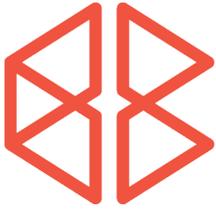




COUNCILLOR EXPENSES AND FACILITIES POLICY

Adopted by Council 25 September 2018





Contents

Part A – Introduction	6
1. Introduction	6
2. Policy Objectives	6
3. Principles	6
4. Private or political benefit.....	7
Part B – Expenses	8
5. General Expenses	8
6. Specific Expenses	8
General travel arrangements and expenses within NSW	8
Interstate travel expenses.....	9
Overseas Travel	9
Travel expenses not paid by Council.....	10
Accommodation and meals	10
Refreshments for Council related meetings.....	10
Professional Development, Conferences and Seminars.....	10
Local Government NSW Annual Conference	11
Attendance at Dinners and other Non-Council Functions	11
Expenses for Spouse or Partner.....	12
Special requirements and carer expenses.....	13
7. Insurance.....	13
8. Legal assistance.....	13
Part C – Facilities	14
9. General facilities for Councillors	14
Facilities.....	14
ICT (Information and Communications Technology).....	15
Administrative support	18
10. Additional facilities for the Mayor	18
11. Approval, payment and reimbursement arrangements.....	19
Direct payment	19
Reimbursement	20
Advance payment.....	20
Notification.....	20



Reimbursement to Council	20
Timeframe for reimbursement	21
12. Disputes.....	21
13. Return or retention of facilities	21
14. Reporting	21
15. Auditing.....	22
16. Breaches	22
Part E – Appendices	23
Appendix 1: Related legislation, guidance and policies	23
Appendix 2: Definitions	24
Appendix 3: Forms.....	26



Policy Summary

This policy enables the reasonable and appropriate reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors to help them undertake their civic duties.

It ensures accountability and transparency, and seeks to align Councillor expenses and facilities with community expectations. Councillors must not obtain private or political benefit from any expense or facility provided under this policy.

The policy has been prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (the Regulation), and complies with the Office of Local Government's Guidelines for the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to Mayors and Councillors in NSW.

The policy sets out the maximum amounts Council will pay for specific expenses and facilities. Expenses not explicitly addressed in this policy will not be paid or reimbursed.

Some of the main expenses and facilities are summarised in the table below. A complete listing of all expenses and facilities are outlined throughout the policy.

Expense or facility	Maximum amount	Frequency
General travel expenses within NSW	\$3,500 per Councillor \$5,000 for the Mayor	Per year
Interstate travel expenses	\$3,500 per Councillor \$5,000 for the Mayor	Per year
Accommodation and meals	As per the NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009 For accommodation – see Clause 6.21	Per meal/night
Professional development, Conferences and seminars	\$10,000 per Councillor \$15,000 for the Mayor	Per year
Non-Council Functions	\$500 per Councillor \$1000 for the Mayor	Per year Per month
ICT expenses (information technology equipment as outlined in clause 9.9)	Up to \$6,500 per Councillor	Per term
ICT expenses (monthly mobile phone plan)	\$200 per month per Councillor \$250 per month for the Deputy Mayor	Per month



Expense or facility	Maximum amount	Frequency
	\$300 per month for the Mayor	
Carer expenses	\$5,000 per Councillor	Per year
Christmas or festive cards	Up to 250 per Councillor and up to 500 for the Mayor.	Per year
Postage stamps	Nil – to be posted by Council	Per year
Council vehicle and fuel card	Provided to the Mayor	Not relevant
Reserved parking space at Council offices	Provided to the Mayor and Councillors	Not relevant
Furnished office	Provided to the Mayor	Not relevant

Additional costs incurred by a Councillor in excess of these limits are considered a personal expense that is the responsibility of the Councillor.

Councillors must provide claims for reimbursement within three months of an expense being incurred. Claims made after this time may not be approved.



Part A – Introduction

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The provision of expenses and facilities enables Councillors to fulfil their civic duties as the elected representatives of Canterbury-Bankstown Council.
- 1.2. The community is entitled to know the extent of expenses paid to Councillors, as well as the facilities provided.
- 1.3. The purpose of this policy is to clearly state the facilities and support that are available to Councillors to assist them in fulfilling their civic duties.
- 1.4. Council staff are empowered to question or refuse a request for payment from a Councillor when it does not accord with this policy.
- 1.5. Expenses and facilities provided by this policy are in addition to fees paid to Councillors. The minimum and maximum fees a council may pay each Councillor are set by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal as per Section 241 of the Act and reviewed annually. Council must adopt its annual fees within this set range.

2. Policy Objectives

- 2.1. The Objectives of this Policy are to:
 - enable the reasonable and appropriate reimbursement of expenses incurred by Councillors while undertaking their civic duties
 - enable facilities of a reasonable and appropriate standard to be provided to Councillors to support them in undertaking their civic duties
 - ensure accountability and transparency in reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors
 - ensure facilities and expenses provided to Councillors meet community expectations
 - support a diversity of representation
 - fulfil Council's statutory responsibilities.

3. Principles

- 3.1 Council commits to the following principles:
 - **Proper conduct:** Councillors and staff acting lawfully and honestly, exercising care and diligence in carrying out their functions
 - **Reasonable expenses:** Providing for Councillors to be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred as part of their role as Councillor



- **Participation and access:** Enabling people from diverse backgrounds, underrepresented groups, those in carer roles and those with special needs to serve as a Councillor
- **Equity:** There must be equitable access to expenses and facilities for all Councillors
- **Appropriate use of resources:** Providing clear direction on the appropriate use of Council resources in accordance with legal requirements and community expectations
- **Accountability and transparency:** Clearly stating and reporting on the expenses and facilities provided to Councillors.

4. Private or political benefit

- 4.1. Councillors must not obtain private or political benefit from any expense or facility provided under this policy.
- 4.2. Private use of Council equipment and facilities by Councillors may occur from time to time. For example, telephoning home to advise that a Council meeting will run later than expected.
- 4.3. Such incidental private use does not require a compensatory payment back to Council.
- 4.4. Councillors should avoid obtaining any greater private benefit from Council than an incidental benefit. Where there are unavoidable circumstances and more substantial private use of Council facilities does occur, Councillors must reimburse Council.
- 4.5. Campaigns for re-election are considered to be a political benefit. The following are examples of what is considered to be a political interest during a re-election campaign:
 - production of election material
 - use of Council resources and equipment for campaigning
 - use of official Council letterhead, publications, websites or services for political benefit
 - fundraising activities of political parties or individuals, including political fundraising events



Part B – Expenses

5. General Expenses

- 5.1. All expenses provided under this policy will be for a purpose specific to the functions of holding civic office. Allowances for general expenses are not permitted under this policy.
- 5.2. Expenses not explicitly addressed in this policy will not be paid or reimbursed. Council's adopted budget will provide the necessary funds in order to facilitate the implementation of this Policy.

6. Specific Expenses

General travel arrangements and expenses within NSW

- 6.1. All travel by Councillors should be undertaken using the most direct route and the most practicable and economical mode of transport.
- 6.2. Each Councillor may be reimbursed up to a total of \$3,500 per year, and the Mayor may be reimbursed up to a total of \$5,000 per year, for travel expenses incurred while undertaking official business or professional development or attending approved conferences and seminars within NSW, including long distance intrastate travel. This includes reimbursement:
 - for public transport fares
 - for the use of a private vehicle or hire car
 - for parking costs for Council and other meetings
 - for tolls
 - by Cabcharge card or equivalent issued by Council (and reconciled)
 - for documented ride-share programs, such as Uber, where tax invoices can be issued, to enable for reconciliation of the expense.
- 6.3. Allowances for the use of a private vehicle will be reimbursed by kilometre at the rate contained in the Local Government (State) Award.
- 6.4. Councillors seeking to be reimbursed for use of a private vehicle or travel in accordance with clause 6.2 must complete the 'Claim Form for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses' (Appendix 3).
- 6.5. Councillors seeking approval for any long distance intrastate travel must submit a 'Request for Councillor Professional Development or Long Distance Travel' Form (Appendix 3) to, and obtain the approval of, the Mayor and General Manager prior to travel.



- 6.6. For long distance intrastate travel by air of less than three hours, the class of travel is to be economy class.

Interstate travel expenses

- 6.7. Council will undertake interstate trips where there are direct and tangible benefits established for the Council and the local community.
- 6.8. Total interstate travel expenses are capped at an annual maximum of \$3,500 per Councillor and \$5,000 for the Mayor. This amount is included in Council's annual budget.
- 6.9. Councillors seeking approval for any interstate travel must submit a case to, and obtain the approval of the Mayor and General Manager (General Manager for the Mayor) prior to travel.
- 6.10. For interstate journeys by air of less than three hours, the class of air travel is to be economy class.
- 6.11. For interstate journeys by air of more than three hours, the class of air travel may be premium economy.
- 6.12. Bookings for air travel are to be made and approved through the General Manager's office. On the occasion where Councillors seek reimbursements for air travel that is for Council business, the reimbursement will not exceed the limits and applicable cost as set out in clauses 6.10-6.11.
- 6.13. For air travel that is reimbursed as Council business, Councillors are not to accrue points from an airline's frequent flyer program. This is considered a private benefit.

Overseas Travel

- 6.14. In accordance with Section 4, Council will scrutinise the value and need for Councillors to undertake overseas travel. Councils should avoid overseas trips unless direct and tangible benefits can be established for the Council and the local community. This includes travel to sister and friendship cities.
- 6.15. For any overseas travel or Councillors seeking approval for any overseas travel, a report must be considered by a full Ordinary Meeting of Council prior to travel.
- 6.16. Any such report will include:
- objectives to be achieved in travel, including an explanation of how the travel aligns with current Council priorities and business, the community benefits which will accrue as a result, and its relevance to the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties
 - who is to take part in the travel
 - duration and itinerary of travel
 - a detailed budget including a statement of any amounts expected to be reimbursed by the participant/s.



- 6.17. For international travel funded by Council, the class of air travel is to be premium economy if available. Otherwise, the class of travel is to be economy.
- 6.18. Upon their return, Councillors should provide a written report to a full Council meeting on the aspects of the trip relevant to Council business and/or the local community.

Travel expenses not paid by Council

- 6.19. Council will not pay any traffic or parking fines or administrative charges for road toll accounts.

Accommodation and meals

- 6.20. Council will incur costs for accommodation and meals (or reimburse costs) while Councillors are undertaking prior approved travel or attending approved professional development, conferences and seminars.
- 6.21. Accommodation will be at the rate of a standard room in the hotel where the professional development, conference and seminar or other Council business is being held, or the nearest hotel to it that is of a similar standard.
- 6.22. The daily limits for meal expenses, including beverages, within Australia are to be consistent with those set out in Part B Monetary Rates of the NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009, as adjusted annually. Councillors will be entitled to the total daily limit for their daily meals.

Refreshments for Council related meetings

- 6.23. Appropriate refreshments will be available for Council meetings, Council Committee meetings, Councillor briefings, approved meetings and engagements, and official Council functions as approved by the General Manager.
- 6.24. As an indicative guide for the standard of refreshments to be provided at Council related meetings, the General Manager must be mindful of Part B Monetary Rates of the NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009, as adjusted annually.

Professional Development, Conferences and Seminars

- 6.25. Council is committed to ensuring its Councillors are up to date with contemporary issues facing council and the community, and local government in NSW.
- 6.26. In the first year of a new Council term, Council will provide a comprehensive induction program for all Councillors which considers any guidelines issued by the Office of Local Government (OLG). The cost of the induction program will be in addition to the ongoing professional development funding.
- 6.27. In addition to the above, each Councillor will have access to a Board of Directors Course with the Australian Institute of Company Directors with costs met by Council, including associated meals, accommodation and travel, if required (these costs are in addition to



allowances set under this policy). Council will fund one such course per Councillor per term.

- 6.28. Separately, Council will set aside \$10,000 per Councillor and \$15,000 for the Mayor annually in its budget to facilitate professional development of Councillors, through conferences, seminars, programs, training, education courses, study tours, programs with affiliated organisations and membership of professional bodies.
- 6.29. Approval for professional development activities is subject to a prior written request to the Mayor and General Manager (the General Manager for the Mayor) using the 'Request for Councillor Professional Development or Long Distance Travel' Form (Appendix 3) which outlines the:
- details of the proposed professional development
 - relevance to Council priorities and business
 - relevance of the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties
- 6.30. In assessing a Councillor request for a professional development activity, the General Manager must consider the factors set out in Clause 6.29, as well as the cost of the professional development in relation to the Councillor's remaining budget.
- 6.31. Council will separately meet the reasonable cost (or reimbursement) of accommodation, meals and travel costs in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
- 6.32. Annual membership of professional bodies will only be covered where the membership is relevant to the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties, the Councillor actively participates in the body and the cost of membership is likely to be fully offset by savings from attending events as a member.
- 6.33. Councillors who do not attend and/or complete any course may be required to reimburse Council.

Local Government NSW Annual Conference

- 6.34. Councillors will also be permitted to attend the Local Government NSW Annual Conference each year. Council will meet all costs associated with the conference (these costs are in addition to allowances set under this policy) .

Attendance at Dinners and other Non-Council Functions

- 6.35. Consideration may be given to meeting the cost of Councillors' attendance at dinners, events (eg entrance tickets) and other non-Council functions including briefings to Councillors from key members of the community, politicians, business and meeting with constituents on council related business.
- 6.36. Approval to meet costs associated with 6.35 will only be given when the function is relevant to Council's interest and prior approval of the Mayor and General Manager has



been obtained (General Manager for the Mayor). The budget for these expenses will be capped at \$500 per Councillor per year. Reimbursement for travel will be funded in accordance with the relevant travel expenses clause of this Policy.

- 6.37. In addition to clause 6.36, Council will provide a further budget of up to \$1000 per month to assist the Mayor (or his/her Mayoral Representative) in conducting his/her civic duties and attendance at community functions.
- 6.38. Council will not provide payment or reimbursement for a Councillors' support or attendance at any political fundraising events or any donation to a political party.
- 6.39. Council will not provide payment or reimbursement to Councillors for general financial support or a donation for any event.

Expenses for Spouse or Partner

- 6.40. Council will meet certain expenses incurred by a Councillor on behalf of their spouse or partner that are properly and directly related to the role of the Councillor as indicated in the following table:

Event	Policy Provisions
Attendance at ALGA and LGNSW Conference	Registration and official conference dinner. Any additional accommodation and travel expenses are the responsibility of the Councillor.
Attendance of Mayor or Mayoral representative when carrying out civic and/or ceremonial functions.	Payment of expenses of accompanying person. Approved expenses for spouse or partner will be met from the allowance established under section 6.36.

Note: (1) Peripheral expenses of the accompanying person, such as grooming, special clothing and transport are not considered reimbursable expenses.

(2) Council will not incur and/or reimburse any expenses for persons accompanying Councillors at civic and/or ceremonial functions.



Special requirements and carer expenses

- 6.41. Council encourages wide participation and interest in civic office. It will seek to ensure Council premises and associated facilities are accessible, including provision for sight or hearing impaired Councillors and those with other disabilities.
- 6.42. Transportation provisions (section 6.2) outlined in this policy will also assist Councillors who may be unable to drive a vehicle.
- 6.43. In addition to the provisions above, the General Manager may authorise the provision of reasonable additional facilities and expenses in order to allow a Councillor with a disability to perform their civic duties.
- 6.44. Councillors who are the principal carer of a child or other elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family member will be entitled to reimbursement of carer's expenses up to a maximum of \$5,000 per annum for attendance at official business.
- 6.45. Child care expenses may be claimed for children up to and including the age of 16 years where the carer is not a relative.
- 6.46. In the event of caring for an adult person, Councillors will need to provide suitable evidence to the General Manager that reimbursement is applicable. This may take the form of advice from a medical practitioner.

7. Insurance

- 7.1. In accordance with Section 382 of the Local Government Act, Council is insured against public liability and professional indemnity claims. Councillors are included as a named insured on this Policy.
- 7.2. Insurance protection is only provided if a claim arises out of or in connection with the councillor's performance of his or her civic duties, or exercise of his or her functions as a councillor. All insurances are subject to any limitations or conditions set out in the policies of insurance.
- 7.3. Council shall pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any claim accepted by council's insurers, whether defended or not.
- 7.4. Appropriate travel insurances will be provided for any councillors travelling on approved interstate and overseas travel on council business.

8. Legal assistance

- 8.1. Council may if requested, indemnify or reimburse the reasonable legal expenses of:
 - a Councillor defending an action arising from the performance in good faith of a function under the Local Government Act
 - a Councillor defending an action in defamation, provided the statements complained of were made in good faith in the course of exercising a function under the Act



- a Councillor for proceedings before an appropriate investigative or review body, provided the subject of the proceedings arises from the performance in good faith of a function under the Act and the matter has proceeded past any initial assessment phase to a formal investigation or review and the investigative or review body makes a finding substantially favourable to the Councillor.
- 8.2. In the case of a conduct complaint made against a Councillor, legal costs will only be made available where the matter has been referred by the General Manager to a conduct reviewer or conduct review panel to make formal enquiries into that matter in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.
- 8.3. Legal expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising out of the performance by a Councillor of his or her functions under the Act are distinguished from expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising merely from something that a Councillor has done during his or her term in office. For example, expenses arising from an investigation as to whether a Councillor acted corruptly would not be covered by this section.
- 8.4. Council will not meet the legal costs:
- of legal proceedings initiated by a Councillor under any circumstances
 - of a Councillor seeking advice in respect of possible defamation, or in seeking a non-litigious remedy for possible defamation
 - for legal proceedings that do not involve a Councillor performing their role as a Councillor.
- 8.5. Reimbursement of expenses for reasonable legal expenses must have Council approval by way of a resolution at a Council meeting prior to costs being incurred.

Part C – Facilities

9. General facilities for Councillors

Facilities

- 9.1. Council will provide the following facilities to Councillors to assist them to effectively discharge their civic duties:
- a Councillor common room will be provided in the Council Chamber and at the Campsie Office. The room will be appropriately furnished to include telephone, photocopier, printer, desks, computer terminals, lockers and appropriate refreshments (excluding alcohol).
 - Councillor Parking Permits for display in private vehicles that will be utilising authorised Councillor parking spaces. Councillors may apply for additional Parking Permits if they have more than one private vehicle. Should Councillors rotate their



private vehicle, only one vehicle displaying a Councillor Parking Permit can be parked in authorised Councillor parking spaces at any time.

- Councillor parking is provided, as follows:
 - Five (5) car parking spaces on P1 in the Civic Tower, excluding the Mayor, while attending Council offices at the Civic Tower on official business;
 - Five (5) car parking spaces at Council's Campsie Office;
 - Access to parking off Chapel Road outside the Council Chambers (as marked);
 - personal protective equipment for use during site visits.
 - a corporate name badge which may be worn at official functions, indicating that the wearer holds the office of a Councillor and/or Mayor or Deputy Mayor.
 - Corporate wardrobe and/or corporate attire up to a total value of \$1,500 per annum.
 - Suitable home office furniture including desk, 2 office chairs and filing cabinet up to the value of \$1600 for the Council term.
 - A brief case or portfolio up the value of \$500 per term
 - Access to suitable gifts for presentation in connection with attendance at community or civic functions. This is to be limited to two (2) occasions per year and up to a maximum value of \$100 per occasion. Such gifts are subject to the approval of the Mayor and General Manager.
- 9.2. Councillors wishing to use the Mayoral Room in the Council Chambers and/or Councillors rooms at the Campsie Office for official business, must book the room in advance of the proposed use. In accordance with Section 4, Councillors must not utilise this facility for private or political benefit.
- 9.3. All facilities, excluding corporate attire, provided under Clause 9.1 this Policy are to be sourced by Council and not individual Councillors. Council will provide necessary consumables for all equipment provided under this Policy.
- 9.4. In line with Council's Active Canterbury-Bankstown initiative, Councillors will also receive access to any Council facility under the same terms and conditions as provided under the Active Canterbury-Bankstown Staff Club.

ICT (Information and Communications Technology)

- 9.5. Council will provide appropriate ICT devices and services for each Councillor as outlined.
- 9.6. Reimbursements will be made only for communications devices and services used for Councillors to undertake their civic duties, such as:
- receiving and reading Council business papers



- relevant phone calls and correspondence
- diary and appointment management.

9.7. Councillors may seek reimbursement for applications on their mobile electronic communication device that are directly related to their duties as a Councillor. Reimbursement must fall within the maximum monthly usage limit outlined below in clause 9.8 (usage) of this Policy.

9.8. Council will provide the following Communication devices per term:

- Mobile phone

Hardware

Access to a current smart phone as follows:

- a) A Council provided mobile phone and related accessories up to the value of \$3,000. The Council provided phone must have a technical support application (app) nominated by the Manager Information Services. This app may change from time to time to ensure a high level of support and alignment with Council's ICT program.
- b) The Councillor provides their own mobile phone.

Usage

- a) Where Council provides the mobile phone:
 - i. Council will provide access to a monthly mobile phone plan which includes a 10GB Data Pack and Council business calls to the following limits: \$200 per month for Councillors, \$250 for Deputy Mayor and \$300 for Mayor. Personal usage must be declared using the 'Reconciliation of Councillors Monthly Mobile Telephone Usage' Form (Appendix 3); or
 - ii. The Councillor may elect to use their own plan. In this circumstance, Council will reimburse the Councillor for business related usage (including data and Council business calls) in accordance with the monthly limits outlined at (a) (i). Claims must be made using the 'Claim Form for Reimbursement Form' (Appendix 3) and accompanied by the detailed account identifying Council usage;
- b) Where the Councillor provides their own mobile phone and associated smart phone plan, Council will reimburse the Councillor for business related usage (including data and Council business calls) in accordance with the monthly limits outlined at (a) (i). Claims must be made using the 'Claim Form for Reimbursement Form' (Appendix 3) and accompanied by the detailed account identifying Council usage. For this option, Council will not provide a mobile phone plan.



- c) In addition to the phone plan outlined at (a), Council will provide International Roaming packages on a Council provided mobile phone plan, to the maximum value of \$500 for data, voice and messaging for Council approved trips. This amount is in addition to the maximum monthly usage limits outlined in clause 9.8.

Where the Councillor uses their own mobile phone plan, a reimbursement to the maximum value of \$500 for data, voice and messaging will only be provided for International Roaming where the reconciliation is supported by a detailed account itemising Council usage.

- 9.9. Council will provide Councillors with the following Information Technology equipment for the Council term:

- An A4 colour multifunction laser printer, including scanning capacity up to a value of \$1,000;
- Computing device as follows:
 - a) Notebook, peripherals and software with a 10GB monthly wireless broadband connection for the device; AND an iPad (9.7" Apple iPad Pro) with related accessories and a 10GB monthly wireless broadband connection for the device, up to a combined value of \$5,500; OR
 - b) Apple 12.9" iPad Pro with related accessories up to the value of \$4,500 and a 20GB monthly wireless broadband connection for the device.
- For clarity, Councillors will only be entitled to elect either option 9.9(a) or 9.9(b), not both.

- 9.10. Council from time to time may provide Councillors with upgraded equipment or new facilities where doing so will result in efficiencies and aligns to Council's general ICT program.

- 9.11. For clarity, Council will not reimburse Councillors for the cost of purchasing their own mobile phone should they elect to bring their own device as per clause 9.8. Also, Council will not be able to provide technical support for the operation of a Councillor owned device, however Council ICT staff may troubleshoot on request for minor issues.

Stationery and Consumables

- 9.12. Council will provide the following stationery to Councillors each year:

- Corporate letterhead and associated stationery such as With Compliments Slips, to be used only for correspondence associated with civic duties – Limit 1500 per annum of any one item
- Councillor business cards - Limit 1500 per annum
- Plain paper – 10 reams per annum



- Up to 250 Christmas or festive cards per year for Councillors and 500 for the Mayor, and use of electronic Christmas cards created by Council.
- Minor items of consumable stationery and printer ink cartridges.
- Council may purchase for or reimburse Councillors a standard weekly digital online subscription to each of the following daily newspapers: Daily Telegraph, The Australian and The Sydney Morning Herald.

Alternatively, Council may purchase for or reimburse Councillors a standard weekly subscription (paper hard copy) to two of the following daily newspapers: Daily Telegraph, The Australian and The Sydney Morning Herald.

- 9.13. Stamps are not provided as part of this Policy. Outgoing mail from Councillors in accordance with their civic duties, may be distributed by Council in accordance with its mail processes. Outgoing mail is to be provided to Executive Services for distribution and will be sent as standard priority post.

Administrative support

- 9.14. Council will provide administrative support to Councillors to assist them with their civic duties only. Administrative support will be provided by staff in the Office of the Mayor and General Manager, or by a member of Council's administrative staff as arranged by the General Manager.
- 9.15. In line with clause 9.14, Council will also provide the following general communications assistance to Councillors to assist them in performing their civic duties:
- Creation of images for use on Councillor's digital media pages for major events.
 - Speeches to facilitate their attendance at any approved community events.

Should Councillors elect to utilise these resources, a minimum of one week notice will need to be provided to the General Manager.

- 9.16. As per Section 4 and Council's Code of Conduct, Council staff are expected to assist Councillors with civic duties only, and not assist with matters of personal or political interest, including campaigning.

10. Additional facilities for the Mayor

- 10.1. Council will provide to the Mayor a maintained vehicle, in accordance with the LCT threshold, with a fuel card and toll road tag. The vehicle will be supplied for use on business, professional development and attendance at the Mayor's office. The range of use for the Mayoral car will be consistent with the employee leaseback policy. Alternatively, an allowance be paid to the Mayor (in accordance with section 6.3 of the policy) that is equivalent to the annual running costs associated with the operation of the Mayoral vehicle.



- 10.2. A parking space at Council's offices will be reserved for the Mayor's Council-issued vehicle for use on official business, professional development and attendance at the Mayor's office.
- 10.3. The Mayor's Council-issued vehicle will display a Council parking permit at all times. The display of this Parking Permit allows this vehicle to utilise Council authorised vehicle parking spaces at Council facilities across the LGA while the Mayor is on official business.
- 10.4. Council will provide the Mayor with a furnished office including a docking facility for the notebook, telephone and meeting space. In addition, the Mayor will also be provided with the IT equipment as outlined in both clause 9.8 (a) and (b) of this Policy.
- 10.5. Additional business cards to that provided for Councillors in clause 9.12 of this Policy.
- 10.6. In performing his or her civic duties, the Mayor will be assisted by an Executive Assistant who will provide administrative and secretarial support, and receive general support from staff within the Office of General Manager.
- 10.7. As per Section 4 and Council's Code of Conduct, staff in the Mayor's office are expected to work on official business only, and not for matters of personal or political interest, including campaigning.

Part D – Processes

11. Approval, payment and reimbursement arrangements

- 11.1. Expenses should only be incurred by Councillors in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
- 11.2. Approval for incurring expenses, or for the reimbursement of such expenses, should be obtained before the expense is incurred, as set out in this Policy.
- 11.3. Up to the maximum limits specified in this policy, approval for the following may be sought after the expense is incurred:
 - local travel relating to the conduct of official business
 - ICT expenditure in accordance with this Policy.
- 11.4. Final approval for payments made under this policy will be granted by the General Manager or their delegate.

Direct payment

- 11.5. Council may approve and directly pay expenses. Requests for direct payment must be submitted to the General Manager for assessment against this policy using the



prescribed form, with sufficient information and time to allow for the claim to be assessed and processed.

Reimbursement

- 11.6. All claims for reimbursement of expenses incurred must be made on the prescribed form, supported by appropriate receipts and/or tax invoices and be submitted to the General Manager.

Advance payment

- 11.7. Council may pay a cash advance for Councillors attending approved conferences, seminars, professional development or other approved official business.
- 11.8. The maximum value of a cash advance will be equivalent to the daily limits for meal expenses as set out in Part B Monetary Rates of the NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009, as adjusted annually, and payable for the duration of the approved conference, seminar, professional development or other official business.
- 11.9. Requests for advance payment must be submitted to the General Manager for assessment against this policy using the prescribed form with sufficient information and time to allow for the claim to be assessed and processed.
- 11.10. Councillors must fully reconcile all expenses against the cost of the advance within three months of incurring the cost and/or returning home by using the 'Reconciliation of Advance Payment Form' (Appendix 3). If the expenses are not reconciled, Council will debit the expenses from the monthly Councillor allowance until such time as the advance payment is fully reconciled. This includes providing to Council:
- a full reconciliation of all expenses including appropriate receipts and/or tax invoices
 - reimbursement of any amount of the advance payment not spent in attending to official business or professional development.

Notification

- 11.11. If a claim is approved, Council will make payment directly or reimburse the Councillor through accounts payable.
- 11.12. If a claim is refused, Council will inform the Councillor in writing that the claim has been refused and the reason for the refusal.

Reimbursement to Council

- 11.13. If Council has incurred an expense on behalf of a Councillor that exceeds a maximum limit, exceeds reasonable incidental private use or is not provided for in this policy:
- Council will invoice the Councillor for the expense



- the Councillor will reimburse Council for that expense within 14 days of the invoice date.

11.14. If the Councillor cannot reimburse Council within 14 days of the invoice date, they are to submit a written explanation to the General Manager. The General Manager may elect to deduct the amount from the Councillor's allowance.

Timeframe for reimbursement

11.15. Unless otherwise specified in this policy, Councillors must provide all claims for reimbursement within three months of an expense being incurred. Claims made after this time may not be approved.

12. Disputes

12.1. If a Councillor disputes a determination under this Policy, the Councillor should discuss the matter with the General Manager.

12.2. If the Councillor and the General Manager cannot resolve the dispute, the Councillor may submit a notice of motion to a Council meeting seeking to have the dispute resolved.

13. Return or retention of facilities

13.1. All facilities or equipment supplied under this policy are to be relinquished immediately upon a Councillor or Mayor ceasing to hold office or at the cessation of their civic duties.

13.2. Should a Councillor desire to keep any equipment allocated by Council, then this policy enables the Councillor to make application to the General Manager to purchase any such equipment, where:

- The General Manager will determine an agreed fair market price or written down value for the item of equipment;
- Generally, equipment will be depreciated over the term of Council; and
- An Administrative charge of \$50 per item will apply to all purchases.

13.3. The prices for all equipment purchased by Councillors under Clause 13.2 will be recorded in Council's Annual Report.

14. Reporting

14.1. Council will report on the provision of expenses and facilities to Councillors as required in the Act and Regulations.



15. Auditing

- 15.1. The operation of this Policy, including claims made under the policy, will be included in Council's audit program and an audit undertaken at least every two years.

16. Breaches

- 16.1. Suspected or alleged breaches of this Policy are to be reported to the General Manager.
- 16.2. Suspected or alleged breaches of this policy shall be dealt with by following the processes outlined for breaches of the Code of Conduct, as detailed in the Code and in the Procedures for the Administration of the Code.



Part E – Appendices

Appendix 1: Related legislation, guidance and policies

Relevant legislation and guidance:

Local Government Act 1993, Sections 252 and 253

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, Clauses 217 and 403

Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities for Mayors and Councillors in NSW, 2009

Local Government Circular 09-36 Guidelines for Payment of Expenses and Facilities

Local Government Circular 05-08 legal assistance for Councillors and Council Employees.

Related Council Policies:

Code of Conduct

Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy

Gifts and Benefits Policy



Appendix 2: Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout this policy.

Term	Definition
accompanying person	Means a spouse, partner or de facto or other person who has a close personal relationship with or provides carer support to a Councillor
Affiliated Organisations	Means organisations that Council is affiliated with as a corporate member, including but not limited to Cities Leadership Institute, Committee of Sydney, Smart Cities Council, Sydney Business Chamber, Local Government NSW, Australian Local Government Association, Waste Management Association of Australia, Australian Mayoral Aviation Association
appropriate refreshments	Means food and beverages, excluding alcohol, provided by Council to support Councillors undertaking official business
Act	Means the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
Annual Conference	Means Local Government NSW Annual Conference
clause	Unless stated otherwise, a reference to a clause is a reference to a clause of this policy
Code of Conduct	Means the Code of Conduct adopted by Council or the Model Code if none is adopted
Councillor	Means a person elected or appointed to civic office as a member of the governing body of Council who is not suspended, including the Mayor
General Manager	Means the General Manager of Council and includes their delegate or authorised representative
ICT	Means Telecommunications and Information Communications and Technology
incidental personal use	Means use that is infrequent and brief and use that does not breach this policy or the Code of Conduct
long distance intrastate travel	Means travel to other parts of NSW of more than three hours duration by private vehicle
maximum limit	Means the maximum limit for an expense or facility provided in the text and summarised in Appendix 1
NSW	New South Wales



official business	Means functions that the Mayor or Councillors are required or invited to attend to fulfil their legislated role and responsibilities for Council or result in a direct benefit for Council and/or for the local government area, and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• meetings of Council and committees of the whole• meetings of committees facilitated by Council• civic receptions hosted or sponsored by Council• meetings, functions, workshops events or other circumstances to which attendance by a Councillor has been requested or approved by Council
professional development	Means a seminar, conference, or training course relevant to the role of a Councillor or the Mayor
Regulation	Means the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (NSW)
year	Means the financial year, that is the 12 month period commencing on 1 July each year



Appendix 3: Forms

- Claim Form for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses
- Claim Form for Reimbursement of Expenses
- Councillor Superannuation Agreement
- Reconciliation of Advance Payment Form
- Reconciliation of Councillor Monthly Mobile Telephone Usage
- Request for Councillor Professional Development or Long Distance Travel