

Shire of Mundaring

POLICY

ATTENDANCE BY ELECTED MEMBERS AT CONFERENCES

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| Policy Ref: | OR-01 |
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| Committee Rec: | SPC6.01.05 | Date: | 19 Jan 2005 |
| Adopted by: | RC10.01.05 | Date: | 25 Jan 2005 |
| Amended by: | C7.03.10 | Date: | 23 March 2010 |
| Reviewed: | Once per Electoral Cycle | Date: | 23 March 2010 |
| Procedure Ref: | N/A | Delegation Ref: | CE-134 |
| Statute Ref: | <i>Local Government Act 1995 s. 5.98 & s. 5.102</i> | | |
| Local Law Ref: | N/A | | |

PURPOSE

To establish standards for the attendance of elected members at both intrastate and interstate conferences and the reimbursement of expenses incurred during those attendances.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, the term “conference” includes conferences, seminars, workshops, training and study tours where relevant to the role of the elected member on the Council.

POLICY

1. Council acknowledges that it has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate training and development opportunities are available to elected members to assist in the fulfilment of the duties and responsibilities associated with their office. Attendance at appropriate conferences is one way to achieve this.
2. Elected members are approved to attend the following conferences conducted within Australia:
 - All elected members - annual Western Australian Local Government Convention.
 - All elected members - one conference per year of relevance to local government at no greater cost than \$4,000 (inclusive of registration, travel and accommodation and incidental costs as applicable).
 - President and Deputy President - Annual National General Assembly of Local Government.

3. If an elected member wishes to attend a conference in addition to the above or which exceeds a total cost of \$4,000, then a request shall be placed before Council for consideration in accordance with the following criteria.

Approval

4. For elected members to be able to seek payment or reimbursement of expenses incurred in the attendance at conferences in addition to those detailed in paragraph 2, the formal approval of Council is required. Any request must be submitted on the Attendance Request Form at Appendix 1 at least seven days prior to the Council's Strategic & Governance Committee meeting where the request will be processed.
5. Where either the Chief Executive Officer proposes to Council or Council itself nominates an elected member to attend a specific conference then that elected member is not required to complete the relevant Attendance Request Form, as the report to the committee will have already been developed and the assessment criteria examined.
6. Elected members should obtain the necessary approvals required by this policy prior to making any financial or other commitments.

Assessment Criteria

7. All proposals for attendance at conferences in addition to those detailed in paragraph 2 shall firstly be subject to an assessment under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer based on the following criteria –
 - Whether the proposal relates to an objective identified within the current or future strategic direction of Council.
 - The current relevance of the proposal to the shire.
 - Historic or expected attendance.
 - The relationship of the proposal to the outcomes to be delivered and how these relate to the elected member's role as a Presiding Member, committee member or elected member.
 - Equity of opportunity and the remaining period of office of the elected member concerned including recognition of the number of opportunities previously provided to that elected member.
 - Whether there are more cost effective options to acquire the relevant knowledge and information.
 - Whether it is appropriate that more than one elected member attends.
 - The total cost of travel, accommodation, registration, meals and other expenses and the potential impact of these on the Shire's budget allocation including the future impact on either conference attendance by other elected members during the current financial year.

Administration Process

8. Registration for all approved conferences including travel and accommodation must be organised through the Chief Executive Officer's Personal Assistant. Where possible, all airfares and other travel arrangements including registration,

accommodation and associated fees and charges shall be paid direct by the Shire.

Payment of Travel, Accommodation and Related Costs

Interstate Travel

9. Economy class air travel arrangements shall apply provided that individual elected members have the option to upgrade their travel arrangements to business class by supplementing the economy airfare at their own cost.
10. Where individual elected members desire to travel interstate by private motor vehicle, they will be reimbursed for actual receipted accommodation costs and vehicle costs, the latter being in accordance with mileage allowances calculated on a cents per kilometre basis payable at the rates and amounts specified in the WA Public Service Award up to and including an amount equivalent to that which would have been expended had arrangements been made to travel by air.

Intrastate Travel

11. Reimbursement of actual vehicle costs will be provided on a cents per kilometre basis payable at the rates and amounts specified in the WA Public Service Award, where travel is solely for the purpose of attending the conference.
12. Economy class air travel arrangements shall apply to intrastate conferences requiring air travel, provided that individual elected members have the option to upgrade their travel arrangements to business class by supplementing the economy airfare at their own cost.

Accommodation

13. Accommodation costs for elected members shall be paid for the duration of the conference, including allowing elected members to arrive the day before the start of the conference and depart the day following the close of the conference, unless other arrangements are specifically approved by Council. In the event that an elected member wishes to extend their stay for personal reasons not associated with approved Council business, then any extended stay is to be at the full cost of the elected member.
14. Elected members are generally expected to stay at the conference venue unless that facility is fully booked or alternative accommodation can be used at no additional cost to Council.
15. Accommodation costs paid or reimbursed shall be the actual costs incurred. Wherever possible accommodation costs shall be pre-paid.

Registration

16. The registration fee of an elected member shall be paid including the fee for a partner attending the official opening, welcoming address and conference dinner if applicable.

Transportation

17. The cost of taxi or bus fares to and from the airport, conference venues or other approved places shall be reimbursed.
18. The cost of car hire will only be reimbursed when specific approval has been obtained at the time attendance at the conference is authorised.

Incidental Expenses

19. An advance of a specific sum per day shall be made available for food, drink and incidental expenses. Meal claims will not be recognised where meals are provided at the conference.
20. The Chief Executive Officer is authorised to set standards and calculate costs for an advance or reimbursement of approved incidental expenses within the following parameters:
 - An amount of \$100 per day, or any other amount predetermined by Council at the time of approving the attendance.
 - The advance is to be paid by electronic bank transfer to the elected member no more than 5 working days prior to departure to the conference.
 - The advance is to cover lunch, dinner and related beverage costs, dry cleaning, taxis, ISP access and business telephone calls.

Reimbursement of Expenses

21. Within 10 working days of the conclusion of the conference, elected members must present receipts to support the expenditure of the advance. Any unexpended funds are to be reimbursed to the Shire within this period.
22. Authorised expenditure over and above the value of the daily allowance shall be reimbursed to the elected member upon presentation of receipts. Elected members will be personally liable for any outstanding amounts not properly acquitted.

Accompanying Partners

23. Council appreciates that elected members may wish their partner to accompany them to conferences. This is supported on the following basis –
 - Where it is more efficient for the Shire to make arrangements for registration, travel and accommodation for partners, it is appropriate that Council meets these expenses in the first instance. The elected member must arrange reimbursement of these costs prior to attendance at the conference.
 - The elected member shall meet directly all attending partner's expenses at the conference other than for attendance at the official opening, welcoming address and conference dinner if applicable.

Sharing of Knowledge

24. Within three months from the conclusion of an approved interstate conference, the elected member shall provide a written report or presentation (including copies of conference papers) of the conference for the information of other elected members and for Shire records. Where appropriate this requirement shall also apply to intrastate conferences.
25. The report or presentation is to contain relevant observations and the identification of significant outcomes gained from the conference that would be of benefit to the Shire's operations. Where appropriate, recommendations proposing specific actions as a result of the outcomes of the conference are also to be made.

Frequent Flyer Points

26. Consistent with the principle of not using public expenditure for private advantage, frequent flyer points or benefits under other incentive or loyalty schemes accumulated in the course of official air travel must not be used for private purposes. They may be used only for further official purposes.

REQUEST FOR ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES

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| Elected Member's Name: | |
| Proposed Conference: | |
| Location of Conference: | |
| Duration of Conference: | |
| Dates of Travel: | |
| Conference Registration Fee: | \$ |
| Airfares: | \$ |
| Accommodation: | \$ |
| Associated Costs: | \$ |
| ESTIMATED TOTAL COST | \$ |
| Details of committee membership of elected members: | |
| Details of conferences previously attended during current financial year: | |
| Expiration of Term of Office: | |
| Elected Member's signature: | |
| Date: | |
| Submitted to Council on: | |
| Approved/Not Approved | Decision No: |
| Chief Executive Officer: | |
| Date: | |