GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

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GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL COUNCILLOR CIVIC SUPPORT AND EXPENSES POLICY

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CONTENTS

1. TITLE 3
2. OBJECTIVE 3
3. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS 3
4. POLICY 3
5. CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT 8
6. ACCOUNTABILITY 8
7. HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER COMPATIBILITY 9
8. ASSOCIATED INTERNAL DOCUMENTS 9
9. EXTERNAL REFERENCES/RESOURCES 9

1. TITLE

Councillor Civic Support and Expenses Policy

2. OBJECTIVE

To set out the entitlement of Councillors to allowances, facilities, resources and reimbursement of certain expenses to assist them in discharging their responsibilities and to provide for reimbursement of certain expenses for members of delegated committees. This Policy is in accordance with the requirements of Division 6 of Part 2 - Entitlements of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

3. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Meaning
Role of a councillor	Includes: • attend Ordinary and Special Council Meetings and meetings of Committees of Council; • attend formal assembly/ briefing sessions and civic or ceremonial functions convened by Council or Mayor; • attend meetings scheduled by Council or the Mayor; • attend a meeting, function, or other official role attended as an appointed representative of Council or Mayor; • attend meetings of community groups, organisations and statutory authorities to which the Councillor has been appointed Council delegate or is authorised by Council, but the reimbursement by Council is to be diminished by however much the body pays travelling expenses directly; • attend to inspect a street, property or area (or to discuss with any person) any matter necessary in performing the duties of a Councillor; • attend to discuss with Officers any matter relating to the City necessary in performing the duties of a Councillor; or • attend meetings or participate in delegations or deputations to which the Councillor has been appointed as a representative by Council or the Mayor.
Role of a member of a delegated committee	Includes: • attend meetings of the delegated committee of which they are a member; • attend formal briefing sessions, inductions or other meetings or events that they are required to attend to fulfil their duties as a delegated committee member.

4. POLICY

4.1 Councillor Allowances

4.1.1 Councillor Allowances, including those payable to the Mayor or a Deputy Mayor, are determined by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal under the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019.*

4.2 Insurance

4.2.1 Councillors are covered under the following Council insurance policies while performing their duties as a Councillor, including attendance at meetings of external bodies as Council's representatives:

(a) Public Liability/Professional Indemnity
(b) Councillors and Officers Liability
(c) Travel Insurance (accompanying partners are also covered)
(d) Workcover Insurance

4.2.2

4.2.3 Council will pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any claim made against a Councillor arising from Council business where any claim is accepted by Council's insurers, whether defended or not.

4.3 Child Care/Carer Expenses

4.3.1 Council will reimburse bona fide:

(a) childcare costs where the provision of child care is reasonably required for the Councillor to perform their role, and
(b) expenses incurred by a Councillor who is a carer in a care relationship within the meaning of section 4 of the Carers Recognition Act 2012, where the expenses are reasonably incurred by the Councillor to perform their role.

4.3.2 Council will reimburse bona fide childcare costs where the provision of child care is reasonably required for members of a delegated committee to perform their role

4.3.3 Childcare/carer expenses are calculated based on hourly fees.

4.3.4 Expenses cannot be claimed in respect of care provided by a family member of the person claiming.

4.3.5 Receipts must show Council meeting or event which the Councillor or delegated committee member is claiming in respect of, the name of the carer, the address at which the care was provided and details of times and fees.

4.4 Facilities and Expenses for Councillors with Disabilities

For any Councillor with a disability, Council may resolve to provide reasonable additional facilities and expenses that may be necessary for the performance of their duties.

4.5 Home/Workplace Facilities

Each Councillor will be provided with:

4.5.1 A Laptop and a desktop photocopier/printer for necessary use in performing their duties as a Councillor. Council will pay all reasonable charges associated with the use of the computer and printer.

4.5.2 Access will be provided for Councillors to relevant Council systems (e.g. email and internet), and the Coordinator Councillor Business will determine the most efficient and economical means for providing access.

4.5.3 Council will provide Councillors with a mobile telephone to handle calls and other electronic communications which are necessary in performing their duties as a Councillor. Council will not pay for or arrange fitting of in-car accessories.

4.5.4 Council will pay charges associated with the use of the telephone for Council business. Councillors may be required to reimburse Council for any costs which were not necessary in performing their duties as a Councillor.

4.5.5 If a Councillor does not accept a Council-provided phone or mobile phone, reimbursement for calls and charges made on a private phone can be claimed where these are substantiated as being necessary to perform a Councillor's duties.

4.5.6 All facilities, including hardcopy material provided by Council to a Councillor, remain the property of Council and must be returned at the end of a Councillor's term of office, retirement or resignation.

4.5.7 Councillors must agree in writing to comply with Council policies or procedures, as amended from time to time, related to the security, maintenance and use of a computer, printer and telephone equipment provided in accordance with this policy.

4.6 Mail

Council will post mail that Councillors have generated in performing their duties.

4.7 Record-keeping

Councillors should note that emails, text messages, social media posts on Council-owned sites, letters and all documents written by a Councillor in performing their duties or received by a Councillor in their professional capacity are Council documents and accordingly:

(a) a record must be kept by Council of these in accordance with the Public Records Act 1973;

(b) must be in accordance with the Councillor Communications and Media Protocol; and

(c) they are subject to Freedom of Information law and processes and Council's Privacy Policy.

Council's Coordinator of Councillor Business can provide advice on record-keeping.

4.8 Reimbursement of Expenses

4.8.1 Councillor expenses are managed through the following processes in accordance with Section 41 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

(a) As per Council's Procurement Policy, where Councillor expenses are managed via the purchase order process, approvals are sought based on delegations of authority and processed through Council's procurement system;

(b) Manual payment requests with detailed supporting documents substantiating reimbursement claims. Expense claims are submitted every month to the Coordinator Councillor Business. All claims must be submitted within two calendar months of them being incurred. No claims are accepted after this period;

(c) The Coordinator Councillor Business has a purchasing card, which is periodically used for councillor expenses.

4.8.2 Council will reimburse a Councillor or a member of a delegated committee for out-of-pocket expenses with which Council is satisfied:

(a) are bona fide expenses; and

(b) have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the role of Councillor or member of a delegated committee; and

(c) are reasonably necessary for the Councillor or member of a delegated committee to perform that role.

4.8.3 Council must provide details of all reimbursements under clause 4.8.2 of this Policy to the Audit and Risk Committee.

4.8.4 Councillors will be reimbursed reasonable expenses necessarily incurred while entertaining visiting dignitaries on behalf of Council, including the reasonable cost of drinks accompanying a meal, provided that approval by Council

resolution is obtained before the expenditure is incurred.

4.8.5 Where Councillors are invited to attend functions necessary for performing their duties, and there is a charge, Council will pay or reimburse the cost. However, if the total cost exceeds, or is likely to exceed, $750, approval by Council resolution is required before the expenditure is incurred.

4.8.6 Where the above sub-clause applies, and it is a function to which partners are invited, Council will also pay or reimburse the reasonable cost for a Councillor's partner.

4.8.7 With regard to all four clauses 4.8.2 to 4.8.6 appropriate documentation of expenses must be provided such as receipts.

4.9 Room Use

4.9.1 Council provides:
(a) an Office for the Mayor; and
(b) a Councillors' room for Councillors to use in performing their duties.

4.9.2 In addition, meeting rooms owned and controlled by Council can be booked by Councillors through secretarial support for meetings, interviews and other functions that are necessary for the performance of their duties as a Councillor, provided that they are in attendance.

4.10 Publications, Stationery and Secretarial Support

4.10.1 Councillors will be supplied with the following publications relevant to their civic duties:
(a) *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*
(b) Bulletins of the Municipal Association of Victoria; and
(c) Other relevant publications.

4.10.2 Councillors will be supplied with business cards and a diary (if required) and can avail themselves of stationery as necessary to perform their Councillor duties. If a Councillor requires a prepaid envelope to be mailed, it must be returned to Council to be sent.

4.10.3 Council stationery is not to be converted or modified in any way, and Council's logo, colour schemes or design schemes are not to be used except in official Council publications. Council stationery may only be used for carrying out duties as a Councillor. It may not be used for personal, electoral or party-political purposes.

4.10.4 Secretarial support will be made available at the Town Hall to assist Councillors in undertaking activities necessary for performing their duties. Staff members will provide such support within all applicable policies, including those dealing with record keeping, privacy etc.

4.11 Building Access and Parking

4.11.1 Each Councillor will receive one access card allowing 24-hour access to the Councillors' area at the Town Hall.

4.11.2 A designated parking space for the Mayor is available at the Town Hall at all times. Designated parking spaces for the Councillors are available at the Town Hall from 5.30 pm to midnight each day.

4.11.3 Councillors must comply with all parking signs and restrictions in the Glen Eira municipality and are personally liable to pay any infringement penalties arising from failure to comply.

4.12 Name Badge

Each Councillor and their partner will be provided with one name badge each for use while on Council business.

4.13 Facilities for the Mayor

4.13.1 Secretarial support will be made available to assist the Mayor in performing their duties.

4.13.2 Office accommodation will be provided to assist the Mayor in performing their duties.

4.13.3 The Mayor may book and use Council's pooled vehicles for official use in accordance with the Fleet Vehicle Policy and procedures.

4.14 Private Vehicle Use

4.14.1 Council will reimburse Councillors for using their private vehicles on travel, which is necessary for performing their duties as a Councillor .

4.14.2 Reimbursement will be according to the relevant rates set by the Australian Taxation Office and upon completion and submission of the relevant Council claim form.

4.15 Overseas Travel

4.15.1 Before Councillors travel overseas to perform their duties, the travel must be authorised by Council Resolution.

4.15.2 The mode of transport is to be determined on the advice of the Chief Executive Officer based on the most cost-effective form of transport and will be economy class only. Bookings and payments are to be made by the Councillor Business team.

4.16 Travel Expenses

4.16.1 Councillors may use Cabcharge vouchers for taxi travel for

journeys within the metropolitan region, which are necessary for performing their duties as a Councillor.

4.16.2 Council will reimburse Councillors for taxi trips or other travel expenses, including by rideshare and public transport, which are necessary for performing their duties upon production of receipts.

5. CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Councillors are encouraged to attend conferences, seminars and training events relevant to their work as Councillors to enhance their personal skills and knowledge to perform their role well.

5.2 Councillors must complete mandatory induction training in accordance with section 32 of the *Local Government Act 2020,* including completing the induction training within four months after the day the Councillor takes the Oath or Affirmation of office.

5.3 In addition to the training at clause 5.2, Councillors must complete professional development training as required at section 33A of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

5.4 The Mayor, Deputy Mayor or any Acting Mayor must complete mandatory Mayoral training provided at section 27A of the Local Government Act 2020 within one month after their election as Mayor or Deputy Mayor (or in the case of an Acting Mayor, within one month of being appointed).

5.5 Council will withhold allowances of Councillors where the legislated training referred to at clauses 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4 has not been complied with (and any required declarations made) in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

5.6 Council will implement a training plan that sets out the learning activities it will undertake to meet the statutory requirements for mandatory training which will be based on the Victorian Governance Guidance on the mandatory training for Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors.

5.7 In-house training will include:

a) Induction and general training programs for newly elected and returning Councillors, with additional training as required;
b) Workshops held in Council facilities, other facilities within the municipality or outside the municipality involving Councillors and Senior Officers;
c) Media training; and
d) Governance and compliance topics (such as meeting procedure, policy development, advocacy and strategic thinking).

5.8 The Chief Executive Officer will liaise with the Mayor to ensure that no scheduled meeting is left without a quorum because of the absence of Councillors at conferences and seminars.

5.9 Council will set a budget of $24,000 per Councillor each four-year term

(subject to Council's approval as part of its budget and financial planning processes) for attendance at conferences, seminars, and/ or training events.

5.10 The total expenditure per Councillor in any four year period referred to at clause 5.9 must not exceed $24,000 except by Council resolution.

5.11
The Mayor may from time to time attend conferences, seminars, functions and/or training events directly related to their representational role as Mayor. The budget for attendance at such events is in addition to the amount referred to at clause 5.9 and will be subject to the approval of Council's Chief Executive Officer

5.12

5.13

5.14 All bookings and payments are to be made by the Councillor Business team.

5.15 A Councillor attending an interstate or overseas conference/seminar will provide a written report within one month of the end of the conference. The purpose is to share information and maximise the benefit to Council.

6. ACCOUNTABILITY

6.1 Claims

Claims for expenses claimable under this policy are to be submitted monthly to the Coordinator Councillor Business. Claims will only be accepted for expenses that occurred up to two calendar months previously.

6.2 Approval

Expenditure and reimbursements will be processed in accordance with this Policy. Claims not covered by this policy may be submitted to a Council Meeting for determination.

6.3 Elections

Council's policy on conduct and use of resources during the election period is set out in Council's Election Period Policy.

6.4 Party Political

No Council resource is to be used for Party Political purposes or any purpose that may present the appearance of being Party Political.

6.5 Reporting

6.5.1 Details of civic expenses for each year (1 November to 31 October) will be disclosed annually on Council's website by the end of February each year.

6.5.2 Civic expenses will be the subject of a review by Council's Internal Auditor after the third year of each Council Term,

with regular reporting to the Audit and Risk Committee.

7. LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

This Policy has been assessed as being compatible with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*.

In line with the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic), a Gender Impact Assessment is not required for this policy.

8. ASSOCIATED C DOCUMENTS

Model Code of Conduct
Governance Rules
Election Period Policy (contained in Council's Governance Rules)
Councillor Communications and Media Protocol
Councillor Capability Framework

9. EXTERNAL REFERENCES/RESOURCES

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)
Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020
Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020
Victorian Government Guidance on the mandatory training for Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors October 2024

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