



# Councillor Expense and Support Policy

October 2024



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## 1. Definitions

<b>Councillor – Role of</b>	<p>Section 28 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The role of every Councillor is—<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) to participate in the decision making of the Council; and</li><li>b) to represent the interests of the municipal community in that decision making; and</li><li>c) to contribute to the strategic direction of the Council through the development and review of key strategic documents of the Council, including the Council Plan.</li></ol></li><li>2. In performing the role of a Councillor, a Councillor must—<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) consider the diversity of interests and needs of the municipal community; and</li><li>b) support the role of the Council; and</li><li>c) acknowledge and support the role of the Mayor; and</li><li>d) act lawfully and in accordance with the oath or affirmation of office; and</li><li>e) act in accordance with the standards of conduct; and</li><li>f) comply with Council procedures required for good governance.</li></ol></li></ol> <p>The role of a Councillor does not include the performance of any responsibilities or functions of the Chief Executive Officer</p>
<b>Councillor duties</b>	<p>Means duties performed by a Councillor that are necessary or appropriate for the purposes of achieving the objectives of a Council having regard to any relevant Act, regulations, Ministerial guidelines or Council policies. Such duties include, but not are not limited to, attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• at meetings of the Council:</li><li>• attendance at briefing sessions, workshops, civic or ceremonial functions convened by the Mayor or Council;</li><li>• attendance at approved conferences, workshops, or training programs related to the role of Councillor, Mayor or Deputy Mayor;</li><li>• attendance at meetings arising as a result of a Councillor being appointed by the Council to an external body; or</li><li>• a meeting, function or other official role as a representative of the Mayor or Council.</li></ul>



<b>Carer</b>	<p>Means in a care relationship within the meaning of section 4 of the <i>Carers Recognition Act 2012</i>. Meaning of a care relationship:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the purposes of this Act, a person is in a care relationship if they provide another person, or receives from another person, care because one of the persons in the relationship: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) has a disability; or</li> <li>b) is older; or</li> <li>c) has a mental illness; or</li> <li>d) has an ongoing medical condition (including a terminal or chronic illness or dementia).</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Despite subsection (1), the following relationships are also care relationships for the purposes of this Act: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a relationship where an individual has custody and guardianship of a child under a permanent care order made under Part 4.10 of the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i>; and</li> <li>b) a relationship where a child is placed with an individual who provides care to that child under a child care agreement made under Part 3.5 of the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i>; and</li> <li>c) a relationship where a child is placed with an individual who provides care to that child under a protection order made under Part 4.9 of the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i>.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. For the purposes of this Act, a person is not in a care relationship with another person merely because they: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) are the spouse, or the domestic partner within the meaning of the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i>, of the other person; or</li> <li>b) are the parent, child or other relative of the other person; or</li> <li>c) live with the other person.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Despite anything to the contrary in this section, a person is not in a care relationship for the purposes of this Act if they provide care to another person: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) under a contract of service or a contract for the provision of services; or</li> <li>b) under an employment contract; or</li> <li>c) in the course of doing voluntary work for a community organisation; or</li> <li>d) as part of the requirements of an education course or training.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>A person described in subsection (1) or (2) may be in a care relationship even if the person receives funding from either the Commonwealth or State Government in relation to carrying out the role of a carer.</p>
<b>Expenses</b>	<p>Payments made by the Council to reimburse Councillors for reasonable costs or charges incurred or to be incurred for discharging their civic functions. Expenses must be outlined in a Council's policy and may be either reimbursed to a Councillor or paid directly by a Council for something that is deemed to be a necessary expense to enable them to perform their civic functions</p>
<b>Facilities</b>	<p>Equipment and services that are provided by councils to Councillors to enable them to perform their civic functions with relative ease and at a standard appropriate to their professional role as Councillors.</p>
<b>Functions of civic office/civic functions</b>	<p>Functions that Councillors are required to undertake to fulfil their legislated role and responsibilities for the Council that should result in a direct benefit for the Council and/or local Whitehorse Community and is consistent with Council's objectives.</p>

## 2. Overview

### Purpose

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires Council to adopt and maintain an expenses policy in relation to the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for Councillors. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure Councillors are provided with the necessary resources to enable them to perform their role
- Describe the out-of-pocket expenses for which Councillors will be eligible to seek reimbursement
- Specify the procedure to be followed by Councillors in applying for reimbursement of expenses
- Describe how Council will comply with any requirements prescribed by the Act and associated regulations in relation to the reimbursement of expenses.
- Outline reporting obligations and requirements.

### Objectives

- Enable the reasonable and appropriate reimbursement of expenses incurred by Councillors while undertaking their official duties
- Enable facilities of a reasonable and appropriate standard to be provided to Councillors to support them in undertaking their role
- Ensure accountability and transparency in reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors
- Ensure facilities and expenses provided to Councillors meet community expectations
- Support a diversity of representation
- Fulfil the Council's statutory responsibilities

### Scope

The policy applies to all Whitehorse Councillors.

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'Councillors' includes the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and all other Councillors of the Council unless otherwise specified.

Expenses and facilities provided by this policy are in addition to allowances paid to Councillors.

## 3. Guiding principles

Council commits to the following principles:

<b>Proper conduct</b>	Councillors and staff acting lawfully and honestly, exercising care and diligence in carrying out their functions.
<b>Reasonable expenses</b>	Providing for Councillors to be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred as part of their role as Councillor.
<b>Participation and access</b>	Enabling people from diverse backgrounds, underrepresented groups, those in carer roles and those with special needs to serve as a Councillor.
<b>Equity</b>	There must be equitable access to expenses and facilities for all Councillors.
<b>Appropriate use of resources</b>	Providing clear direction on the appropriate use of Council resources in accordance with legal requirements and community expectations.
<b>Accountability and transparency</b>	Clearly stating and reporting on the expenses and facilities provided to Councillors.

## 4. Expenses

### Expenditure incurred conducting official Council duties

Councillor support expenses are those costs necessarily incurred by Councillors (out-of-pocket), in conducting Council business. Any costs incurred by a Councillor which are not covered specifically within the policy will not be met, unless the Councillor has received prior authorisation from the Council or, if delegated to do so, from the Chief Executive Officer.

Councillors will act in accordance with the Councillor Code of Conduct and this policy when seeking reimbursement of expenses and use of Council allocated resources.

Councillors need to exercise appropriate prudence in the use of Council resources and ensure they are used solely in the public interest. This includes:

- Maintaining appropriate security over Council property, facilities and resources provided to assist them in performing their role; and adhering to any guidelines or policies that have been established for the use of Councillor resources and facilities
- Not using public funds or resources in a manner that is improper or unauthorised
- Not using Council resources, including staff, equipment and/or intellectual property for electoral or other purposes
- Ensuring that all expense claims are accurate and supported by the relevant documentation and strictly relate to Council business.

### Carer and dependent related expenses

The care of family members is the responsibility of individual Councillors. However, in certain circumstances Councillors will be able to seek reimbursement for bona fide care expenses.

Council will provide reimbursement of costs where the provision of childcare is reasonably required for a Councillor or member of a delegated committee to perform their role. This applies to the care of a dependent whilst the Councillor undertaking their official duties.

Council will provide reimbursement of costs where the provision of carer services is reasonably required when a Councillor who is in a 'care relationship' with another person, incurs reasonable expenses in the performance of their official duties.

The definition of 'care relationship' is as per section 4 of the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*. (Refer to Definitions to this policy.)

Care Expenses are defined as hourly fees, agency booking fees, reasonable travelling expenses for a carer other than an immediate family member of the Councillor.

Payments for carer and childcare services are not eligible for reimbursement if paid for a service provided by a person who:

- Normally or regularly resides with the Councillor or delegated committee member
- Has any financial or pecuniary interest with the Councillor or delegated committee member
- Is immediate family (e.g. partner, parent, sibling or in-law) of the Councillor or delegated committee member
- Has a relationship with the Councillor, delegated committee member or their partner.

For the purposes of this policy, a child shall be defined as up to, but not including 16 years of age.

Claims for childcare and care expenses are to be submitted on a monthly basis. Each care expense claimed shall be substantiated by a receipt from the caregiver showing the dates and times care was provided, and the Councillor shall show why the care was needed on each occasion.



## Support for a Councillor with a disability

The Chief Executive Officer or delegate will assess and approve the reasonable support required by way of additional facilities and expenses in order to allow that Councillor to perform their duties.

## Health and wellbeing

Councillors may be able to access Council's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counselling service – Councillor Support, to assist with their health and wellbeing during their term of office. Access to this program can be requested through the Chief Executive Officer or delegate.

## Interstate and overseas travel

Councillors should avoid interstate, overseas and long-distance intrastate trips unless direct and tangible benefits can be established for the Council and the local community. Council will evaluate the value and need for Councillors to undertake overseas travel. This includes travel to sister and friendship cities.

When it is suitable for Councillors to undertake in interstate or international travel on behalf of the Council, such representation at national or international levels can play a crucial role in shaping, communicating, and implementing Council policy. This includes:

- Travel to investigate issues, projects or activities of relevance to actions contained in the Council Plan and other policies and programs
- Attendance at conferences, workshops and forums as either a presenter or a delegate on topics relating to Council's policies, aims and projects or on areas of professional development for Councillors.

Councillors may claim the reasonable costs of:

- Meals (excluding alcohol) for the duration of any travel in the course of performing Official Council Business. This does not include the cost of meals for partners, guests or families of Councillors
- Appropriate accommodation when interstate or overseas, all accommodation is to be booked by the Mayor and Councillor Support Team. Accommodation will be provided from the day prior to commencement of the conference, event etc. each day on which events involving official Council Business are held. This does not include any additional costs of accommodation for partners, guests, or families of Councillors.

Councillors seeking approval for any interstate and long-distance intrastate travel must submit a case to, and obtain the approval of, the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer prior to travel.

Councillors seeking approval for any overseas travel must submit a case to Council, all overseas travel requires approval in advance by Council resolution.

The request should outline the:

- Objectives to be achieved in travel, including an explanation of how the travel aligns with current Council priorities and business, the community benefits which will accrue as a result, and its relevance to the exercise of the Councillor's duties
- Who is to take part in the travel
- Duration and itinerary of travel
- A detailed budget including a statement of any amounts expected to be reimbursed by the participant/s.

In assessing a request, the consideration of the following factors include:

- Relevance of the topics and presenters to current Council priorities and business and the exercise of the Councillor's duties
- Cost of the conference or seminar in relation to the total remaining budget
- Policy parameters

Any Councillor who is offered sponsorship in the form of conference registration or other costs in an official capacity, wholly or partly by any government agency, external organisation or person, shall immediately make this known to the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

A written report shall be prepared for the information of Council by every Councillor (subject to the exception below) who has travelled overseas or interstate in an official capacity.

The report shall provide comment on the value of the conference/visit, benefit to Council and provide recommendations for further action (if applicable). This report will be circulated to all Councillors. In the event that two or more Councillors attend the same conference, for the purposes of this policy, only one written report is required which may be a joint report.

## Procedure for claiming

A Councillor must:

- Submit claims for out-of-pocket expense reimbursements on the relevant Councillor expense claim form, supported by receipt or other suitable documentation
- Outline in the application for reimbursement that the out-of-pocket expense is a bona fide expense which has been reasonably incurred in the performance of their duties.

Reimbursements will be provided by electronic funds transfer.

The basic test to determine whether or not an expense is lawful/lawfully incurred is whether the expenditure is necessary or appropriate for the purposes of achieving the objectives of Council having regard to the Act, or any other relevant Act, regulations, Ministerial Guidelines or Council Policies.

Council will not reimburse Councillors for any infringements incurred for road traffic or parking violations.

## Timeframe for claims

Councillors should submit their claims for reimbursement within one (1) month of the claim being incurred to ensure reasonable public reporting of expenses, and management within Council's financial cycle.

To maintain transparency and probity, all reimbursements will be paid directly into the Councillor's nominated bank account. A remittance of payment will be provided to the Councillor.

## Accountability

A Councillor expense report shall be produced monthly and made available on Council's website. The report will include expenses incurred and reimbursements made during the previous month.

A biannual report of all Councillor expenses will be provided to Council's Audit and Risk Committee by the Director Corporate Services and communicated to all Councillors. The report to include expenses incurred/reimbursements made during the previous six months.

Councillor expenses are recorded in the Annual Report.



## 5. Support, resources and facilities

### Administrative support and facilities - Mayor

Administrative support will be provided to the Mayor for work directly related to the duties of office, acknowledging the responsibilities and greater level of commitments and expectations placed on the Mayor. All support will be overseen by the Manager Governance and Integrity and undertaken by the Councillor Support Team.

A fully maintained vehicle will be provided in accordance with the requirements and provisions of Council's Fleet Policy.

The Mayor will be provided with a perpetual Mayoral medallion for use at official functions and at the end of the Mayoral term will be presented with a replica medallion in recognition of their services.

Due to the special role of the Mayor, a separate office is provided at the Whitehorse Civic Centre, 379-397 Whitehorse Road Nunawading events (Civic Centre), including associated equipment required for the Mayor to carry out Council business.

### Administrative support and facilities – Councillors

Limited administrative support is available to Councillors for work directly related to their duties of the office. All support will be overseen by the Manager Governance and Integrity and undertaken by the Councillor Support Team.

Support to the Mayor and Councillors will be provided during normal office hours and broadly includes:

- Diary management
- General follow up and preparation of correspondence
- Constituent/community contact activities
- Relevant bookings on behalf of Councillors including meeting rooms, civic events and conferences
- Responding to invitations
- Speech notes
- Resource requests (including stationery and equipment) in accordance with this policy
- Processing Councillor requests for reimbursement of expenditure

Councillors have access to the Councillor's lounge provided at the Civic Centre. The lounge is equipped with workstations (3), a multifunction device and provision of tea, coffee and biscuits. The shared space is suitable for office work, reading and research. No visitors are allowed into the Councillor's lounge.

The multifunction device is provided for Councillors to undertake small amounts of printing/photocopying directly related to carrying out Council business. Photocopying on behalf of external groups or organisations is not permitted. Photocopying is a reportable expense. Councillors will not use for any personal, business, political or election-related material.

### Communication Equipment

Each Councillor is entitled to the following facilities equipment and access:

- Mobile phone
- Laptop or tablet – equipped with internet access
- Email access
- Home printer (on request)

Council will cover connection fees and all Council business call charges, with accounts being sent directly to Council. In the case of mobile phones, it will be at Council's discretion whether to repair or replace damaged phones. If a phone is lost or stolen, the Councillor should immediately report the loss or theft to the Councillor Support Team, and to Victoria Police if the loss or theft is discovered outside office hours.

Councillor issued mobile devices are to be used for related Council business activities, but it is accepted that, on occasions, reasonable incidental personal calls will be made. Charges incurred in excess of the monthly telephone service plan in place, will be subject to reimbursement by the respective Councillor.

The equipment remains the property of Council and is recorded on Council's Assets Register and must be returned at the end of a Councillor's term of office. Councillors are expected to adhere to Council's policies as adopted from time to time.

## Stationery/Mail

When communicating with constituents, Councillors are encouraged to use electronic formats. Where a small number of postage services are required on Council business related matters, Councillors shall have access to postal services which will be arranged through Mayor and Councillor Support.

Standard Council stationery is available to all Councillors on request. Stationery will include business cards, paper, writing implements and a diary. Council stationery is not to be converted or modified in any way and may only be used for carrying out the functions of the civic office and must not to be used for election purposes.

The Mayor will be provided with personalised letterhead inclusive of their photograph to be used for official Council correspondence only.

## Name Badge

Each Councillor will be provided with a name badge for use while undertaking Council business.

## Apparel/Uniform

Councillors will be able to access limited uniform for use while carrying out Council business. The items would include similar to a:

- Broad brim hat
- Cap
- Polo shirt
- Bomber jacket

All uniform items will include the Whitehorse City Council logo. All items will be organised by the Councillor Support Team in consultation with the Councillor. Uniform items will be a reportable expense.

Other protective clothing required to assist in carrying out Council business will be provided on request or loaned to the Councillor for that purpose. This clothing will be limited to wet weather and protective clothing such as waterproof apparel, hard hat etc.

## Meals and refreshments

The part-time and voluntary nature of the role of a Councillor necessitates a Councillor attending meetings outside normal business hours. In many instances the timing of meetings renders it impractical for Councillors to make their own meal arrangements prior to attending such meetings.

In recognition of these situations and to facilitate timely attendance at meetings, it is considered appropriate to provide Councillors attending Council meetings and Councillor Briefing sessions with a meal. The meal is to take the form of buffet style together with non-alcoholic beverages.

## Councillor resource and information hub

Councillors have a dedicated resource and information hub. This is the primary portal to receive relevant and necessary information and will provide access to:

- Council Business papers - meeting agenda, minutes, attachments
- Councillor Briefing presentations
- Correspondence directed to multiple Councillors or the Council
- Information and updates about projects, achievements, and data of Council's operations
- Policies and reference or resource materials (including reference material and reports from other agencies or organisations)
- Latest news and updates relevant to Council
- Forms relevant to Councillors
- Useful website links

## Room Use

Councillors can book meeting rooms at Council-managed venues, subject to availability, for meetings where the primary purpose is for the Councillor to carry out their duties. The Councillor must be in attendance at the meeting.

Where booking fees are applicable, these will be a reportable Councillor expense.

Where free use of meeting rooms is available for use by Councillors, this does not extend to community or other groups who would be subject to Council's policy on the use of Council facilities, including community and other organisations where Councillors are nominated as the Council representative or delegate.

## Building Access and Parking

Each Councillor will receive a security access fob/card allowing access to the Civic Centre. Loss or theft of this fob/card must be reported immediately to the Councillor Support Team.

Designated parking spaces for Councillors will be available at the Civic Centre. A 'Councillor' sticker will be issued to Councillors for their vehicle/s providing that the Councillor has nominated the vehicle registration number/s to the Councillor Support Team.

## 6. Professional development and training

### Councillor induction

Councillors will be supported in their role through the provision of a comprehensive induction program.

### Professional development

Council allocates budget to facilitate professional development of Councillors through programs, training, education courses and membership of professional bodies

Councillors can seek guidance to analyse their particular requirements and identify appropriate professional development to meet their needs.

Councillors may attend professional development opportunities that:

- Relate directly to the duties and responsibilities of the role of being a Councillor
- Are organised by a Local Government peak body/association - MAV, VLGA, ALGA, ALGWA, etc.
- Are a governance and leadership course approved by the Chief Executive Officer, such as the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) course; or as per other training providers such as the Governance Institute of Australia
- Are specific needs-based training approved by the Chief Executive Officer, including media, chairing, public speaking and social media use.

### Conferences and seminars

Conferences and seminars are organised by local government related organisations, professional bodies and private sector providers on issues and events that impact the role of Councillors and the Council in general.

Council is committed to ensuring its Councillors are up to date with contemporary issues facing Council and the community and the sector.

### Training courses

Council supports the enhancement of skills required by Councillors to assist in carrying out their role. This includes participating in a range of one-off or short-term training courses, seminars and activities in a variety of areas of professional and personal development. These may be provided internally or by professional bodies, private organisations and educational institutions.

Professional or personal development needs which require or involve on-going, longer-term support, guidance or mentoring should first be discussed with the Chief Executive Officer or delegate.

### Memberships and subscriptions

Councillors will be provided with:

- An internally produced media monitoring record (Media Watch)
- Copies of key local government industry publications
- Memberships to local government bodies (on request)

## Requests/Approval process

All requests under this section for professional development and training is subject to a prior written request to Councillor Support Team who will seek approvals from the Chief Executive Officer and Manager Governance and Integrity. The request should outline the:

- Details of the proposed professional development / training
- Relevance to Council priorities and business
- Relevance to the exercise of the Councillor's duties.

In assessing a request, the consideration of the following factors include:

- Relevance of the topics and presenters to current Council priorities and business and the exercise of the Councillor's duties
- Cost of the conference or seminar in relation to the total remaining budget
- Policy parameters

## Courses nearing end of Council term

Any professional development courses undertaken by a Councillor should provide a demonstrable benefit to the Whitehorse community. To reflect this commitment, all courses that incur a cost greater than \$500 must be completed at least three months prior to the commencement of the election period for a Local Government General Election.

For courses that incur a cost greater than \$5,000, such as Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD), to ensure benefit to the community, Councillors will only be able to undertake these courses in the first three years of each Council term.

## Annual budget

Council will allocate specified amounts per Councillor in the annual budget, expenditure in excess of the allocation will require Council approval prior to expenditure occurring. All expenses incurred are reportable.

## Budget allocations

The main expenses are shown in the table below, all monetary amounts are exclusive of GST. Councillors may only utilise one third of the budget allocation in the new financial year of the last term before the general election.

Expense	Maximum amount per financial year
Professional development, Training and seminars (includes travel and accommodation expenses)	\$7,500
Events	\$1500
Guests/Partner	\$250
Ward Meetings	\$500
Mobile Phones	\$700
Travel/Mileage/Ride share/Cabs	\$500

## 7. Civic representation and engagement

### Events and functions

Attendance at local events and functions is a key part of a Councillor representative role.

Councillors will carefully consider if their attendance at an event or function truly relates to the duties of office, and whether community resources should be used to pay for their attendance and how it aligns with Council's strategic objectives and the Council Plan.

Councillors will avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of their attendance at events and functions, including the disclosable gifts threshold.

Hospitality is classified as a gift where a Councillor attends an event or function:

- From free tickets received, and they have no official duties to perform
- With free membership
- Where the hospitality is generous.

Any invitations to attend an event or function, which are related and relevant to the 'duties of a Councillor', must be received in writing i.e. formal invitation by name, from the event organiser in order for Council to cover this expense (note: 'in writing' is inclusive of email and social media messages).

Councillors when requesting to attend an event or function need to outline how it relates to their role and must act in accordance with the Act, the Councillor Gift Policy and the Councillor Code of Conduct.

### Events covered

If invited, Councillors will be supported to attend paid/non-paid events that are:

- Council-organised or Council-sponsored
- Held by Council, groups or organisations in Whitehorse or the Metropolitan Region and have a benefit to the local community
- Melbourne-based events hosted by key community partners/stakeholder organisations, departments or agencies, where an official invitation is received, and the Councillor has been invited in an official capacity
- Not conflicting with any Council policies or resolutions
- A ticketed event for Councillors invited by written invitation to attend local fundraiser/charitable events, where the event benefits Whitehorse City Council and the community directly.

### Accompanying partner/guest

Council will cover the cost of a Councillor's partner/guest for a function, dinner or lunch where the Councillor and partner/guest have been specifically invited to the event as representatives of the Council. A partner or guest may accompany a Councillor to functions where other attendees are generally accompanied by partners.

The payment of expenses for partner/guest at an appropriate function is limited specifically to the ticket and meal. The cost of Councillors' partners (other than the Mayor's partner) attending functions outside of authorised Whitehorse Council activities will be borne by Council up to the value of \$250 per year.

Council will meet the reasonable expenses of the Mayor's partner when accompanying the Mayor to invited functions. Peripheral expenses such as special clothing, transport is not covered.

The ticket of a Councillor's partner or guest may constitute a disclosable gift under the Act for the Councillor if accepted free of charge.



## The Round tickets

Councillors are entitled to two (2) complimentary house seat tickets for performances at The Round per year. These tickets are for use by the Councillor and one guest only and cannot be transferred.

Requests for tickets need to be sent to the Councillor Support Team, this does not include purchasing tickets for family members and other guests.

Tickets received are a reportable Councillor expense.

## 8. Travel and transport

### Travel expenses private vehicle use

Councillors using their private vehicles outside of the municipality to carry out their official Council functions will be reimbursed reasonable expenses as per the applicable kilometre rate where such costs are incurred as part of official Council duties.

Travel within the municipality is deemed to be covered by the Councillor allowance.

Claims for reimbursement of travel must be submitted within one (1) month of the date from which they are incurred.

### Use of taxis/ride share

Councillors may use taxis, or an equivalent registered ride share service to assist them to carry out their functions as Councillors. Costs will be reimbursed, and claims should be submitted within one (1) month of the trip, accompanied by a receipt and claim form stating the nature of Council business and date and time of activity.

### Public transport

Myki cards are issued upon request for appropriate Council business use.

### Car parking fees

Car parking fees incurred while conducting Council business will be reimbursed on the basis of original receipts/other relevant details regarding the purpose, date and time of the meeting or function.

## 9. Insurance

Council purchases several policies to protect its core business operations. The following policies will provide coverage whilst a Councillor is carrying out Council business:

- Public liability/professional indemnity
- Councillors' and officers' liability
- Corporate travel (including partners)
- Workers' compensation
- Motor (fleet) – for those fleet drivers
- Crime

Council is required to pay an excess following lodgment of a claim for the above policy lines. Applicable excess payable will depend on the insurance policy triggered. All claim decisions are made by the insurer.

Councillors are provided with equipment to perform their role as Councillors. There is an expectation due care will be exercised in protecting the equipment from damage or theft.

## 10. Exclusions

This section sets out the exclusions to reimbursement of expenditure by Councillors:

- Any expenditure not specified in this policy.
- Any claims made outside of the timeframes specified. If a Councillor does not claim a particular expense within the designated timeframe, this cannot be claimed as an additional amount for another expense.
- Any expenses arising from a breach of road, traffic, parking or other regulations or laws
- Any expenses relating to insurance, as set out in Section 7.
- Any expenses arising from the attendance of immediate family members/associates attending conferences, seminars, training, planning sessions, or corporate hospitality or events, except as provided for in the policy.

## 11. Policy details

<b>Date Adopted</b>	25 October 2024 (V3)
<b>Responsible Department</b>	Governance and Integrity
<b>Review History</b>	August 2021
<b>Review Date</b>	August 2026
<b>Reference</b>	24/175477
<b>Human Rights</b>	This policy has been reviewed for compliance with the <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i> (assessment completed on next page).  A gender impact assessment was not required.
<b>Related legislation</b>	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i> <i>Carers Recognition Act 2012</i> <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> <i>Gender Equity Act 2020</i>
<b>Related policies</b>	<i>IT Acceptable Use Policy</i> <i>IT Security Policy</i> <i>Mobile Devices Policy</i> <i>Public Transparency Policy</i> <i>Social Media Guide – Councillor</i> <i>Councillor Code of Conduct</i>

## Appendix: Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 compliance assessment

<b>Policy Title</b>	Councillor Expense and Support Policy	
<b>Department</b>	Governance and Integrity	
<b>Purpose of Policy</b>	To ensure Councillors are provided with the necessary resources to enable them to perform their roles and specify the procedure for Councillors to follow in applying for reimbursement of expenses.	
<b>Applicable human right impacted</b>	<p>Are human rights supported? OR Are human rights limited by the policy? If so, how?</p>	Is the limitation on the right reasonable and justifiable? If so, how?
<p><b>Right to privacy and reputation</b></p> <p><a href="#">Section 13 - Your right to privacy and reputation   Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission</a></p>	<p>Council has many various public reports and registers in support of public transparency, this includes reporting of Councillor expenses in the Annual Report in accordance with legislative requirements.</p> <p>As part of the role of a Councillor providing transparency and confidence to the community that Councillors are acting with integrity and honesty and not misusing resources.</p>	This policy provides clear guidance and obligations of all Councillors regarding the provision of resources and balances this right with the requirements of Overarching Governance Principles in the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> relating to transparency and use of Council resources.
<p><b>Right to take part in public life</b></p> <p><a href="#">Section 18 - Your right to take part in public life   Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission</a></p>	<p>The policy provides Councillors an opportunity to attend training and events in support of their diverse roles to perform their duties without disadvantage.</p> <p>The policy supports a diversity of representation and encourages Councillors in their learning and development.</p>	The policy encourages and supports Councillors in professional development and undertaking their role balanced with transparency of expenses and support and guidelines of appropriate expenditure.

