



LITHGOW CITY COUNCIL

Policy 9.9

PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO
COUNCILLORS

Version 1

9.9 PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO COUNCILLORS

OBJECTIVE: To comply with the provisions of Section 252 of the Local Government Act, 1993 and adopt policy concerning the payment of expenses incurred or to be incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, the Mayor and Councillors in relation to discharging the functions of civic office.

POLICY:

1 EXPENSES

1.1 Travelling Expenses (Outside the Lithgow City Council LGA)

Councillors will be entitled to travel to State Government sponsored ad hoc committees and official engagements and functions, where the Councillor has been authorised by the Council by way of a resolution or is deputising for the Mayor, at the expense of the Council by the most practical conveyance.

Where prior notice is given, Councillors will be provided with a motor vehicle when required to attend conferences, seminars, meetings and official engagements and functions, where the Councillor has been authorised by the Council or is deputising for the Mayor. The Councillor in charge of the vehicle at the time of any infringement notice shall be responsible for all traffic and parking fines incurred.

Councillors may only undertake overseas travel where travelling expenses where the Council has specifically authorised a councillor's itinerary and specifically authorised reimbursement by way of a Council resolution made prior to the trip being taken. The resolution must specifically name any Councillor(s) authorised to undertake overseas travel, indicate the reason the travel has been deemed to be necessary and include a determination of any reimbursement of expenses.

Councillor(s) must have successfully supplied to Council (in an open session of a council meeting) details via a written report which illustrates the nexus of their trip with the policies and/or objectives of the Council and the report must illustrate the community benefit that will arise from the trip.

The lack of a resolution to reimburse expenses that specifically names the Councillor(s) will preclude the approval of the reimbursement of any travel expenses.

Reimbursements will be on items submitted as receipts or tax invoices only where proof of payment is provided and the appropriate claim form is completed.

Advance payments for any expenses expected to be incurred will not be provided.

Spouses, partners or accompanying persons shall not be entitled to any reimbursement of travelling expenses.

Councillor(s) undertaking any travel outside the Lithgow City Council LGA are required to submit a written report to the next Council meeting via the Business Paper for that meeting.

Reimbursement will be made available provided that travel is undertaken expediently, and by the shortest practicable route, and reimbursement is subject to a formal claim being lodged not later than three (3) months after the expense was incurred.

1.2 Travelling Expenses (Inside the Lithgow City Council LGA)

Councillors will be reimbursed travel expenses in accordance with the Australian Taxation Office approved rates for use of private motor vehicles to attend the following:

- Council meetings;
- Council Committee meetings;
- Working Group meetings which the Councillor is the nominated delegate;
- Section 355 Committee meetings;
- External Organisations/Committee Meeting, which the Councillor is the nominated Delegate, except where fees are paid to the Councillor by the external organisation;
- Workshops convened by Council;
- Public Meetings convened by Council;
- Training programs relating to the role of the Council; and
- Inspections within the area of the Council, undertaken according to a resolution of Council.
- To attend a formal function or meeting where a formal invitation to attend arises only as a result of their position as a Councillor.

Reimbursement will be made available provided that travel is undertaken expediently, and by the shortest practicable route, and reimbursement is subject to a formal claim being lodged not later than three (3) months after the expense was incurred.

Advance payments for any expenses expected to be incurred will not be provided.

Spouses, partners or accompanying persons shall not be entitled to any reimbursement of travelling expenses.

1.3 Official Engagements and Functions

Council will be responsible for the expenses of Councillors to attend meetings, official engagements and functions where the Councillor has been authorised by the Council or is deputising for the Mayor within the Local Government area. Expenses relating to a Councillors partner will be the responsibility of the Councillor.

1.4 Expenses Associated with Councillors Attending, At Their Discretion, Conferences, (including the Annual LGA or Shires Conferences) Seminars, Councillor Professional Development and Training Programs, Elected Member Courses and Local Government and Shires Associations Industry Working Groups.

Councillors will be responsible for payment of expenses, from their annual Professional Development Discretionary Vote, which is identified in the annual Management Plan (see next point), incurred for attending and participation in the following:

- conferences (including the Annual LGA or Shires Conference) and seminars;
- Councillor professional development and training programs;
- elected member courses;
- Local Government and Shires Associations Industry Working Groups.

1.5 Annual Councillor Professional Development Discretionary Vote

All Councillors will be allocated the sum of \$2,000 annually, (subject to review by Council annually in conjunction with the Management Plan) to specifically provide for the professional development of Councillors.

Where a Councillor is required to attend conferences (including the annual LGA or Shires Conference) and seminars, professional development training programs, elected member courses, and Local Government and Shires Associations Industry Working Groups outside the Lithgow City Council LGA, it will be necessary for the Council to authorise the attendance of Councillors at these events to be affected by way of a resolution of an Ordinary Meeting of the Council. Payment for attendance shall be made from the Councillor Professional Development Discretionary Vote.

Amounts remaining unexpended as at 30 June each year will expire and any unexpended amounts will not be carried over or available for expenditure in successive years.

The amount in the vote shall be reviewed annually as part of the creation of the budget and management plan. Council will purchase the tickets to the annual Lithgow Business Association Awards for Councillors and partners wishing to attend and payment shall be from this vote.

Any Councillor who has special care needs shall be able to seek reimbursement of reasonable costs. This includes child care expenses and the care of the elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family members where a Councillor can illustrate the expenses enable the councillor to attend to official Council duties. Councillors must complete a claim form for these expenses which shall be submitted to an ordinary meeting of Council for approval as an increment to the Annual Councillor Professional Development Discretionary Vote. The increment relating to special care needs shall be capped at \$250 per annum.

1.6 Legal and insurance expenses and obligations

Council shall maintain policies which contain provisions for legal expenses and insurance in the form of:

- Councillors and Officers liability insurance
- Personal Accidents insurance

Where council's insurance policies do not cover a Councillor's legal expenses in relation to a matter arising directly as a result of the Councillor's actions in the civic office, Council will determine, by resolution, if the Councillor is to be re-imbursed for reasonable solicitor/client costs as long as they relate to:

- Conduct arising from the execution of a councillor's civic duties;
- The matter is finalised;

- Council authorises by specific resolution naming the Councillor and determining the amount to be reimbursed.

2 FACILITIES

2.1 Stationery

Council will provide, upon request, the following stationery to Councillors to be used only on Council business:

- Writing pads
- Letter Head stating "From the Desk of Councillor...."
- Envelopes
- Box Files
- Business cards
- Writing pens
- Diary
- Year Planner
- Educational and promotional material and gifts.

2.2 Postage

Council will provide Councillors with postage facilities where the communication being posted is in discharge of the Councillor's functions of civic office.

2.3 Communication

Council will provide the Mayor with a mobile phone or similar device for use directly associated with the role as Mayor of Lithgow City Council.

Councillors are to be reimbursed for Council related calls that are charged to their personal telephone accounts relating to their place of residency, Councillors are to submit a claim within three months following the payment of such accounts. An annual allocation of \$50 per councillor per financial year is available upon confirmation that telephone calls can be related to Council business and charges appear on a councillor's home telephone account. Call charges demonstrated to be for the purpose of conducting Council business shall be reimbursed to the Councillor with the amount being deducted from the Annual Councillor Discretionary Vote.

Councillors will be provided with the appropriate communication, information and technology equipment to be connected to the Councillor's area of the Lithgow City Council Computer Network.

2. Secretarial Services

Council will provide a secretarial service to all Councillors to facilitate the discharge of functions of civic office. In addition, the following information and resources will be provided:

- Computer Based Central Diary of the dates of all meetings, civic functions and engagements;
- Extracts from Council's Computer Based Information/Records System containing and index of the availability of consultants reports and studies, infrastructure strategies and other relevant resource material.

2.5 Training

Council will conduct training programs for Councillors as is appropriate for the effective discharge of functions of civic office. Such training programs will be conducted by Council's own staff and external service providers will be engaged when and where required.

2.6 Resource Centre and Office Accommodation

The Mayor's/Councillors' Room will be available to Councillors as a Resource Centre and to meet with residents and use telephone facilities where multiple calls may be necessary in the discharge of Councillors' functions of civic office. The following resources will be provided in the Mayor's/Councillor's Room to enable Councillors to undertake individual research:

- Local Government Act 1993 and related legislation.
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
- Lithgow City Council Code of Conduct.
- ICAC and Ombudsman Reports.
- Lithgow Local Environmental Plans
- Copies of current consultancy reports and studies.
- Industry management journals, publications and selected readings.
- Lithgow City Council Code of Meeting Practice

Access to the Resource Centre will be available during normal office hours and special arrangements may be made for access outside normal office hours.

2.8 Mayoral Motor Vehicle

The Mayor will be provided with a prestige motor vehicle to discharge the functions of civic office and the performance of Council business. The vehicle will be made available to the Mayor for private usage subject to the payment of \$2000 Annually.

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Attachments:	9.9.1 Claim form				

9.9.1 COUNCILLOR EXPENSES CLAIM FORM

CREDITORS NO.....

COST ACCOUNT NO.....

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

To be completed for ALL Expense reimbursements- RECEIPTS MUST BE ATTACHED

I..... declare that the expense of \$.....

datedwas incurred by me for the following purpose (specify details)

ACCOMMODATION/MEALS

.....
.....

FUEL KLMS Traveled..... Engine Capacity () < 2.5 litres @ 54 c per km

KLMS Traveled..... Engine Capacity () > 2.5 litres @ 62 c per km

EDUCATIONAL

.....

PHONE

.....

OTHER

.....
.....

.....
EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

.....
APPROVING MANAGER

FORM MUST BE COSTED AND AUTHORIZED BEFORE PAYMENT CAN BE PROCESSED