor's Code of Conduct and the Election Period Policy.

28. Professional memberships and subscriptions

Professional memberships that are considered to be reasonable bona fide out of pocket Councillor expenses are:

- Australian Institute of Company Directors.
- The Victorian Local Governance Association.
- The Australian Local Government Women's Association.

Other individual memberships, professional associations or subscriptions which are considered demonstrably beneficial to Council or the performance of the duties of a Councillor may be reimbursed subject to a resolution of Council.

29. Councillor online presence

For each Councillor a Council web page will be provided on Council's website containing:

- A photograph of the Councillor;
- Contact details;
- Ward map;
- Council appointment, Committee memberships and community and professional affiliations;
- A short bio of the Councillors including professional memberships and associations.

Additional information may be included at the request of a Councillor, subject to the content being approved for publication by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Council Media Policy further outlines the expectations of Council, the role of Councillors and support provided.

30. Other expenditure not specified

Any expenditure not specified in this policy as expenditure for which a Councillor is entitled to be reimbursed or paid by Council shall be the responsibility of the Councillor, except where Council resolves that a claim is reasonable bona fide expenditure.



31. Submission of claims for reimbursement / Management Mechanisms and Accountability

Form of claims

Claims are to be submitted on the prescribed form to the Manager Governance.

Claims should be accompanied by fully accredited receipts / tax invoices for any expenses claimed.

If receipts cannot be produced, Councillors may be required to provide a statutory declaration.

Claims must include sufficient detail to demonstrate, in accordance with the Act, that the expense for which reimbursement is claimed is a reasonable bona fide out-of-pocket expense incurred while performing the duties of a Councillor.

Timeframe for submission of claims

Councillors are required to submit claims in a timely manner to ensure transparency and timely accountability.

Claims for reimbursement of expenses during the month of June must be submitted within 7 working days of the end of financial year.

Claims for reimbursement which are not in accordance with this policy will not be processed.

Assessment of claims

The Manager Governance will process all claims.

If the Manager Governance has a question about a claim, he/she will, in the first instance, discuss this matter with the relevant Councillor.

If required, the Manager Governance will seek guidance / intervention from the Chief Executive Officer.

Exclusions

Any expenses arising from a breach of road, traffic, parking or other regulations or laws, including Council Local Laws, will not be reimbursed or funded in any way by Council.

If a Councillor chooses not to claim a particular expense, this cannot be offset against a claim for any additional amount associated with another expense.

Claims for expenses other than those included in these guidelines will not be reimbursed, except in exceptional circumstances and after Council has resolved that the claim is reasonable and should be reimbursed.



32. Reporting and Disclosure

In the interest of transparency and accountability, quarterly reporting of all councillor and delegated committee members expenses will be provided to Council and Council's Audit and Risk Committee. All expenses incurred and reimbursements will be reported under the following categories:

- Mobile phone usage charges
- Training/conferences
- Travel, accommodation and meals
- Child care expenses
- Carer and dependent related expenses
- Reimbursement of own vehicle travel claim

The quarterly report will also include Councillor / Mayoral allowances paid to councillors during the quarter.

Councillors will be required to sign off an annual statement, confirming that the individual Councillor expenses as published on Council's website during the corresponding financial year are true and correct.

Councillors should be aware that Accounting Standard AAS22 requires the disclosure of the names and remuneration paid to the directors or an entity. Councillors are required to adhere to this Standard which also requires the disclosure of certain types of transactions. Broadly, these transactions are those that could be perceived as affecting the independence of the elected member.

The disclosure required is a listing of transactions and any other beneficial interests between Council and the individual Councillor and their related business and parties. It is each Councillor's responsibility to ensure that details of such related party transactions are supplied to the Governance Department for reporting purposes.

33. Mayoral and Councillors Gifts

At the end of every mayoral term, the outgoing Mayor will receive from Council:

- a Letter under the seal of Council;
- a presentation book of the Mayor's activities during their mayoral term;
- a mayoral portrait; and
- the Mayor's name plate.

At the end of Councillors' electoral term, outgoing Councillors will receive from Council:

- a Letter under the seal of Council in recognition of their service as Councillor;
- the Councillor's name plate; and
- an engraved service plaque.

The outgoing Mayor and Councillors must declare these gifts in accordance with the Councillors Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality Guidelines.



34. Roles & Responsibilities

The Governance Department is responsible for:

- the implementation and compliance of this policy;
- approving reimbursement claims forms submitted by Councillors;
- advising Councillors if any claims appears to breach this policy or is inappropriate;
- assisting Councillors in understanding their entitlements;
- ensuring a copy of this policy is provided to each Councillor and placed on Council's website; and
- reviewing this policy.

Councillors are responsible for:

- the general care of all equipment provided by the organisation or purchased with Council funds;
- complying with this policy;
- ensuring that details of such related party transactions are supplied to the Governance Department for reporting purposes;
- providing true and correct information when completing reimbursement forms referenced in this policy; and
- seeking their own financial and taxation advice.

35. Monitoring, evaluation & review

Council commits to monitoring processes and decision making to understand the overall success of the policy's implementation.

A periodic review of the policy will be undertaken to ensure any changes required to strengthen or update the policy are made in a timely manner, otherwise the policy will have cyclic review in two years for the date of adoption.

Related documents

Legislation	Local Government Act 2020 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Freedom of Information Act 1982 Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 Equal Opportunity Act 2010 Gender Equity Bill 2020
Policies	Governance Rules Public Transparency policy Governance Framework Information Privacy policy



Definitions & Abbreviations

Term	Meaning
Carer	Means a carer as defined under section 4 of the Carer Recognition Act 2012
Delegated committee	Delegated committees are defined under section 63 of the Local Government Act 2020
Duties of the Councillor	Means duties performance by a Councillors that are necessary or appropriate for the purposes of achieving the objectives of Council having regard to any relevant Act, regulations, Ministerial guidelines or Council policies.
Expenses	Includes expenses initially incurred by a Councillor for which a claim is subsequently made for reimbursement and expenses incurred by Council for or on behalf of a Councillor.
Communication Equipment	Portable communication equipment such as mobile telephone - Iphone, Ipad, wireless internet connection and associated hardware and software.
Professional Development	Means the process of improving and increasing the capabilities, knowledge and skills of councillors through access to education and training opportunities through outside organisations or in the workplace.
The Act	Means the Local Government Act 2020

Please note: This policy is current as at the date of approval. Refer to Council's website (www.bayside.vic.gov.au) or staff intranet to ensure this is the latest version.

