1.2 ATTENDANCE BY COUNCIL MEMBERS AND CEO AT CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Responsible Directorate	Corporate Services	
Responsible Service Area	Governance	
Adopted	December 2025	C.12.12.2025
Reviewed	January 2005 March 2010 May 2018 March 2023 January 2024 December 2025	RC10.01.05 C7.03.10 C15.05.18 C2.03.23 C9.01.24 C.12.12.2025
Procedure Ref	N/A	

1. PURPOSE

1.1. The *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act), section 5.90A provides that Shire of Mundaring (the Shire) is to adopt a policy on attendance at events for council members and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

1.2. Attending certain events to represent Shire of Mundaring is an important function for council members and the CEO. In order to carry out their functions impartially, council members and the CEO are required to demonstrate that attendance at events and the acceptance of tickets is transparent and that they are not improperly influenced by third parties.

1.3. This policy provides a framework for the acceptance of invitations to events and the reimbursement of expenses incurred during attendance whilst considering the benefit to the community.

2. SCOPE

2.1. This policy applies to the acceptance of tickets and attendance at events by council members and the CEO of the Shire (attending in their capacity as a council member or CEO) and includes:

2.1.1. Acceptance of invitations to attend events and the criteria for approval

2.1.2. The provision of tickets to events

2.1.3. Payments in respect of event attendance

2.2. This policy does not apply to Shire employees, other than the CEO.

2.3. Where this policy relates to attendance at conferences, it should be read in conjunction with the “Council Member Continuing Professional Development, Training and Professional Memberships Policy” (1.3).

3. DEFINITIONS

attendees	a council member or the CEO attending a conference/ event as applicable.
conference	a conference relevant to local government business.
council member	a person elected under the Act as a member of Council. The Shire's council members include the Shire President, Deputy Shire President and Councillors (as defined by the Act).
event	has the meaning given to it under section 5.90A of the Act and includes a concert, conference, function, sporting event and an occasion prescribed for the purposes of this definition by the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*. This is not an exhaustive list.
Exempt conference or event gift	A gift received in accordance with this policy and listed as a pre-approved event under s.5.62(1B).
gift	has the meaning given to it under section 5.57 of the Act; a conferral of a financial benefit (including a disposition of property) made by one person in favour of another person unless adequate consideration in money or money's worth passes from the person in whose favour the conferral is made to the person who makes the conferral; or a travel contribution.
Pre-approved event	An event listed in this policy that exempts the recipient from disclosing a gift or interest under s.5.62(1B).
ticket	includes an admission ticket to an event or an invitation to attend an event, or complimentary registration to an event offered by a third party.

4. POLICY

Council acknowledges that it has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate development opportunities are available to council 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.

Attendance at an event as a representative of the Shire, where the attendee has not paid for the ticket, is a gift and must be disclosed if valued over $300 (either one gift or cumulative over 12 months from the same third party).

4.1. Pre-Approved Conferences/ Events

Attendance at a pre-approved event will exclude the recipient from the requirement to disclose an interest if the ticket is above $300 (either one gift or cumulative over 12 months from the same donor) and the donor has a matter before Council.

Receipt of the gift will still be required under the gift register provisions.

The below table indicates pre-approved events (marked with an 'X'):

Conference/ Event Organiser	Shire President	Deputy Shire President	Council Members	CEO
Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA)	X	X	X	X
Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)	X	X	X	
Annual National General Assembly of Local Government	X	X (if Shire President is not attending)		
Local Government Professionals WA	X	X	X	X
Australian Insitute of Management				X
WA Government Agency (e.g. Public Sector Commission)	X	X	X	X
Perth Metropolitan Local Governments	X	X	X	X
WA Regional Local Governments and other Local Governments	X	X	X	X
State or Federal Member of Parliament (excluding political party event or fundraisers)	X	X	X	X
Shire of Mundaring hosted events	X	X	X	X
Not for Profits and Community organisations / groups within the district of the Shire of Mundaring	X	X	X	X

In addition to accepting invitations to attend pre-approved events, the CEO is approved to attend events in accordance with their contractual entitlements.

4.1.1. Distribution of Tickets

Where an invitation to attend a pre-approved event, including tickets, is extended to the Shire and is addressed to the Shire President, and the President is unable or does not wish to attend the event, the Shire President may with the consent of the event organiser, distribute the ticket to the Deputy Shire President or another council member or employee.

Where an invitation to attend a pre-approved event, including tickets, is extended to a specific council member, and the individual council member is unable or does not wish to attend the event, the Shire President may with the consent of the event organiser, distribute the ticket to another council member or employee.

Where an invitation to attend a pre-approved event, including tickets, is extended to the CEO, and the CEO is unable, or does not wish to attend the event, the CEO is to advise the event organiser of their inability to attend and may, if the event organiser agrees, distribute the invitation to a nominated employee.

4.2. Other Events

An invitation to an event accepted by a council member or CEO without payment (to attend in their capacity as a council member or CEO), where a member of the public is required to pay, unless noted as a pre-approved event in this policy, will generally be classified as a gift to which gift declaration provisions apply.

Where an event is a free event to the public then no action is required by the recipient in relation to this policy.

If the event is ticketed and the council member or CEO pays the full ticketed price and does not seek or obtain reimbursement then no action is required by the recipient in relation to this policy.

Where either the CEO proposes to Council or Council itself nominates a council member to attend a specific conference then that council member is not required to complete the Conference and Event Attendance Form, as the report to Council will have already been prepared and the assessment criteria examined. The expenditure is to be considered as part of a report to Council and allocated to the relevant service area or council member budget.

4.3. Approval Process

All event invitations or offers of tickets for a council member to attend must be forwarded in writing and addressed to the CEO for approval.

Where an event invitation or offers of tickets are for the CEO to attend must be forwarded in writing and addressed to the Shire President for approval.

4.4. Criteria for Approval

All proposals to accept invitations for enrolment and attendance at conferences/ events that incur costs (for the reimbursement of expenses) shall be subject to an initial assessment by the CEO based on the following criteria:

4.4.1. The role of the attendee at the conference/ event (participant, observer, presenter, facilitator) and the value of their contribution.

4.4.2. Whether the conference/ event relates to an objective identified within the current or future strategic direction of Council.

4.4.3. The current relevance of the conference/ event to the Shire.

4.4.4. Equity of opportunity of the council member concerned including recognition of the number of opportunities previously provided to that council member.

4.4.5. Whether there are more cost effective options to acquire the relevant knowledge and information.

4.4.6. Whether it is appropriate that more than one council member attends.

4.4.7. 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 council members.

4.4.8. Whether the conference/ event is sponsored by the Shire.

4.4.9. Remaining term of office.

Conferences/ events that will not be considered for approval include:

4.4.10. Political party events and fundraisers.

4.4.11. Entertainment events that do not have any relevance to the Shire or to the business of local government.

4.4.12. An event that benefits a council member or the CEO in a personal capacity.

No council member is permitted to accept invitations to attend conferences/ events which will incur a cost to the Shire during caretaker period, unless otherwise determined by a resolution of Council.

4.5. Ethics and Equity

Council will seek to distribute attendance opportunities equitably among members for the purposes of s.5.90A.

4.6. Authority for Approval

Once the CEO undertakes an initial assessment in relation to the criteria for approval, a report will be presented to Council for approval.

4.7. Reimbursement of Expenses

4.7.1. Attendance at events via complimentary tickets is governed by the Shire's Attendance at Conferences and Events Policy and relevant provisions under section 5.62 and 5.87A/B. Expenses incurred (travel, accommodation, registration) for attending such events remain subject to the Council Member Fees, Expenses and Allowances Policy and the Council Member Continuing Professional Development and Professional Memberships Policy, including the Regulation 37 provisions and special resolution exception for the final three months of term.

Where payment or reimbursement of expenses is sought for costs incurred by acceptance of an invitation for the attendance at a conference/ event in excess of the available budget allocation, formal Council approval is required. Any request must be submitted on the "Conference and Event Attendance Form" (Appendix 1) at least fourteen days prior to the Council meeting at which the request will be considered.

The extent to which an attendee will be reimbursed will be in accordance with the "Council Member Fees, Allowances and Expenses Policy" (2.10)

and this policy. Where appropriate, the Shire will pay reasonable costs associated with an attendee's accommodation.

Necessary approvals required by this policy are to be obtained prior to making any financial or other commitments. No reimbursement of expenses will be approved retrospectively.

4.7.2. Private Motor Vehicle

The use of a private motor vehicle is reimbursed in accordance with the "Council Member Fees, Allowances and Expenses Policy" (2.10).

4.7.3. Intrastate, Interstate and Overseas Air Travel

Economy class air travel arrangements shall apply to CPD requiring air travel. The most direct route to and from the airport situated closest to the venue shall be booked.

Where practicable, advantage should be taken of available discount fares.

Attendees have the option to upgrade their travel arrangements to business class by supplementing the economy airfare at their own cost.

4.7.4. Accommodation

Unless other arrangements are specifically approved by Council the following applies:

4.7.4.1. Accommodation costs shall be paid for the duration of the training/ CPD. This includes arrival the day before the start of the training/ CPD and departure the day following the close of training/ CPD where necessary (for example, timing 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).

4.7.4.2. Accommodation will, where practicable, be booked at the associated venue or in close proximity to the venue and be a standard twin or double.

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

In the event that an attendee 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 attendee.

4.7.5. Personal Accident and Corporate Travel Insurance

Personal accident and corporate travel insurance is provided in accordance with the "Council Member Allowances and Expenses Policy" (2.10).

Attendees may wish to obtain their own insurance cover, at their own cost, to ensure the benefits and endorsements are adequate for their individual needs.

If an attendee extends their stay (item 4.6.4) or an accompanying person attends (item 4.7.9) the Shire will not cover the cost of the additional insurance.

4.7.6. Transportation

The cost of parking costs, taxi, ride share or fares for public transport to and from the airport, training/ CPD venue or other approved places shall be reimbursed in accordance with the "Council Member Allowances and Expenses Policy" (2.10).

The cost of car hire will only be reimbursed when the request has been included in the notification of attendance and approval given at the time attendance the conference/ event is authorised.

4.7.7. Meals and Incidental Expenses

Meal expenses are to be interpreted as reasonable expenses incurred for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, and dinner where these are not provided at the event or in travel.

Incidental expenses are to be interpreted as reasonable expenses incurred by the council member for telephone calls, public transport and sundry food and beverages.

The CEO is authorised to set standards and calculate costs for reimbursement of approved incidental expenses. Alternatively, Council may determine the amount for meals and incidental expenses at the time of approving the attendance.

4.7.8. Child Care Expenses

Reimbursement for child care expenses that result from attendance at a conference/ event will be reimbursed in accordance with the "Council Member Allowances and Expenses Policy" (2.10).

4.7.9. Accompanying Person

Council appreciates that attendees may require someone to accompany them to training/ CPD. This is supported on the following basis:

- Details of the accompanying person is included when the request is submitted.
- Where it is more efficient for the Shire to make arrangements for registration, travel and accommodation for accompanying persons, it is appropriate that Council meets these expenses in the first instance. The attendee must arrange reimbursement of these costs prior to attendance at the training/ CPD.
- Expenses incurred by the accompanying person at the conference/ event will be borne by the Council Member, not the Shire.

4.7.10. Accompanying Carer

Where an attendee is attending training/ CPD and has a disability as defined in the *Disability Services Act 1993*, the Shire will meet the cost of an accompanying carer where that carer is a person who provides ongoing care or assistance.

The costs provided by the Shire for an accompanying carer will include travel, meals, registration, accommodation and participation in any programs.

4.7.11. Claiming Reimbursement of Expenses

Within 30 working days of the conclusion of the training/ CPD, receipts must be presented to support the expenditure that is to be reimbursed.

Only expenses incurred in the attendee's capacity to fulfil their role representing the Shire will be reimbursed.

4.7.12. Loyalty Rewards or Bonus Points

Consistent with the principle of not using public expenditure for private advantage, where possible, travel and accommodation bookings that accrue loyalty rewards or bonus points, should not be personally claimed or used for private purposes and where possible be used only for further official purposes.

4.8. Administration Process

Registration for all conferences/ events approved in accordance with this policy, including travel and accommodation, are to be organised by the Executive Assistant to the CEO.

Where possible, all airfares and other travel arrangements including registration, accommodation and associated fees and charges shall be pre-paid by the Shire.

Where items are unable to be pre-paid, council members may seek reimbursement for expenses in accordance with this policy.

4.9. Final Three Months of Term

Council members may accept complimentary tickets to events at any time, including their final three months in office. However, Council or CEO-paid expenses for attending these events are governed by the Shire's fees and Council Member Fees, Allowances and Expenses Policy and Council Member Continuing Professional Development, Training and Professional Memberships Policy, which restrirct reimbursement unless a special Council resolution is passed during that period

4.10. Reporting

Gifts received by council members and the CEO will be listed in the Shire's Gift Register in accordance with section 5.87A and section 5.87B of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

The CEO maintains and publishes the current version on the Shire website and updates it following any amendment. (New clause for transparency)

1. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Conference and Event Attendance Form

2. RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1995, section 5.90A Policy for attendance at events

Local Government Act 1995, section 5.98 Fees etc. for council members

3. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Council Member Continuing Professional Development, Training and Professional Memberships Policy (1.3)

Council Member Fees, Allowances and Expenses Policy (2.10)

Local Government Operational Guidelines – Attendance at Events Policy

Local Government Operational Guidelines – Disclosure of gifts and disclosure of interests relating to gifts