

POLICY

CORPORATE SERVICES

GOVERNANCE & CORPORATE PLANNING



COUNCILLOR FACILITIES POLICY >>

1. POLICY STATEMENT >>

To provide the Mayor and Councillors with the facilities necessary for the efficient performance of their roles.

2. PRINCIPLES >>

This Councillor Facilities Policy complies with the Statement of Principles set out in the Department of Local Government guidelines:

- **No private benefit to be derived**
Facilities provided to Councillors are for the sole use of Councillors in undertaking their duties and must be used responsibly and appropriately.
- **Reasonable Expenses Reimbursement**
Councillors should not be financially disadvantaged when carrying out their roles, and should be provided with facilities necessary for the efficient performance of their roles, and in accordance with community expectations.
- **Public accountability and transparency**
The use of the provided facilities will be open for review to the extent appropriate to the proper performance of a Councillor's responsibilities.
- **Public perceptions and community expectations**
The Council will provide only those facilities reasonably necessary for the efficient performance of a Councillor's responsibilities.
- **Equity and Participation**
To maximise equity and the participation of Councillors from diverse backgrounds and circumstances, this Councillor Facilities Policy expressly permits the provision of facilities that are necessary to allow the participation of Councillors who experience unusual barriers to participation, such as a disability or cultural responsibilities.

3. SCOPE >>

This policy applies to the Mayor and Councillors for the provision of Council owned facilities to assist them in undertaking their roles.

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4. RESPONSIBILITY >>

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and adhered to by the Mayor and Councillors.

5. DEFINITIONS >>

Council business - This is official business of a Councillor as generally described in Part 2, Divisions 1 and 2 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, conducted on behalf of, and approved by, Council where a Councillor is required to undertake certain tasks to satisfy legislative requirements or achieve business continuity for the Council. Council business should result in a benefit being achieved either for the local government and/or the local government area.

*** Participating in a community group event or being a representative on a board not associated with Council is not regarded as Council business.*

Facility - Facilities provided by Council to Councillors are the 'tools of trade' required to enable them to perform their duties with efficiency and at a standard appropriate to fulfil their professional role for the community.

6. POLICY >>

The Council will provide Councillors with facilities as set out in this policy.

In addition to the facilities expressly referred to in the section of this Policy headed *Facilities*, the Council will provide other facilities that are necessary to allow the participation of Councillors who experience unusual barriers to participation, such as a disability or cultural responsibilities.

Facilities

Councillors will be provided with facilities that enable them to perform the role of a Councillor throughout the Townsville local government area. All facilities provided to Councillors remain the property of Council and must be returned to Council when a Councillor's term expires.

The facilities provided will be:

6.1 Personal Protective Equipment

- 6.1.1 All necessary personal protective (safety) equipment for use on official Council business or inspections e.g. safety helmets, boots, vests etc.

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6.2 Mobile Telecommunication Facilities

6.2.1 Mobile Telephone – Nokia 6210 or similar.

6.2.2 Personal calls made by Councillors via the mobile telephone are to be reimbursed to Council via the appropriate administrative procedure.

6.3 Home Office Facilities

6.3.1 Laptop with docking station, standard MS Windows software and broadband internet connectivity (including wireless connectivity);

6.3.2 Home office telephone (see also section 6.4.5);

6.3.3 Personal calls made by Councillors via the home office telephone are to be reimbursed to Council via the appropriate administrative procedure;

6.3.4 Multi-function printer, scanner, facsimile machine;

6.3.5 Individual stationery supply and name badge;

6.4 Council Office Facilities at Walker Street and Thuringowa Drive consisting of limited:

6.4.1 Office space (some dedicated offices and other shared office space);

6.4.2 Laptop docking stations;

6.4.3 Access to office facsimile machines, printers and scanners;

6.4.4 Telephone access;

6.4.5 For Councillors who choose to use the Council office facilities as their principal office, a dedicated telephone line will be made available at the Council office, but the number of their home office telephone line will not be advertised.

6.5 Administrative Support

6.5.1 Limited administrative support to all Councillors;

6.5.2 Full administrative support for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

6.6 Vehicle Use

6.6.1 Councillors may either claim reimbursement for business use of their own vehicle (see the Councillor Expenses Reimbursement Policy); or

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6.6.2 Elect to receive a Council vehicle on the following conditions:

- Councillors will be provided with a fully maintained 4 or 6 cylinder motor vehicle which shall be used for Council business.
- Fuel cards are provided for each vehicle and motor vehicle insurance is covered by Council.
- Private use of this vehicle is permitted on the basis that Councillors reimburse Council for the percentage of private use based on log book records in accordance with the Australian Taxation Office legislation. The amount to be reimbursed will be calculated according to the Fringe Benefits Tax legislation.
- Any motor vehicle provided to a Councillor will remain the property of Council, and must be surrendered to an authorised representative of Council upon expiry of the term of the Councillor.

7. LEGAL PARAMETERS >>

Sections 236(b), 250(ak), 250(ar), 250(as), 250(at), 250(au), 534, Divisions 1, 2 and 4 of the Local Government Act.

8. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS >>

Guidelines for Councils as prepared by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation to assist Councils in developing an Expenses Reimbursement Policy

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