

## Councillors' Expenses and Allowances

Approved By: **Council**  
Doc Controller: **Executive Manager**  
**Corporate Governance**  
File: 4/14/2

Document Code: **CP-CCS-CG-001**  
Version: **9.0**  
Approved Date: **28 Mar 2023**  
Next Review Date: **28 Mar 2027**

### 1 PURPOSE

To provide a clear policy framework around councillors' entitlement to expenses and allowances in accordance with the legislative requirement for a policy under Schedule 5 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

### 2 OBJECTIVE

The policy aims to provide for anyone, regardless of financial circumstances, to effectively fulfil their functions as a Councillor by ensuring that reasonable costs associated with the role are met.

It determines reasonable levels for claiming those expenses which are prescribed under the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015* (Reg 43). In addition, it determines a number of additional work related expenses which the Council deems appropriate for Councillors to claim in fulfilling their duties of office.

### 3 SCOPE

This policy applies to Councillors of Burnie City Council.

Within this policy:

**the Act** means the *Local Government Act 1993*

**the Regulations** means the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015*

### 4 POLICY

Where, in the opinion of the General Manager, a question arises as to whether a claim is eligible under this Policy, or the claim appears unreasonable or does not serve the interests of Council, the General Manager will raise the concern with the Councillor and make a decision.

It is the responsibility of Councillors to ensure that any claims are consistent with this policy and reflective of community expectations.

#### 4.1 PRESCRIBED ALLOWANCES

The Council shall pay allowances for Councillors in accordance with the Regulations (Reg 42). Allowances will be paid on a monthly in arrears basis. Allowances are determined and published by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Local Government Division, and indexed annually.

A Councillor may elect not to receive all or part of a prescribed allowance. Notification of such a decision is to be provided to the General Manager in writing. (Section 340A(3)(4) of the Act).

## 4.2 EXPENSES OF OFFICE

### 4.2.1. Provision of ICT Equipment

Councillors will be provided with the following devices of their selection from Council's current standard suite of ICT equipment, relevant to the day:

- Laptop or Ipad; and
- Iphone (two sim card option available to support Council and private plans on one phone)

The above equipment will be replaced in accordance with ICT replacement timeframes relevant to the day. All ICT equipment issued to Councillors remains the property of Council and must be returned to Council at end of use.

The use of privately-owned devices, including laptops, ipads and iphones, to access the Council network is not permitted, due to cyber security risk management protocols.

Councillors with existing private devices connected to Council's network will have until 30 June 2023 convert to council-owned devices.

Ancillary ICT equipment required by each Councillor may be claimed under the following Communications and Expenses of Office section.

### 4.2.2. Communications and Expenses of Office

Council will directly pay or reimburse Councillors for expenses of office up to a maximum of \$3,000 ex GST per financial year for each Councillor. Such expenses of office may include but are not limited to:

- Phone call and data plans
- Internet connection and data plans
- Stationery and office supplies
- Home office expenses including minor equipment
- ICT related equipment (eg keyboards, screen covers, cameras)
- Other expenses of office necessary for carrying out the duties of a Councillor

The preferred method of internet plan is by sim card in laptop or ipad, enabling access from anywhere, and reducing administrative time for expense payments.

If travelling overseas, Councillors are requested to put appropriate measures in place to avoid excessive phone costs.

Reimbursement claims must be submitted to the Governance Officer together with receipts on the Councillor Expenses Claim Form, within the year they are incurred.

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Items under this section are generally consumables and not required to be returned at the end of the Councillors' term of office.

### 4.2.3. Parking Permits

Each Councillor will be provided with one parking permit for use in discharging the function of a Councillor, and is valid only for the dates shown on the Permit.

The Permit allows the vehicle to be parked on any metered parking space or within a Council controlled voucher car park area in Burnie, or City Offices basement car park without payment while being used on official Council business. Permits are not effective in the Marine Terrace multi storey car park.

Permits must not be used for parking a vehicle when conducting private business, or on a purpose unrelated to Council business.

### 4.2.4. Hospitality Expenses (Mayor and Deputy Mayor)

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor may incur reasonable expenditure for hospitality in exercising the role of Mayor and Deputy Mayor with stakeholders and constituents. The expenditure must be incurred only while on Council business. All transactions must have a receipt and be authorised by the General Manager for reimbursement. The purchase of alcohol is not permitted under the hospitality expenses.

### 4.2.5. Professional Development

All Councillors are required and expected to undertake professional development opportunities in order to carry out their roles effectively. Professional development is a legislated requirement under the Declaration of Office signed by each Councillor.

Councillors may each claim up to \$4,000 ex GST per financial year, to undertake professional development opportunities that are directly related to the role of a councillor. Any professional development agreed by Council to be delivered to all councillors will be included in this allowance.

Professional development includes but is not limited to attendance at any local government conferences (eg LGAT, ALGA), and any state or Commonwealth government training and development sessions. Councillors are also encouraged to identify further opportunities in addition to these.

Attendance to LGAT Mayor's Workshops and similar, by the Mayor or their delegate, will be treated as Expenses of Office under section 4.2.2 above.

Professional development expenses will generally be paid directly by Council to the provider. Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses associated with the professional development may be claimed in addition to the above allowance, as provided for under section 4.3 below.

### 4.2.6. Dinners, Functions and Events

Council may cover the costs of dinners, functions or events to which either:

- the Mayor is invited to represent Council, or
- one or more Councillors are appointed by the Mayor to attend on behalf of Council, or
- all Councillors are invited to attend in an official capacity, subject to the discretion of the Mayor

### 4.2.7. Partners' Costs

Where additional costs are incurred for Councillors' partners to attend functions, dinners, events or similar, these costs will be at personal expense of the Councillor or their partner. For practicality in booking arrangements, this may be by deduction from the Councillor's Allowance.

## 4.3 OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES

### 4.3.1. Eligible Activities

Out-of-pocket expenses for meals, travel and dependent person care, may be claimed by Councillors for the following activities:

- To and from the formal meetings of Council and Council workshops.
- To and from any meeting of any Committee the Councillor has been appointed to as a representative of Burnie City Council, or for any other meeting where the Councillor has been delegated or authorised by Council or the Mayor to attend.
- Upon business of the Council, outside the municipal area, in compliance with a resolution of Council.
- To and from any conference, seminar or professional development, function or event as approved under sections 4.2.5 and 4.2.6 of this policy.
- To attend inspections or business as arranged by the General Manager.

Reimbursement claims must be submitted to the Governance Officer together with receipts on the Councillor Expenses Claim Form, within the year they are incurred.

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### 4.3.2. Meals and Accommodation

For attendance at meetings of Council, Council Workshops or meetings of any committee of Council, which commence after 5.00pm, an evening meal may be provided.

Reasonable out-of-pocket meal expenses and/or accommodation expenses for an activity specified in section 4.3.1 above will be reimbursed to a Councillor upon presentation of the Councillor Expenses Claim Form together with receipts, in the year the expenses are incurred.

### 4.3.3. Vehicles and Travel

Wherever possible, Council will provide a vehicle for use by Councillors in the exercise of their duties and functions as a Councillor. Vehicle bookings for Councillors are to be coordinated through the Personal Assistant to the Mayor and General Manager. For cost efficiency it is preferred that Councillors seek the use of a Council vehicle for business travel outside the municipality that exceeds 100km return.

In cases where a council vehicle is not available or practical, a travel allowance will be payable to a Councillor for an activity specified in section 4.3.1 above.

The travel allowance payable will be at the Australian Tax Office rate for travel allowances.

A Councillor shall not claim travel or other expenses where the expense would otherwise have been incurred as a result of private business.

A Councillor shall not claim travel or other expenses where alternative arrangements have been made for travel, meaning that the Councillor did not incur the cost of that travel.

All policies adopted for use of Council vehicles apply to Councillors when driving Council vehicles. (See related documents at end).

### 4.3.4. Dependant Person Care Expenses

Council will reimburse a Councillor for necessary, reasonable expenses incurred in relation to the care of any dependant of the Councillor, while undertaking an activity specified in section 4.3.1 above.

Where a licensed childcare provider is used, reimbursements made will be net of any entitlement to government subsidies. When an unlicensed provider is used, reimbursements will be made up to an hourly rate of \$25/hour ex GST.

Dependant person expenses are not eligible for reimbursement if the payment for that care is made to a person who normally or regularly lives with the Councillor or is a member of the Councillor's family.

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All claims must detail the date and time care was provided, the business of Council that it related to, attach a receipt or invoice from the provider (whether licensed or unlicensed), and be submitted in the year the expense was incurred. Dependant person care expenses will, unless there are exceptional circumstances, be paid in arrears.

### 4.4 OTHER MATTERS

#### 4.4.1. Retirement Gifts

Retirement presentations for Councillors may be in the form of a gift up to the value of \$250 ex GST for each four years of service up to a maximum of \$1,000 ex GST.

#### 4.4.2. Insurance

Council will provide the following insurance cover for all Councillors, for liability arising out of or in the course of carrying the function of a Councillor:

- Personal Accident Insurance
- Directors and Officers Insurance
- Crime Insurance
- Business Travel Insurance
- Comprehensive Motor Vehicle Insurance on Council fleet vehicles

#### 4.4.3. Privacy and Disclosure

Monthly statements are to be provided to each Councillor detailing the expense claims and allowances paid and/or claimed to date.

The total expenses claimed by each Councillor will be published in Council's Annual Report, in accordance with section 72(1)(cb) of the Act. The total expense figure will include expenses claimed in accordance with this policy, including communications and expenses of office, hospitality allowance, professional development, dinners, functions and events, and out of pocket expenses including meals, accommodation, travel, and dependant care expenses.

This policy serves as a public document to provide an open and fair framework of expense entitlements within which Councillors are entitled to claim, in order that anyone regardless of financial circumstances, may effectively fulfil their functions as a Councillor.

## 5 LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1993 S.340A Allowances  
Local Government Act 1993 Schedule 5 – Office of Councillors  
Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 S.42 Allowances for elected members  
Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 S.43 Expenses for councillors



COUNCIL POLICY

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**6 RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Annual Schedule of Councillors' Allowances from DPAC
- Councillor Expenses Claim Form FO-CBS-SG-009
- Workplace Policy WP-OGM-HR-022 Vehicles – Use in the Workplace
- Council Policy CP-CBS-SG-028 Receipt of Gifts and Benefits
- Council Policy CP-CBS-SG-024 Code of Conduct

Policy Endorsement	
Responsibility:	It is the responsibility of individual Councillors to ensure the integrity of the policy is maintained. It is the responsibility of the General Manager to exercise discretion in respect of matters that require clarification or a decision in respect of this policy. It is the responsibility of Governance Unit to administer and maintain this policy in the Corporate Document Framework.
Minute Reference:	Item AO050-23
Council Meeting Date:	28 March 2023
Strategic Plan Reference:	Council Plan Enabler – Our People
Previous Policies Replaced:	This policy replaces the previous policy <i>Councillors' Expenses and Allowances</i> version 8.1 dated 21 May 2019 (Item AO134-19).
Date of Commencement:	29 March 2023
Publication of policy:	This policy is distributed to new Councillors on commencement and is available on the Councillors' Portal. Members of the public may inspect this policy at the City Offices or access on Council's website ( <a href="http://www.burnie.tas.gov.au">www.burnie.tas.gov.au</a> )