



# Burke Shire Council

## Councillor Expenses Reimbursement Policy

### Document Control

#### Document Details:

Document Reference Number: GOV01

Version Number: 3

Next Scheduled Review Date: July 2012

#### Version History

Meeting Resolution	Date	Reason / Comments
17-090617	17-7-09	Policy
	20-11-10	Revision
20.110817	17-8-11	Revision

## **BACK GROUND**

Division 2 is about the expenses reimbursement policy. Section 44 (2) the expenses reimbursement policy is a policy providing for the following:-

- (a) Payment of reasonable expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by councillors for discharging their duties and responsibilities as councillors;
- (b) Provision of facilities to the councillors for that purpose.

A local government must adopt, by resolution an expenses reimbursement policy or an amendment of the expenses reimbursement policy as per section 45 of the Local Government (Operations) Regulations 2010.

### **1.0 OBJECTIVES:**

1. Use of public moneys in the public interest by responsible budgeting and accounting;
2. Fair and reasonable allocation of council resources (allowances, facilities and other benefits) to enable all councillors to conduct the duties of their office;
3. Transparent decision-making by public disclosure of policy and resolutions; and
4. Accountability for expenditure and use of facilities through full justification and acquittal.

### **2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION:**

Local Government (Operations) Regulation 2010 Chapter 5 Division 2 s 44; 45; 46 and 47

### **3.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of the reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities policy is to ensure that councillors (including mayors) can receive reimbursement of reasonable expenses and be provided with necessary facilities in performance of their role.

### **4.0 PROVISION OF FACILITIES**

All facilities provided to councillors remain the property of council and must be returned to council when a councillor's term expires.

#### **4.1 Private use of council owned facilities**

Based on the principle that no private benefit is to be gained the facilities provided to councillors by local governments are to be used only for council business unless prior approval has been granted by resolution of council.

The council resolution authorising private use of council owned facilities will set out the terms under which the councillor will reimburse council for the percentage of private use – unless otherwise prescribed in this policy.

## **4.2 Councillors of the Burke Shire Council will be provided with**

- Laptop computer (One per term of office) with Council's current Microsoft Office (Including Outlook) installed.
- Laptop computer can be purchased at the end of term for the valued amount with a minimum of \$100.00 and computer restored to default settings.
- One Council email account
- Internet Access Allowance (Broadband/Satellite) of \$500 per annum payable where a broadband or satellite connection exists at the Councillors place of residence, paid at the beginning of each financial year.
- Name Badge
- Access to office space and meeting room at the Council Office
- Business cards as required
- Diary
- Access to photocopiers, printers, facsimile machines, telephone and internet access at Council Offices
- Safety equipment (where required for site inspections etc).
- One LG corporate jacket for use at Official functions (One per term of Council).
- Councillors may have access to a council vehicle for official business where such purpose has been approved by Council or the Chief Executive Officer in advance.
- Insurance Cover to indemnify or insure councillors in the event of injury sustained while discharging their civic duties.
- Insurance Cover Paraplegic Benefits Fund.
- Fuel for a council-owned vehicle used for official council business, will be provided or paid for by council.
- Any reimbursements to be claimed with the applicable financial year.

## **4.3 Additional Facilities for the Mayor**

- A Corporate Credit Card will be issued to the mayor for purchase of fuel, payment of expenses on official business and/or hospitality in accordance with this policy.
- Access to secretarial support at the Council Office.
- Provision of a fully funded mobile phone for Council business
- As the Mayor's place or residence is outside of mobile range Council will provide a phone connection at the Mayor's residence for Council related calls.
- The Mayor is provided with a fully maintained vehicle while attending council approved activities and for private use. When the Mayor is away for a period of time then this vehicle will be provided to the Deputy Mayor to be used for attending council approved activities. A log book must be maintained.
- This vehicle will be available for use by Councillors attending official Council business in consultation with the Mayor.

#### **4.4 Maintenance costs of council owned equipment**

Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and reasonable wear and tear costs of Council-owned equipment that is supplied to Councillors for official business use. This includes the replacement of any facilities which fall under council's asset replacement program.

#### **5.0 PAYMENT OF EXPENSES**

Expenses will be paid to a Councillor through administrative processes approved by a Council's Chief Executive Officer subject to the limits outlined in this policy.

#### **6.0 EXPENSE CATEGORIES**

##### **6.1 Professional development**

Council will reimburse expenses incurred for:

- Mandatory professional development (Requires a Council resolution determining such development as mandatory in advance); and
- Discretionary professional development deemed essential for the councillor's role up to a maximum cost (including GST) of \$3,000 per Councillor per Term of Office (Requires a Council resolution approving such development in advance).

##### **6.2 Travel as required to represent Council**

A local government may reimburse local (and in some cases interstate and overseas) travel expenses (eg. Flights, car, accommodation, meals and associated registration fees) deemed necessary to achieve the business of council where;

- A councillor is an official representative of council and
- The activity/event and travel have been endorsed by resolution of council.

Councillors are to travel via the most direct route, using the most economical and efficient mode of transport.

Council will pay for reasonable expenses incurred for overnight accommodation when a councillor is required to stay outside the local government's region.

Council will pay for overnight accommodation if a councillor is required to stay overnight in the township of Burketown for the purposes of official business where it is not practical for them to return home (eg. Where they do not have a private residence in the township and their property is in excess of 50km from the township of Burketown and/or on unsealed roads that are not accessible due to wet weather).

NOTE: Any fines incurred while travelling in council-owned vehicles or privately owned vehicles when attending to council business, will be the responsibility of the councillor incurring the fine.

##### **6.3 Travel bookings**

All Councillor travel approved by Council will be booked and paid for by Council. Economy class is to be used.

Airline tickets are not transferable and can only be procured for the councillor's travel on council business. They cannot be used to offset other unapproved expenses (eg. Cost of partner or spouse accompanying the councillor).

#### **6.4 Travel transfer costs**

Any travel transfer expenses associated with councillors travelling for council approved business will be reimbursed provided that tax receipts for same are submitted to Council for reimbursement. Example: Trains, taxis, buses and ferry fares.

Cab charge vouchers may also be used if approved by council where councillors are required to undertake duties relating to the business of council.

#### **6.5 Private vehicle usage**

Councillor's private vehicle usage will be reimbursed by council if the:

- Travel is to and from the councillor's private residence to attend official business of the council including Council meetings and/or Council arranged inspections or Council approved deputations; or
- Other travel that has been endorsed by Council resolution.

#### **Subject to:**

- The claim for mileage being substantiated with log book details and signed claim by the councillor; and
- No council vehicle being available for use by the Councillor to attend the business being claimed for (Councillors may be required to share vehicles for travel or utilise a Council vehicle where this is more economical for Council; and
- Total travel claim not exceeding the cost of the same travel using economy flights plus the cost of taxi transfers; and
- The mileage rate being 80 cents per kilometre of travel.

#### **6.6 Accommodation**

All Councillor accommodation for council business will be booked and paid for by Council. Council will pay for the economical deal available. Where possible, the minimum standards for Councillor's accommodation shall be three or four star rating.

Where particular accommodation is recommended by conference organisers, Council will take advantage of the package deal that is the most economical and convenient to the event.

Where a Councillor elects to stay with family or friends in lieu of using Council provided accommodation a per overnight stay allowance of \$50 will be payable.