



## ELECTED MEMBER POLICY

Title	<b>ELECTED MEMBER ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES</b>		
Responsible Director	Chief Executive Officer		
Adoption Date	25/11/2019	Review Date	2021

### 1 Purpose

To provide details on the provision of Council Member allowances and reimbursement of expenses and ensure compliance with the *Local Government Act (NT) 2008* (the Act) and associated Ministerial *Guideline 2 - Allowances for Council Members*, issued annually.

### 2 Policy background

Section 71 (1) of the Act provides that, “a member of council is entitled to be paid an allowance by the council.” Section 71 (2) qualifies this by providing that, “The allowance is to be paid at a rate fixed by council (subject to guidelines issued by the Minister) for the relevant financial year.

Guideline 2 requires council to have a policy which determines eligibility for entitlement of Extra Meeting Allowance and Professional Development Allowance.

### 3 Statement of policy

Council will provide allowances and reimbursement for expenses to Elected Members in accordance with the Act, ministerial guidelines and relevant Council policy. Payments are limited to items expressly stated in legislation and/or this policy. Where there is conflict between this and other Council policy, this policy will take precedence.

Council determines allowances annually, within the maximum allowances set by the Minister, when adopting the budget for each financial year.

#### Base Allowance

Elected Members receive regular, automatic payment of Base Allowance, covering activities required of a Member in the performance of their role. This allowance covers activities such as agenda study and meeting preparation, attendance at regular Council meetings, and attendance at social functions as Council representatives, constituency responsibilities, and Council representation outside of the municipality, including delegations interstate and overseas.

Regular council meetings at Alice Springs Town Council are regular meetings or Committees for which all Elected Members are required to attend.

#### Electoral Allowance

Elected Members are provided with a regular, automatic payment of Electoral Allowance, which may be used at the discretion of individual members to assist with electoral matters.

### **Acting Principal Member Allowance**

An 'Acting Principal Member Allowance' (Acting Mayor) is payable to the Deputy Principal member (Deputy Mayor) or other Elected Member if appointed as the Acting Principal Member for a period of up to 90 days (aggregate) in a financial year. This allowance is provided by Council resolution, appointing an Acting Principal Member, and is effective from a date set in the resolution, or the date of the resolution if an 'effective date' is not provided. The allowance ceases as of a date set in the resolution of appointment or upon return of the Principal Member (the Mayor) to regular duties.

### **Extra Meeting Allowance**

Extra Meeting Allowance may be claimed by Elected Members for attendance at the following meetings, for which they have been elected a member, as per the register of Representatives for Council and External Committees.

- Council Advisory Committees
- Internal Consultative Committees
- External Committees
- Ministerial Appointed Committees

If any eligible meeting already attracts an allowance paid by another body or organisation, Council will not pay Extra Meeting Allowance for attendance at that meeting.

The Extra Meeting Allowance will be calculated each year during the budget process and displayed in the Municipal Plan.

As per Ministerial Guideline 2, to be eligible to claim Extra Meeting Allowance, a member must attend at least 75% of the meeting duration, may only claim once for the same meeting and may only claim up to 2 meetings per day.

Claims must be made using approved forms, are processed monthly and must be submitted by the second working day of the month following the meeting. Late claims will be processed the following month and not more than two (2) months in arrears.

The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Acting Mayor are not entitled to receive Extra Meeting Allowance; as it is provided for and included in the Base Allowance for these roles.

### **Professional Development Allowance**

Professional Development Allowance is available to all Elected Members to attend appropriate and relevant training courses or conferences which sustain a Member's professional competence in their role as an Elected Member. This may include courses/conferences:

- furthering a Members knowledge of Local Government
- in a discipline that would assist in the performance of an Elected Member
- on a topic or function relating to Local Government.

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Any such course must be approved by the CEO, using approved forms, prior to any commitments being made, and includes training requirements relating to elections if stipulated in the Act.

The allowance is to be used to cover course or conference fees, travel, meals and accommodation for the duration of the course/conference and may be used multiple times each year, subject to the annual maximum specified under Guideline 2.

All claims must be made using the approved forms.

If the allowance is claimed, the Member is required to provide a written report or presentation within two (2) months of the conclusion of the professional development for the information and benefit of other Members.

### **Travel expenses**

Arrangements will be made and paid by Council, where applicable, once relevant forms have been approved. Reimbursement of travel expenses may be claimed for approved travel, subject to satisfactory documentation and CEO approval.

When an Elected Member is required to travel in order to attend an approved activity (eligible Committee Meeting as listed in 'Extra Meeting Allowance'), the Member may claim Extra Meeting Allowance for each full day of travel, unless that travel falls on the same day on which the meeting is held. As per Ministerial Guidelines, a full day of travel means at least 4 hours inclusive of time in transit.

Council will purchase the most economical class of travel ticket available. Business class tickets will not be purchased. Should a Member choose to alter bookings for personal reasons, the additional cost of changes will be met by the Member.

No travel allowance to compensate for an Elected Members time will be paid when undertaking approved travel. Relevant Council travel policy must be adhered to however; where there is a conflict this policy will take precedence.

Claims for travel expenses must be made using the approved forms.

### **Claims for allowances and expenses**

Council delegates power and authority to approve claims for allowances, in accordance with the Act, guidelines and appropriate policy, to the CEO.

Claim forms for allowances are:

- Elected Member Request for Professional Development
- Elected Member Extra Meeting Allowance Claim

Claim forms for travel and related expenses are:

- Elected Member Travel requisition form



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- Elected Member Travel acquittal form

### **4 Council policies superseded**

This policy supersedes policies:

Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Policy (24/06/2019)