

Shire of Mundaring

POLICY

ATTENDANCE BY ELECTED MEMBERS AT CONFERENCES

Policy Ref:	OR-01
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Adopted by:	RC10.01.05	Date:	Jan 2005
Amended by:	C7.03.10	Date:	March 2010
Amended by:	C15.05.18	Date:	May 2018
Procedure Ref:	n/a	Delegation Ref:	n/a
Statute Ref:	<i>Local Government Act 1995 s. 5.98 (expenses to be reimbursed)</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

CEO means the Chief Executive Office of the Shire of Mundaring

Conference includes conferences, seminars, congresses, workshops, training courses, industry forums, presentations, awards and study tours that will benefit an elected member in his or her decision making role on Council

Council means the Council of Shire of Mundaring

Elected Member means a Councillor of the Shire of Mundaring 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. All elected members have an annual conference allowance of no more than \$3000 per financial year. All unspent funds for this purpose will not be carried forward at the end of the financial year.

3. The cost of attendance by an elected member at the Annual Western Australian Local Government (WALGA) Convention will be part of the individual conference allowance.
4. The President or Deputy President is approved to attend the Annual National General Assembly of Local Government. Costs of attendance is not part of the individual conference allowance.
5. If an elected member wishes to attend a conference in addition to the above or which exceeds their total allocation of \$3000, then a request shall be placed before Council for consideration in accordance with the assessment criteria.

Approval

6. For elected members to be able to seek payment or reimbursement of expenses incurred in the attendance at conferences in excess of the individual allowance, the formal approval of Council is required. Any request must be submitted on the Attendance Request Form (**Appendix 1**) at least fourteen days prior to the Council meeting at which the request will be considered.
7. Where either the CEO 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 Council will have already been prepared and the assessment criteria examined. In these circumstances, the attendance cost are not to be taken from the elected member's annual allowance.
8. Elected members should obtain the necessary approvals required by this policy prior to making any financial or other commitments. No reimbursement of expenses will be approved retrospectively.

Assessment Criteria

9. All proposals for attendance at conferences in addition to those detailed above shall be subject to an initial assessment by the CEO 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.
 - The relationship of the proposal to the outcomes to be delivered and how these relate to the elected member's role.
 - Equity of opportunity 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 impact on future conference attendance by other elected members during the current financial year.

Administration Process

10. Registration for all approved conferences including travel and accommodation must be organised through the CEO's Executive 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

11. 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.

Intrastate Travel

12. Reimbursement of actual vehicle costs will be provided on a cents per kilometre basis payable at the rates specified in the *Local Government Officers' (Western Australia) Interim Award 2011*, where travel is solely for the purpose of attending the conference.

13. 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

14. 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 where this is necessary because of travel and/or the conference event timetable which makes it unreasonable to arrive at or return home in normal working hours or have a '10 hour break' between the end of the event and resuming normal hours of work, 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.

15. Elected members are generally expected to stay in a standard "twin or double" room at the conference venue unless that facility is fully booked or alternative accommodation can be used at no additional cost to Council.

16. Accommodation costs paid or reimbursed shall be the actual costs incurred. Wherever possible accommodation costs shall be pre-paid.

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. The CEO is authorised to set standards and calculate costs for reimbursement of approved incidental expenses up to \$124 per day, or any other amount predetermined by Council at the time of approving the attendance

Reimbursement of Expenses

20. Within 10 working days of the conclusion of the conference, elected members must present receipts to support the expenditure that is to be reimbursed.

Accompanying Partners

21. 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.

Sharing of Knowledge

22. 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.

23. The report or presentation is only applicable to conferences and 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.

Loyalty Rewards or Bonus Points

24. Consistent with the principle of not using public expenditure for private advantage, where travel and accommodation bookings or associated bookings are made and carry loyalty rewards or bonus points, they should not be personally claimed or used for private purposes. They may be used only for further official purposes.

REQUEST FOR ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES

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:	