



Central Coast Council

Councillor Allowances and Expenses Policy

February 2023

Table of Contents

<i>PURPOSE</i>	2
<i>SCOPE</i>	2
<i>STANDARDS (INCLUDING RELEVANT LEGISLATION)</i>	2
<i>RELEVANT LEGISLATION</i>	2
<i>RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS</i>	2
<i>POLICY STATEMENT</i>	2
<i>GUIDELINES</i>	3
<i>REVIEW</i>	5

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Councillor Allowances and Expenses Policy is to establish a clear framework and guidelines for the payment of allowances and reimbursement of expenses to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors, and to provide transparency in relation to such payments.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors of Central Coast Council.

STANDARDS (INCLUDING RELEVANT LEGISLATION)

This Policy was developed in accordance with:

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- . *Local Government Act 1993* (section 340A and Schedule 5, section 1 and 2)
- . *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015* (Regulation 42, 43 and Schedule 4)

RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

- . Elected Members Professional Development Policy – 2022
- . Code of Conduct of Councillors – 2023

POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy provides for the implementation of legislative requirements relating to the payment of allowances and reimbursement of expenses to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015* (the Regulations).

This Policy provides guidelines for Councillors in relation to:

- . Councillor allowances;
- . expenses claims process;
- . communications expenses;
- . reporting of allowances and expenses;
- . provision of information technology and business facilities;
- . provision of Mayoral vehicle; and

- . Councillor insurance.

GUIDELINES

1 COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

The Council will pay allowances in accordance with section 340A of the Act and regulation 42 of the Regulations.

Section 340A of the Act entitles Councillors to prescribed allowances, as set out in Schedule 4 of the Regulations. Mayors and Deputy Mayors are entitled to allowances in addition to those payable to them as Councillors.

Regulation 42 establishes an indexation process so that allowances are adjusted from 1 November each year by multiplying the allowances for the previous year by the inflationary factor for the current year. Allowances can be paid in monthly or fortnightly instalments and all allowances will be paid in arrears.

A Councillor may decline all, or part, of their allowance by notifying the General Manager in writing.

2 COUNCILLOR EXPENSES

Regulation 43 specifies that a Councillor is entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable expenses in carrying out their duties and functions as a Councillor, in accordance with the policy adopted under Schedule 5 of the Act (this Policy).

On a half-yearly basis in the months of December and June, the Council will reimburse claims for:

- 5.1 Travelling that has occurred as a result of a decision of the Council or the General Manager. Expenses incurred travelling to and from Councillor Workshops and Council Meetings are automatically recorded, calculated and reimbursed. The travel allowance payable will be at the "Vehicle allowance" rates specified in the Local Government Industry Award 2010 (as amended from time to time).
- 5.2 Care of any person who is dependent on the Councillor, where a copy of an account of the carer is provided and the period of the care matches the approved business of the Council.
- 5.3 Reasonable costs of registration fees, accommodation and meals in respect to the attendance of the Councillor at an approved conference, seminar, forum or event. Reference to the Elected Members Professional Development Policy – February 2022 (section 5.3 to 5.5 in particular) will be made when claiming and assessing the reimbursement of these expenses.

All expenses claims will be submitted in writing and must include receipts where available. The payment of these claims will be made as part of the next direct deposit of the Councillor allowance.

The Council recommends that Councillors retain records of expenses for taxation purposes.

Where in the opinion of the General Manager, a claim for reimbursement of expenses appears to be ineligible under this Policy, the claim may be refused.

3 COMMUNICATIONS EXPENSES

The Council will pay Councillors an amount of \$50.00 per month for expenses relating to telephone and internet use. This payment will be made at the time of the direct deposit of the Councillor allowances.

4 REPORTING OF ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES

To provide transparency and in accordance with section 72(1)(cb) of the Act, a Statement of Allowances and Expenses Paid to Elected Members is included in the Council's Annual Report, listing separate totals for Councillors' allowances and expenses for the financial year.

5 PROVISION OF FACILITIES

The Council will provide a laptop (remaining the property of the Council at all times) for use for Council business. Each laptop will be installed with required software, including Microsoft Office and Docs on Tap. Other software deemed necessary for Council business may be requested and installed upon approval by the General Manager.

Training in Docs On Tap will be provided as part of the induction process for Councillors. Any other training for Councillors (e.g. in the use of Microsoft Office) can be arranged on request to the Executive Services Officer.

Support for the operation of the laptop will be provided by the Information Technology (IT) Team during office hours. This support is primarily for equipment problems, not training. Any equipment failures are to be reported to the IT Team so that repairs can be arranged. After-hours support will not be available.

When the laptop is to be replaced or a Councillor leaves the Council, the equipment is to be returned to the IT Team for removal of data prior to reallocation or disposal.

Councillors will be supplied with a Council email address which will remain active for the duration of the Councillor's term of office.

Councillors will be provided with Council business cards.

Councillors will be provided with parking permits for use on Council business in the Central Coast area.

6 *PROVISION OF MAYORAL VEHICLE*

The Council will provide a fully serviced sedan (the sedan remaining the property of the Council at all times) for the Mayor in the exercise of their duties and functions as Mayor. The vehicle is to be garaged at the Mayor's residence.

7 *COUNCILLOR INSURANCE*

The Council will provide Councillors with insurance cover against loss arising from any claims incurred by them in their capacity as Councillors under the Directors and Officers Liability Policy, together with personal accident insurance cover for Councillors (subject to age limit) whilst engaged in Council activities, including travel to and from place of work and residence.

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed within three months after a local government election, unless organisational or legislative changes require more frequent review.

SANDRA AYTON
GENERAL MANAGER

Date of approval: 20/02/2023

Approved by:



.....