

Elected Members' Allowances and Benefits Policy	
	Statutory Policy
TRIM Reference	AR18/46305
First Issued	24 November 2014
Last Reviewed	13 December 2022
Next Review	November 2026

1. POLICY STATEMENT

To assist Elected Members in performing their official functions and duties they are entitled to be provided with a range of facilities and support, and be reimbursed for expenses as specified in this policy.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 Purpose

This policy will ensure that the payment of Elected Member allowances, the reimbursement of expenses and the provision of benefits by the Council is in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) and the *Local Government (Members Allowances and Benefits) Regulations 2010* (the Regulations). This Policy also specifies the expenses that will be reimbursed without the specific approval of Council.

2.2 Scope

This Policy applies to all Elected Members.

2.3 Definitions

prescribed meeting means a meeting of the Council or Council committee, or a briefing session, discussion, workshop, briefing, training course or similar activity which is directly or closely related to the performance of the roles or duties of the Elected Member.

eligible journey means a journey between the principal place of residence, or a place of work, of an Elected Member, and the place of a prescribed meeting.

2.4 Strategic Reference

5 Governance and Financial Sustainability

5.5 We meet or exceed legislative and accreditation requirements for all relevant programs.

3. PRINCIPLES

3.1 Council encourages continued professional training and development for Elected Members. This is necessary for good governance and to improve performance of the functions and duties of Elected Members.

3.2 Elected Members are paid an allowance for performing and discharging their functions and duties on Council. Section 59 of the Act outlines the role of an Elected Member.

3.3 Allowances

3.3.1 Elected Member allowances are determined by the Remuneration Tribunal on an annual basis on the anniversary of the last periodic election. The allowance takes effect from the conclusion of the election.

3.3.2 Elected Member allowances are increased annually, as determined by the Remuneration Tribunal and published in the SA Government Gazette.

3.3.3 In accordance with Regulation 4, Elected Members will be paid monthly in arrears.

- 3.3.5 The annual allowances for an Elected Member of Port Augusta City Council (Group 2) are:
- a) Elected Members \$19,110
 - b) Principal members, is equal to four times the allowance for Elected Members of that Council (\$76,440)
 - c) Deputy Mayor or an Elected Member who is the presiding member of one or more prescribed committees is equal to one and a quarter (1.25) times the allowance for Elected Members of that Council (\$23,887.50).
- 3.4.6 An additional sitting fee is also payable for Elected Members who are presiding members of other committees (who are not deputy mayors, or presiding members of prescribed committees). The sitting fee is \$188 per meeting to a maximum of \$1,129 per annum.

3.5 Mandatory Reimbursements - Travel

- 3.5.1 Elected Members are entitled to receive reimbursement for travelling expenses actually and necessarily incurred for travel within the Council area associated with attendance at a prescribed meeting.
- 3.5.2 Reimbursement for travel expenses is restricted to eligible journeys provided the journey is by the shortest or most practicable route and to that part of the journey within the Council area.
- 3.5.3 When an Elected Member travels by private motor vehicle, the rate of reimbursement is the appropriate rate per kilometre prescribed for the purposes of calculating deductions for car expenses under section 28.25 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* of the Commonwealth.
- 3.5.4 Travel by taxi, bus or other means of public transport is reimbursed on the basis of expenses actually and necessarily incurred.
- 3.5.5 To receive reimbursement an Elected Member is required to complete an Elected Member Claim Form and submit it to the Chief Executive Officer. For administrative efficiency these forms are to be submitted on a monthly basis.

3.6 Mandatory Reimbursements - Child/Dependant Care

- 3.6.1 Elected Members are entitled to reimbursement for child/dependant care expenses actually or necessarily incurred by the Elected Member as a consequence of the Elected Member's attendance at a prescribed meeting. Child/dependent care is not reimbursed if the care is provided by a person who ordinarily resides with the Elected Member.
- 3.6.2 To receive reimbursement an Elected Member is required to complete an Elected Member Claim Form and submit it to the Chief Executive Officer. For administrative efficiency these forms are to be submitted on a monthly basis.

3.7 Prescribed and Approved Reimbursements

- 3.7.1 Section 77(1)(b) of the Act provides that the Council may approve the reimbursement of additional expenses as set out in the Regulations incurred by Elected Members under a policy adopted by Council.
- 3.7.2 Council approves the payment of expenses incurred in travelling to a function or activity on Council business. The following conditions apply to these expenses:
- a) travel both within and outside the Council area is incurred by the Elected Member as a consequence of attendance at a function or activity on the business of Council. This includes Mayoral receptions, opening ceremonies, dinners, citizenship ceremonies and official visits; inspection of sites within the Council area which relate to Council or Committee agenda items; meetings of community groups and organisations as a Council representative

- b) car parking fees, travel by taxi, bus, plane or other means of public transport will be reimbursed on the basis of being expenses where they are incurred as a consequence of the Members' attendance at a function or activity on the business of the Council.
- c) Receipts or other evidence of expenditure must be submitted on an Elected Member Claim Form for any of the above expenses.

3.8 Travel Time Payment

- 3.8.1 Pursuant to the determination made by the Remuneration Tribunal, Elected Members (excluding Principal Members) of non-metropolitan Councils are eligible for payment for a travel time payment where the Elected Member's usual place of residence is within the relevant Council area and is located
- a) at least 30kms but less than 50kms from the Council's principal office - \$454 per annum.
 - b) at least 50kms but less than 75kms from the Council's principal office - \$775 per annum.
 - c) at least 75kms but less than 100kms from the Council's principal office - \$1,162 per annum
 - b) 100kms or more from the Council's principal office - \$1,649 per annum.

3.9 Training/Conferences/Seminars

- 3.9.1 Applications to attend training and other functions must be completed and lodged with the Chief Executive Officer for approval and where the cost exceeds \$2,000 formal Council approval is required.
- 3.9.2 Council will pay reasonable expenses associated with attending approved conferences, seminars, training and other similar activities related to the performance of the roles or duties of a Member. Bookings for accommodation, meals and parking at Hotels/Motels must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer. Requests for reimbursement of other expenses incurred must be accompanied by receipts and should be lodged with the Executive Assistant.
- 3.9.3 Council will pay the reasonable cost of meals and refreshments for Members attending functions as approved according to this policy, where any of those meals are not provided as part of the fee for the conference or function.

3.10 Local, Domestic and International Travel

- 3.10.2 Taxis, coaches and other transfer transport expenses will be met by the Council for approved travel, upon presentation of an official receipt.
- 3.10.3 Expenses actually and necessarily incurred (or to be incurred) for domestic and international travel relating to the functions of Council and to the roles or duties of Members, will be paid where the travel has been approved by the Council.
- 3.10.4 Approved air travel for Members will be provided at the economy rate unless:
- a) there is a legitimate medical reason, supported by a medical certificate, requiring travel at a high class; or
 - b) the Council resolves that a higher class booking is appropriate e.g. if the Member is to be in a group which is travelling first class or business class.
- 3.10.5 Bookings for Members' air travel will be made by the Executive Assistant at the most advantageous price to the Council. Frequent flyer points or other marketing offers associated with a particular airline booking may accrue to the Member concerned.

3.11 Communication Facilities

- 3.11.1 The Mayor will receive an iPad or laptop and a Council Phone with associated costs paid by the Council. The Mayor will also be provided with an office space.

- 3.11.2 Elected Members will be provided with an iPad or laptop with internet access at the expense of Council. Elected Members may be provided with a Council phone upon request with costs paid by the Council.
- 3.11.3 Elected Members must refer to Elected Member Records Management Policy regarding their responsibilities in protecting Council records.

3.12 Facilities and Support

- 3.12.1 Pursuant to Section 78 of the Act, Council has considered and is satisfied that the facilities and support listed below are necessary or expedient for all Elected Members on a uniform basis, to assist them in performing or discharging their official functions and duties.
- 3.12.2 Where Members are required to attend training or functions that take place outside of the Council area, a Council pool vehicle will be provided. Payment of any expiations incurred will be the responsibility of the person who is driving the vehicle at the time of the infringement. For insurance purposes, vehicles may only be driven by Elected Members or Council staff.
- 3.12.3 Insurance cover for all Elected Members will be provided, pursuant to Section 80 of the *Local Government Act 1999*, to ensure Members are adequately covered against risk associated with the performance of discharge of official functions or duties of the Council.
- 3.12.4 A light meal and drinks will be provided for Members where appropriate, to support attendance at Council Meetings, Committee Meetings, briefings and workshops.
- 3.12.5 Tea and coffee making facilities will be available in Council Chambers.
- 3.12.6 Elected Members will be provided with any stationery requirements upon request, for the purpose of conducting the business of the Council.
- 3.12.7 Elected Members will receive a name badge containing the Council Logo.
- 3.12.8 Elected Members will receive individual Elected Member Business Cards.
- 3.12.9 Elected Members will be provided with access to branded and labelled high-vis vests for community event attendance.
- 3.12.10 The Mayor will be provided access to a Council pool vehicle, which is to be used specifically to undertake the role and duties of the Mayor. The Mayor will book this vehicle when it is required. The vehicle will be available for Council staff to book at other times. A log book will be completed by the Mayor and Council staff for each trip undertaken.
- 3.12.11 The Mayor will be provided with a specific car parking space at the Civic Centre.
- 3.12.12 A Member must not use a facility or service provided by the Council for private use, unless the use has been approved by the Council and the Member has agreed to reimburse the Council for the costs associated with that use. Elected Members are solely responsible for those facilities released into their care and control for the duration of their term in office.
- 3.12.13 All equipment provided to Elected Members must be returned to Council on or before the close of voting for each General Election.
- 3.12.14 If the facilities provided to the Elected Member are damaged or lost the Elected Member must lodge a written report with the Chief Executive Officer.

3.13 Other Reimbursements

Any additional reimbursements and facilities and support not detailed in this Policy require the specific approval of Council prior to any reimbursements being paid, benefits being received and facilities or support being provided.

3.14 Register of Allowances and Benefits

- 3.14.1 Pursuant to Section 79 of the Act, the Chief Executive Officer must maintain a Register in which they will ensure that a record is kept of
- a) the annual allowance payable to an Elected Member; and
 - b) any expenses reimbursed under Section 77(1)(b) of the Act; and
 - c) Other benefits paid or provided for the benefit of the Member; or
 - d) the provision of a reimbursement or benefit not previously recorded.
- 3.14.2 The Register will be published on Council's Website and updated on an as needs basis. The Register is also available for inspection by members of the public, free of charge, at the Council's office during ordinary business hours. Copies or extracts of the Register are available for purchase upon payment of a fixed fee.

3.15 Leave of Absence

- 3.15.1 If an Elected Member is deemed to have been granted a leave of absence to contest a State Parliament Election under section 55A of the Act, the following will apply:
- (a) the Elected Member will not be paid an allowance for the period of leave;
 - (b) the Elected Member must not access or use any facility, service or support provided by Council to a member in the performing or discharge of their official functions or duties during the period of leave;
 - (c) the Elected Member must return their Council issued iPad/Laptop/phone to Council prior to the commencement of the leave of absence. The items will be returned to the Elected Member at cessation of the period of leave.

4. RESPONSIBILITY & REVIEW

4.1 Responsible Officer

- 4.1.1 Director City Services is responsible for preparing an annual audit review to ensure compliance with this policy. Audit reports should highlight apparently excessive claims or payments.
- 4.1.2 The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for approving all reimbursement claims.
- 4.1.3 The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing and monitoring expense reimbursement procedures in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and this Policy.

4.2 Availability

- 4.2.1 This policy will be available on Council's website.
- 4.2.2 The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring a copy of this Policy is provided to all Elected Members.

4.3 Review

- 4.3.1 This policy will be reviewed within 12 months of a General Election for Local Government, or as required to meet other obligations.
- 4.3.2 This policy lapses at a General Local Government Election.

5. REFERENCES

5.1 Legislation

Local Government Act 1999
Local Government (Members Allowances and Benefits) Regulations 2010

5.2 Other References

Elected Members Reimbursement Claim Form
Elected Members - Request for approval for Attendance at Training / Course / Conference
/ Seminar / Function Form
Electronic Communications Management Policy
Fees & Charges Policy
Register of Allowances & Benefits
Elected Member Records Management Policy