

## 1. Policy Statement

To define the parameters surrounding the application of Councillor meeting attendance fees and Councillors taking leave of absence.

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all Councillors.

## 3. Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementation of this Policy.

## 4. Background

The Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal (the Tribunal) determines, by categorisation of local government authorities, the maximum remuneration levels to be applied to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors.

### Extract from Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal Report December 2017

“In its 2014 report the Tribunal explained the rationale behind the adoption of a system of remuneration which comprised a base payment (of two thirds of the annual remuneration) and a monthly payment based upon attendance at, and participation in, the 12 mandated Council meetings. As a result of feedback received in the following two years the Tribunal decided, in 2016, to slightly modify the basis upon which the ‘meeting fee’ is paid, as recorded below:

Rather than the meeting fee being based, solely, on attendance at and participation in mandated council meetings, the Tribunal believes that the meeting fee concept should be extended to incorporate other important meetings which require a Councillor's attendance, and participation, such as budget meetings, planning sessions, and the like. This is because the role of a Councillor requires them to fully participate in, and contribute to, such meetings.

As such, Councils should identify, at the commencement of each year, those meetings where the presence of all Councillors is expected so as to identify the number of meetings which each Councillor will need to attend to receive the meeting fee component of the remuneration level set out in the note at the foot of the Remuneration Schedule.”

### Extract from Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal Report 2010

#### “Councillor Leave

From the Tribunal's perspective, the results of the survey about Councillor attendance provides some indication that Councils are unsure how to treat Councillors who might be absent for some time and simply continue to pay them based upon the notion they are entitled to an amount of annual remuneration regardless of their level of attendance at Council meetings or participation in Council affairs. In the circumstances, the Tribunal has deemed it appropriate to issue some "guidance" on leave, such as sick leave and recreation leave for Councillors.

In the Tribunal's view, the community is generally accepting of the circumstance that Councillors might, on occasions, be unable to participate in Council affairs because of illness or injury. In addition, the community would reasonably expect that Councillors can take some recreation leave on an annual basis. Reflecting normal community expectations the Tribunal believes that Councillors should be able to take up to ten days sick leave each year as well as four weeks recreation leave without any such absences affecting their remuneration levels.

However, in the Tribunal's view, Councils should not be expected to remunerate any Councillors who are absent on recreation leave for more than four weeks. Equally, unless there is a special resolution to this effect, a Council should not be expected to maintain the remuneration of a Councillor who is absent on sick leave for a longer period than the community might expect the Council to accommodate in the particular circumstances involved.”

## 5. Definitions

### Remuneration

The Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal determine the remuneration payable to Councillors. While the rate of remuneration is set by the Tribunal, each Local Government is responsible for determining how and when it will pay the remuneration to Councillors.

### Council Business

This is official business 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. *Example: Council may decide that Council business includes civic ceremony duties such as opening a school fete.* Participating in a community group event or being a representative on a board not associated with Council is not regarded as Council Business.

### Extended Leave of Absence

Extended leave of absence constitutes leave from the Councillor's full position. It is not simply leave from the Councillor's duty to attend Council meetings. Thus, extended leave of absence would be leave from the Councillor's full position over a lengthened period of time.

## 6. Policy

### 6.1 Meeting Attendance Fees

The following meetings, Briefing Sessions and workshops are nominated as those that a Councillor is required to attend and participate in, in order to receive the meeting attendance component of their remuneration:

- A. All monthly General Meetings;
- B. Budget workshops and Briefing Sessions to formulate the next financial year Budget;
- C. The Special Budget Meeting where the Budget is adopted; and
- D. For each calendar month, at least two of the regular monthly Advisory Portfolio or Committee meetings such as but not limited to Internal or External Advisory Committee meetings and/or Councillor Connect/Briefing Session.

Payment of the meeting attendance fee will not be affected if Council has granted a leave of absence for a Councillor by way of resolution who is unable to attend a meeting. Failure to attend the nominated meetings, without appropriate leave of absence being granted, will result in the meeting attendance component of their remuneration being deducted from a future monthly payment.

For clarity, should a Councillor link into the meeting by teleconference, then that Councillor is deemed to have attended the meeting. Attendance by way of teleconference will be considered in extenuating circumstances and will be at Council's discretion.

Certification of attendance at a meeting will be determined by the record of attendance in the official Council Minutes for the General Meeting and the Council Attendance Book for other sessions.

### 6.2 Councillor Leave Entitlements

#### 6.2.1 General Leave

Noting the Tribunal's Report of 2010 above, it is considered that Councillors be paid the base rate and meeting attendance fee when leave as listed below is taken, providing leave of absence has first been approved by Council:



- i. Recreation Leave – up to four weeks in any one 12 month period;
- ii. Sick Leave – up to 10 days in any one 12 month period; and
- iii. Bereavement Leave – up to five days in any one 12 month period;

With none of the above leave periods being accumulative if such leave is not taken in any one 12 month period.

### 6.2.2 Extended Leave

In cases where a Councillor cannot carry out their duties due to extended illness, family illness, or other matters which may arise from time to time, Council will consider an extended period of 'paid leave of absence' up to a three month period where the base rate and meeting attendance fee will be paid.

The Councillor may apply for an extended leave of absence beyond the three month period, and if Council does agree to the extension, it will only be provided on a basis of no remuneration of the base rate or meeting attendance fees noting it is considered by Council that the community would not support payment of remuneration beyond the original three month period of paid leave.

## 7. Disclosure

This Policy will be available on Council's website.

## 8. Related Procedures


Nil

## 9. Legal Parameters

- Local Government Regulation 2012

## 10. Other: Related Legislation and Other Governing Material

- Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal Reports 2010, 2017

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