

## PURPOSE

This policy sets out the when Council will reimburse Aldermen for expenses incurred while acting in their roles, and otherwise assist them to carry out the duties of their office.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to Aldermen. It does not apply to other employees or senior management of Council.

## STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

### Leading Our Community

Objective 4.1	Govern in the best interests of our community
Strategy 4.1.1	Manage Council for maximum efficiency, accountability and transparency
Strategy 4.1.3	Maximise regulatory compliance in Council and the community through our systems and processes
Objective 4.2	Prioritise our resources to achieve our community's goals
Strategy 4.2.1	Deploy the Council's resources effectively to deliver value

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Aldermens' ICT usage policy (September 2013)

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Acts	<i>Local Government Act 1993, Schedule 1</i>
Regulations	<i>Local Government (General) Regulations 2015, regulation 43</i>
Australian/International Standards	<i>N/A</i>

## DEFINITIONS

**Alderman** or **Aldermen** includes the Mayor and Deputy Mayor except where stated otherwise.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### 1. Travel expenses

The Mayor will have unrestricted use of a vehicle supplied by the Council that is commensurate with the position.

Council will reimburse an Aldermen (including an Alderman acting as the Mayor's Delegate) for vehicle travelling expenses up to a maximum of 80km for each trip:

- while attending Council meetings, committee meetings, or any other meeting or function that is arranged by, or is attended as a representative of Council
- while responding to a citizen's request or problem
- in response to a Council staff member's request to meet
- in relation to verifying any details relating to an item on the agenda of a Council or committee meeting that the Alderman is required to attend
- when visiting the council offices for the purpose of carrying out their duties as an Alderman.

Re-imburement under this clause will be limited to \$2,000 (excluding GST if the claim includes a tax invoice where Council can claim back the GST) per financial year.

Council will reimburse an Alderman for vehicle travelling expenses for trips greater than 80km if the Alderman is representing Council as the Mayor's delegate or if the purpose of the travel has been approved by Council or the General Manager under their delegated authority to approve conference, seminar or training attendance.

Travelling expenses for the use of a private vehicle will be reimbursed at Tasmanian Public Service rates.

All claims for reimbursement of vehicle travelling expenses must be made on the approved form and must contain sufficient details of each trip to justify reimbursement under this policy. Minimum details required are:

- date of travel
- origin and destination
- purpose (which must be a purpose consistent with this policy)

If the claim relates to the use of a private vehicle, the distance travelled, the vehicle engine capacity and the number of cylinders of the vehicle must also be provided.

Receipts must accompany any claim for vehicle travelling expenses where public transport (buses, taxis etc) transport is used and must also be recorded in the details of the claim.

Council will not reimburse an Alderman for the cost of a hire car, except with the prior approval of the General Manager.

Council will not reimburse an Alderman for petrol, oil or any other vehicle related expense, except when the expenditure has been incurred while hiring a vehicle that has been approved by Council.

Council will not reimburse an Alderman for travelling in relation to unsolicited visits to citizens that have been undertaken for the self-promotion of the Alderman (canvassing, door knocking etc).

Council will not reimburse any claims that are more than 3 months old.

## **2. Child care**

Council will reimburse an Alderman for child care costs that are incurred to enable an Alderman to carry out the duties of their office.

Receipts for payments made to the child carer must accompany claims for reimbursement of childcare expenses, together with details of the date(s) and start and end times that the child care took place.

Reimbursement will not be provided where the child carer is a member of the Alderman's immediate family.

## **3. Communications and data expenses**

Council will reimburse Aldermen for communications and data expenses, as set out in this section.

Aldermen, other than the Mayor, will be given a Communications Allowance of \$2,000 per financial year, as a contribution to the following:

- mobile and landline-based telephone calls
- mobile data
- home broadband
- the purchase of computing or mobile communications devices and accessories

Council will reimburse the Mayor for reasonable communication expenses incurred in the course of carrying out the duties of the Mayor's office.

Aldermen may claim communications expenses in any of the following ways:

- as a reimbursement, on the provision of appropriate evidence
- as a monthly allowance (for an agreed amount), to be paid as a contribution towards the cost of communications and data plans incurred by the Alderman.

Claims for reimbursement of telephone and mobile phone expenses must be made on the appropriate claim form and be supported by sufficient source documentation to justify reimbursement, together with a declaration stating that the amount claimed has been expended in the performance of their duties as an Alderman.

Where an Alderman seeks reimbursement the costs of a phone or data plan (or a combined plan), or opts to claim payment of a monthly telecommunications allowance instead of retrospective reimbursement, the amount claimed is to be based on the estimated percentage of use of each plan that was incurred in the performance of their duties as an Alderman.

Claims for reimbursement should be submitted each month using the form supplied by Council.

Council will not reimburse any claims that:

- are more than 3 months old
- are for telephone calls made or data used for self-promotion or other private purposes.

#### **4. Mobile device purchases**

Aldermen, other than the Mayor, may fund the purchase mobile computing or communication devices (such as tablets, laptops or mobile phones) required to perform their duties from their Communications Allowance. If required, Council can arrange the purchase or, alternatively, will reimburse Aldermen on the presentation of evidence. The equipment will remain the property of the Alderman.

If Council has previously purchased computing or mobile devices for use by an Alderman, Aldermen will have the option of purchasing their equipment from Council for its written-down value.

Council will arrange for Council's email and calendar to be installed on the device and synchronised with Council's email system. However, the Aldermen must allow Council to install Mobile Device Management (MDM) software on any device on which Council data or information is stored. If the device is lost or stolen, Council will remotely clear all data off the device. Alderman must advise Council's ICT ServiceDesk as soon as possible if the device is lost or stolen.

Council will provide basic training and support for use in relation to accessing Council data and email. Council's ICT Team will not provide support for any hardware or applications on a device, other than those required to access Council data or information.

All equipment purchased through the Communications Allowance remains the property of the Alderman.

Consumable items such as stationery, printer cartridges etc may be obtained by contacting Council's ICT section who can assist through an online order facility from Council's current provider using Council's account details. Any purchases will be charged to the Alderman's telecommunications allowance account. Alternatively, reimbursement for purchases can be claimed from the Alderman's telecommunications allowance allocation.

Aldermen will be required to adhere to the Aldermen's Information Communications Technology Usage Policy.

Council will not allow or be responsible for any global roaming on any mobile device.

This policy will be reviewed and amended as required to ensure Council adopts those technology trends necessary for its efficient operation.

## **5. Local Functions**

Council will reimburse Aldermen for costs incurred attending local functions as a Council representative.

All claims for reimbursement for local functions should be made on the appropriate Council form and be supported by sufficient source documentation to justify reimbursement under this policy. The documentation is to include receipts or invoices verifying the expenditure.

Council will not reimburse:

- any claims that are more than 3 months old
- for expenditure incurred while at a local function for any additional costs for accompanying persons, except costs that are necessary to provide an Alderman with a disability equal access to the function.

## **6. Postage expenses and secretarial support**

Council will reimburse Aldermen for postage expenses incurred in replying to issues raised by individual citizens, provided appropriate evidence is provided.

Council will provide Aldermen, other than the Mayor, with limited secretarial support to assist with their duties as Council's representative on working groups, steering groups, special committees, or external committees. Council will provide the Mayor with secretarial and executive support necessary for the Mayor to perform the duties of the Mayor's office.

Council will not provide secretarial support, address lists, postage or reimbursement of postage expenses for unsolicited correspondence to citizens.

Requests for secretarial support which, in the opinion of the General Manager, are excessive, may be refused.

Council will provide Aldermen with up to 500 business cards per year of the same quality and design provided to Council's management team. Council will not charge Aldermen for providing business cards.

Council will not reimburse any postage claims that are more than 3 months old.

## **7. Aldermanic Training**

It is the joint responsibility of the Mayor and General Manager to arrange for newly elected Aldermen to be provided with such familiarisation and induction training as may be necessary in each individual case.

In providing training opportunities for Aldermen, the Local Government Association of Tasmania and other Tasmanian based training agencies should be accessed in the first place. If a particular training and development need cannot be met through these means, efforts should be made to provide training in-house. Only if this is not possible should interstate options be explored and taken up.

All Aldermen will be provided with details of the Annual Conference and other meetings of the Local Government Association of Tasmania.

It is the responsibility of the General Manager to suggest to Aldermen topics for training and development which arise out of the strategic plan or upon issues of concern to Local Government as they arise from time to time.

Details of conferences or training sessions organised by non-Local Government organisations but of relevance to Aldermen may also be provided to Aldermen.

If an Alderman wishes to attend a conference or training course where the total cost, including travel and expenses, is likely to be:

- more than \$500 (plus reasonable costs up to \$500 where there are special needs for any Alderman such as disability or injury) - an application is to be made in writing to the General Manager for approval
- less than \$500, (plus reasonable costs up to \$500 where there are special needs for any Alderman such as disability or injury) - details will be discussed with the General Manager who will have delegated authority to consider the request and approve attendance.

If the General Manager refuses to grant permission to attend a conference or training course, an Alderman may apply in writing for consideration to the Mayor. If the Mayor refuses to grant permission, the Aldermen may apply in writing for consideration at a meeting of the Council.

The General Manager is to inform the Mayor in writing of decision by him to provide Council funds for an Alderman to attend a training course outlined above.

Council will not reimburse or sponsor an Alderman for his or her participation in courses that will result in the award of a secondary or tertiary qualification.

Council will reimburse an Alderman for course fees, travel, accommodation and other expenses associated with attendance at a training course, conference or seminar approved by the Mayor or the General Manager in accordance with the provisions of this policy. Council will not reimburse any claims that are more than 3 months old.

Council will not reimburse an Alderman for expenses incurred while at a training course, conference, or seminar for any additional costs for accompanying persons, except costs that are necessary to provide an Alderman with a disability equal access to the function, or the cost of one accompanying person's attendance at an official conference dinner.

If an Alderman has reached their \$2,000 limit for the year and the General Manager wishes to approve the training, the General Manager will submit a report for consideration at a meeting of Council.

## **8. Memberships**

Council will not reimburse an Alderman for membership of any club, association or professional body.

## 9. Dispute Resolution

If, in the opinion of the General Manager, an Alderman's claim or request is unreasonable or does not meet the requirements of this policy, and agreement cannot be reached with the Alderman, the matter will be referred to the Mayor who may decide the matter themselves or refer the matter to a Council meeting for decision.

### BACKGROUND

Aldermen naturally incur expenses as a result of carrying out the duties and functions of their office.

The *Local Government Act 1993* provides that councillors are entitled to be reimbursed for their reasonable expenses in carrying out those duties and functions, that Council adopts a policy in respect of payment of expenses incurred by councillors in carrying out the duties of office and that Council may provide other support services, facilities and equipment to Councillors as it considers appropriate.

As part of its duty to practice responsible and accountable government and to ensure that public funds are not misused, Council must ensure that there are clear guidelines setting out the expenses for which Aldermen are able to be reimbursed and the support which it will provide in accordance with its obligations under the *Local Government Act 1993* and associated regulations.

### DOCUMENT CONTROL

<b>Version:</b>	2.0	<b>Adopted</b>	26 October 2020	<b>Commencement Date</b>	27 October 2020
<b>Minutes Reference</b>	26 October 2020, Item 16			<b>Review Period</b>	4 Years from adoption
<b>Previous Versions:</b>	1.0, adopted 29 August 2016 (item 12)				
<b>Responsible Directorate</b>	Corporate Services	<b>Controller:</b>	Executive Officer		
<b>ECM Document No.:</b>					