



Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Policy

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Policy Objective

1. To provide guidance and clarity with regard to the allowances and expenses that will be paid to elected members in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*, *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and the *Salaries and Allowances Act 1975*.
2. To enable elected members to effectively carry out their role and functions, and ensure that they are not unduly financially disadvantaged when doing so.
3. To remove barriers, promote inclusion and ensure that the opportunity to become an elected member is available to all electors within the local government area.

Policy

1. Allowances

a) Meeting Attendance Allowance – Elected Members

Meeting attendance allowances for elected members are required to be determined each year by Council and adopted as part of the annual Budget. The amounts will be within the range determined each year by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

Any taxation liability arising from the payment of meeting allowances is the responsibility of each elected member.

Payment may be made to an elected member's superannuation fund if requested.

Meeting attendance fees are payable in arrears as quarterly instalments.

b) President and Deputy President Allowance

President and Deputy President allowances are required to be determined each year by Council and adopted as part of the annual Budget. The amounts will be within the range determined each year by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

Any taxation liability arising from the payment of meeting allowances is the responsibility of each elected member.

Payment may be made to an elected member's superannuation fund if requested.

These allowances are in addition to attendance allowance and paid in arrears as quarterly instalments.

c) Information and Communication Technology Allowance

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) allowance is determined each year by Council and adopted as part of the annual Budget, and is within the range determined by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

The ICT allowance covers:

- ✓ telecommunication expenses;
- ✓ ~~expenses incurred for the repair of the supplied computer, if the fault is found to be caused by the elected member;~~ ICT hardware (eg laptop or tablet)
- ✓ consumable supplies;
- ✓ non-standard software or hardware; and
- ✓ provision of an internet connection and data plan.

This allowance is paid in arrears as quarterly instalments.

2. Reimbursement of Expenses

Reimbursement of reasonable meal expenses will be processed monthly upon receipt of the claim form and receipts. Expense claims must be on a Travel Expenses Claim Form and submitted to the Chief Executive Officer or Director Corporate & Community Services for approval.

a) Travel Costs

Elected members attending meetings or representing the Shire at meetings or events outside of the Shire of Denmark are encouraged to use a Shire vehicle.

Reimbursement of travel costs are subject to the costs being adequately evidenced by providing the Director Corporate & Community Services with the reason for travel, date, mileage, from and to locations, an appropriate receipt, and (if required) evidence that the CEO or Council has approved the attendance.

Elected members who incur travel costs while using their privately owned vehicle, pursuant to Regulation 31(1)(b) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, are entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred because of the member's attendance a Council meeting, or a meeting of a committee of which they are a member.

The extent to which an Elected Member can be reimbursed for reasonable travel costs is as determined by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal. This is particularly relevant if an Elected Members resides or works outside of the Shire of Denmark local government area.

In accordance with Regulation 32(1) of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations, the Council has approved the additional circumstances for when reasonable travel costs incurred may be reimbursed.

- ✓ Attendance at meetings, briefings, workshops, presentations, deputations, ceremonies, functions, training, on-site inspections in connection with Elected Members duties or as an authorised Council representative.

Subject to any requirements under Council's *Attendance at Events Policy*.

Travel costs incurred are to be calculated in accordance with the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal determination.

For the purposes of this policy *travel costs* include parking fees (not parking fines).

b) Meals

Occasionally Councillors may attend meetings, training or conferences outside the Shire of Denmark and, depending on the distance and time of day, may require overnight accommodation and meals.

Accommodation and registrations must be pre-approved by the Chief Executive Officer and booked through the Executive Support Officer.

c) Child Care Costs

Elected Members who incur child care costs are entitled to be reimbursed if the expense is incurred by a council member in performing a function under the express authority of the Council or in his or her capacity of an Elected Member, pursuant to Regulation 31(1)(b) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

Reimbursement will be in accordance with the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal determination.

For the purpose of this section the number of hours claimed shall be limited to the actual length of the meeting, with a nominal time allowance for networking opportunities and travel to and from the place of care.

Reimbursement of child care costs will be processed upon receipt of the claim form and receipts which must include detail of the date, number of hours, rate and function/meeting attended.

Child care costs will only be paid upon evidence of out-of-pocket expenses.

3. Equipment

a) Provision of Equipment

Elected members are required to provide all ICT hardware (eg laptop/phone/tablet) and the ICT allowance should be set, through the budget process, to accommodate this requirement.

Shire will provide ICT support to purchase, install and maintain:

- antivirus software
- e-mail and calendar accounts
- file sharing software.

The support is limited to two (2) devices per elected member.

If the ICT hardware is lost or stolen the elected member should notify the Shires ICT department as soon as possible.

At the end of an elected members term, Shire accounts should be removed from the ICT hardware and confidential information deleted. ICT support will be made available to assist where required.

~~All elected members following their election will be issued with a computer device, cover and keyboard as determined most appropriate by the Manager Corporate Services and the Shire's ICT Officer at the commencement of their initial term.~~

~~The device will remain the property of, and be insured by, the Shire. All devices will be renewed four years after their date of purchase.~~

~~The Shire will purchase and install antivirus software and any other program considered necessary to assist elected members in performing their functions as an elected member.~~

~~Maintenance and support for the device will be provided by the Shire's ICT department. All requests for assistance are to be directed to the Director Corporate & Community Services in the first instance.~~

~~In the event of damage or loss, elected members are to mitigate against any further damage and notify the Shire as soon as possible.~~

~~Councillors are to utilise their Shire provided device for Shire purposes only.~~

~~Elected members may choose to keep their device at the end of their term.~~

~~If an elected member resigns mid term, they must hand back their device to the Shire.~~

~~Prior to retention, the device is to be provided to the Shire's ICT Officer to erase, update and remove Shire related information and management systems.~~

b) Stationery

Elected members will be supplied with a Shire of Denmark name badge.

4. Insurance

Elected members will be provided with insurance cover for:

- a) Personal Accident and Corporate Travel whilst performing their official duties. Cover does not include ordinary medical expenses.
- b) Legal Representation Costs Indemnification, in accordance with Council Policy, for matters arising out of the performance of the official duties of their office provided the performance or exercise of the official duty is, in the opinion of Council, not illegal, dishonest, against the interests of the Shire or otherwise in bad faith.
- c) Public Liability for matters arising out of the performance of the official duties of their office but subject to any limitations set out in the insurance policy.

5. Other Expenses

It is not expected that elected members will incur any other expenses in the performance of their duties. Should an elected member incur an expense they believe they are entitled to have reimbursed; the matter shall be presented to Council for a determination.

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