

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear policy framework around aldermen's entitlement to expenses, allowances, benefits and gifts in accordance with the legislative requirement for a policy under Schedule 5 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Schedule 5 – Office of Councillors

1 Expenses

(1) A council, on or before 1 January 2006, is to –

- (a) Adopt a policy in respect of payment of expenses incurred by councillors in carrying out the duties of office; and*
- (b) Make a copy of the policy available for public inspection.*

2 OBJECTIVE

In addition to prescribed expenses and allowances under the *Act*, this policy determines the additional expenses and allowances which the Council deems appropriate for the support of aldermen in fulfilling their duties of office.

Schedule 5 – Office of Councillors

1 Expenses

(2) A councillor is entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable expenses in accordance with the policy adopted under subclause (1) in relation to –

- (a) any prescribed expenses; and*
- (b) any other expenses the council determines appropriate.*

2 Loan of services, facilities and equipment

A council may decide to provide support services, facilities and equipment on loan to a councillor on any conditions it considers appropriate.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to Aldermen of Burnie City Council and addresses the following matters:

- Prescribed allowances
- Claim for expenses
- Meal allowance
- Use of vehicles and travelling expenses
- Childcare expenses
- Provision of facilities – city offices
- Home office expenses
- Telephones and computing devices
- Conferences and seminars
- Dinners, functions and events
- Partners' costs
- Retirement gifts

Aldermen's Expenses and Allowances

Approved By: **Council**
Doc Controller: **General Manager**
File: 4/14/2

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- Insurance
- Privacy

4 POLICY

4.1 Prescribed Allowances

- 4.1.1 The Council shall pay allowances for elected members in accordance with Regulation 42 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2005*.
- 4.1.2 Allowances will be paid on a monthly in arrears basis.
- 4.1.3 An Aldermen may determine 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 *Local Government Act 1993*]

4.2 Claim for Expenses

- 4.2.1 Aldermen are entitled to be reimbursed for the following prescribed expenses under the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2005*:

Section 43

A councillor is entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable expenses in accordance with the policy adopted under Schedule 5 to the Act in relation to –

- (a) telephone rental and telephone calls; and*
- (b) travelling; and*
- (c) care of any child of the councillor.*

- 4.2.2 Claims for travelling expenses (see 4.4) or reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in accordance with this policy shall be made to the General Manager not later than three (3) months after the expense has been incurred and shall be submitted on the prescribed form [Alderman Expenses Claim Form]. Claims are preferred on a monthly basis.
- 4.2.3 Where, in the opinion of the General Manager, a question arises as to whether a claim for reimbursement of expenses is eligible under this Policy, or the claim appears unreasonable or does not serve the interests of Council, the General Manager shall refer the matter to Council in closed session for decision and policy guidance.

Note: *Council is encouraged to regularly review and revise this Policy. It is incumbent upon the General Manager and Aldermen themselves to provide Council with this opportunity by referring claims, even historically accepted claims, to Council for Policy consideration. The General Manager should endeavour to refer the matter without disclosing the identity of the individual who submitted the claim.*

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4.3 Meal Allowance

- 4.3.1 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.
- 4.3.2 For attendance upon inspections or upon business of Council either, inside or outside the Municipal area, out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed upon presentation of a claim for payment [Alderman Expenses Claim Form]. A receipt should where possible be provided with the claim.

4.4 Use of Vehicles and Travelling Expenses

- 4.4.1 Council will provide a dedicated Aldermen's Pool Car for use of the Mayor and Aldermen in the exercise of their duties and functions as an Alderman. Bookings for the Aldermen's Pool Car are to be coordinated through the Personal Assistant to the Mayor and General Manager.
- 4.4.2 Council will reimburse Aldermen for necessary out-of-pocket expenses incurred in travelling to discharge their functions as an Alderman in respect of the following:
- (a) To and from the formal meetings of Council, Council workshops or a meeting of any Committee the Alderman has been appointed to as a representative of Burnie City Council, or for any other meeting where the Alderman has been delegated or authorised by Council to attend.
 - (b) Upon business of the Council, outside the municipal area, in compliance with a resolution of Council.
 - (c) To and from the Annual Conference of the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) or to and from any meeting of the Cradle Coast Authority to which Council has appointed representatives.
 - (d) To and from any seminar/conference in compliance with a resolution or policy of Council.
- 4.4.3 The travel allowance payable will be at the Australian Tax Office rate for travel allowances.
- 4.4.4 An Alderman shall not claim travel or other expenses where the expense would otherwise have been incurred as a result of private business.
- 4.4.5 Clauses 4.4.2 and 4.4.3 do not apply to travel, either inside or outside of the municipal area, where alternative arrangements are made for travel.
- 4.4.6 For cost efficiency it is preferred that Aldermen seek the use of the Aldermen's Pool Car for business travel outside the municipality that exceeds 100km return.

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

4.5 Childcare Expenses

- 4.5.1 Council will reimburse an Alderman for necessary, reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of office in relation to care of any child of the Alderman, including:
- (a) To attend the formal meetings of Council, Council workshops or a meeting of any Committee the Alderman has been appointed to as a representative of Burnie City Council, or for any other meeting where the Alderman has been delegated or authorised by Council to attend.
 - (b) Upon business of the Council, outside the municipal area, in compliance with a resolution of Council, except where the body or committee reimburses relevant child care expenses incurred by the Alderman.
 - (c) To attend any seminar/conference in compliance with this policy or a resolution of Council.
 - (d) To attend inspections or business as arranged by the General Manager.
- 4.5.2 Where a licensed child care provider is used, reimbursements made will be net of any entitlement to government subsidies.
- 4.5.3 At the General Manager's discretion, child care may be paid at an hourly rate of up to \$20/hour when no licensed provider is available (evenings for example).
- 4.5.4 Childcare costs are not eligible for reimbursement if paid for child caring by a person who normally or regularly lives with the Alderman or is a member of the Aldermen's family.
- 4.5.5 All claims must detail the date and time care was provided, the business of council that it related to, and attach a receipt or invoice from the provider (whether licensed or unlicensed).
- 4.5.6 Council will not reimburse any claims that are more than three months old.
- 4.5.7 Childcare expenses will, unless there are exceptional circumstances, be paid in arrears.

4.6 Provision of Facilities – City Offices

- 4.6.1 The Mayor is to be provided with a dedicated office for the carrying out of his/her duties as Mayor.

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- 4.6.2 Aldermen are permitted to use a separate office and telephone for calls and appointments in discharging the function of an Alderman.
- 4.6.3 Council will provide Aldermen with administrative support in relation to discharging the function of an Alderman.
- 4.6.4 Each Alderman will be provided with one parking permit for use in discharging the function of an Alderman.

4.7 Home Office Expenses

- 4.7.1 Council will reimburse Aldermen for the cost of postage, journals/books, stationery etc provided that claims are submitted on the prescribed form [Alderman Expenses Claim Form] together with receipts.
- 4.7.2 Council will reimburse Aldermen for the cost of capital items such as a desk, filing cabinet, briefcase etc, provided that claims are submitted on the prescribed form together with receipts. A maximum of \$1,000 in the first year of office and up to \$500 pa thereafter may be claimed for capital items.

4.8 Communications

- 4.8.1 If requested, an Alderman will be provided with a mobile phone or smart phone for the purpose of discharging the function of an Alderman. Phones provided are to be returned to Council at the conclusion of an Alderman's term of office. Reasonable personal use of the phone is allowable on the phone plan.
- 4.8.2 A communications allowance of up to \$250 per month (non-cumulative) can be claimed by each alderman in respect of expenses incurred for mobile or smart phones, landline telephone expenses including fax machines and internet expenses. Copies of such expenses will be provided monthly to aldermen for their information and any amount over this will be deducted from the next alderman's allowance. At the General Manager's discretion, Aldermen may claim over the allowance threshold if it can be justified that the expense is clearly associated with discharging the function of an Alderman.
- 4.8.3 If travelling overseas, Aldermen are requested to put appropriate measures in place to avoid excessive phone costs. Aldermen should approach the General Manager for assistance in this matter.
- 4.8.4 If requested, Aldermen will be provided with a computing device and internet access. Generally speaking Council will commence a phase of replacing PCs and laptops with tablets as they fall due for replacement. Computing devices are to be returned to Council at the conclusion of an Alderman's term of office.

4.9 Conferences and Seminars

- 4.9.1 The Council encourages Aldermen to attend conferences, seminars and training relevant to Local Government. When held within Tasmania, Aldermen are entitled to attend the ALGA National Assembly, the LGMA National Congress, the LGAT Annual Conference, or any relevant training session or forum hosted by LGAT in Tasmania.
- 4.9.2 Attendance at any other conference, seminar or training within Tasmania and all conferences, seminars and training outside Tasmania requires a resolution of Council.
- 4.9.3 The Council will pay on or on behalf of Aldermen registration and out of pocket expenses, other than those paid in accordance with Clauses 4.3 and 4.4 of this policy, in respect of attendance at any seminar or conference, in compliance with a resolution or policy of Council and/or Clause 4.9.1.

4.10 Dinners, Functions and Events

- 4.10.1 Council may cover the costs of dinners, functions or events to which either:
- the Mayor is invited to represent Council; or
 - one or more Aldermen are appointed by the Mayor to attend on behalf of Council; or
 - all Aldermen are invited to attend in an official capacity, subject to the discretion of the Mayor.

4.11 Partners' Costs

- 4.11.1 Where additional costs are incurred for the Mayor and/or Aldermen's partners to attend functions, dinners, events or similar, these costs will be at personal expense of the alderman or their partner. For practicality in booking arrangements, this may be undertaken by deduction from the aldermen's allowance.

4.12 Retirement Gifts

- 4.12.1 Retirement presentations for Aldermen should be in the form of a gift up to the value of \$250 for each four years of service up to a maximum of \$1,100 (including GST).

4.13 Insurance

- 4.13.1 Council will provide the following insurance cover for all Aldermen, for liability arising out of or in the course of carrying the function of an Alderman:
- Personal Accident Insurance
 - Directors and Officers Insurance

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- Fidelity Guarantee Insurance
- Business Travel Insurance (conditions apply)
- Motor Vehicle Insurance on Council fleet cars

4.14 Privacy

4.14.1 The total expenses claimed by each Alderman will be published in the Annual Report. The total expense figure will include expenses claimed in accordance with this policy, including out-of-pocket meal expenses, vehicle and travelling expenses, childcare expenses, home office expenses, communications expenses, conferences and seminars including out-of-pocket expenses. This policy serves as a public document to provide an open and fair framework of expense entitlements within which aldermen are entitled to claim.

5 LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1993 S.340A Allowances
Local Government Act 1993 Schedule 5 – Office of Councillors
Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 S.42 Allowances for elected members
Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 S.43 Expenses for councillors

6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Annual Schedule of Aldermen's Allowances from LGAT
Alderman 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

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Policy Endorsement	
Responsibility:	<p>It is the responsibility of individual Aldermen to ensure the integrity of the policy is maintained.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of Governance Unit to administer and maintain this policy in the Corporate Document Framework.</p>
Minute Reference:	Item Number AO109/15, Resolution Number MO110/15
Council Meeting Date:	19 May 2015
Strategic Plan Reference:	<p>Strategy 7.1.1 Formulate policy that is equitable, inclusive and responsive to current needs, and ensure decision-making is informed and accountable.</p> <p>Strategy 7.7.3 Provide support to elected members to assist them to fulfil their roles effectively.</p>
Previous Policies Replaced:	This policy replaces the previous policy <i>C1 Aldermen's Expenses, Allowances and Gifts</i> version 6.0 dated 15 October 2013 (Item AO244/13, 15.10.2013).
Date of Commencement:	20 May 2015
Publication of policy:	<p>This policy is distributed to new aldermen on commencement and is available on the Aldermen's Portal.</p> <p>Members of the public may inspect this policy at the City Offices or access on Council's website (www.burnie.net)</p>