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| First adopted: | August 2015; Implemented October 2016 |
| Revision dates/version: | November 2017; March 2021, November 2022 |
| Next review date: | As required but no later than November 2025 |
| Engagement required: | Not required |
| Document Number | |
| Associated documents: | Remuneration Authority Determination, Code of Conduct, Corporate Hospitality and Entertainment Policy and OAG Guidelines |
| Sponsor/Group: | General Manager – People and Organisational Performance |

ELECTED MEMBERS SUPPORT POLICY

Purpose and Scope

1. To set out clear and transparent levels of expenses and allowances paid to, or on behalf of, Elected Members of Hamilton City Council.
2. To outline the level of support provided to Elected Members to enable them to carry out their roles.

Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Authority | The Remuneration Authority |
| Local Government Members' Determination | The annual determination gazetted by the Authority, determining the level and parameters of permitted remuneration payable to members of a local authority. A determination applies from 1 July to 30 June. |

Principles

3. Elected Members should be reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses they incur in carrying out Council business, within the parameters set by the Authority and legislation.
4. Reasonable resources should be made available to Elected Members to enable them to more efficiently carry out their responsibilities.
5. Reimbursement of expenses, payment of allowances and use of the Council resources apply only to Elected Members personally, and only while they are carrying out Council business in their official capacity as an elected member.
6. Transparency and accountability guide the reimbursement of Elected Members' allowances and expenses.

Policy

Equipment

7. At the commencement of each 3-year term, all Elected Members will be provided with Hamilton City Council approved standard IS (Information Services) equipment (a mobile phone, laptop, and iPad).
8. Elected Members who are provided with Hamilton City Council approved standard IS equipment will be connected to Council's IS network and provided with IS support services.
9. All Council equipment must be returned at the end of each 3-year term.
10. Any equipment provided must be used in accordance with the Council's IS Usage Standards and Guidelines¹.
11. Elected Members have the opportunity of having a remuneration deduction to cover personal use of Council mobile devices. The amount of the deduction is determined by the Chief Executive or his/her delegate, in line with central government practice and Authority advice.

Stationery and Services

11. The Council will provide a reasonable supply of stationery to Elected Members for their use on Council business.
- 12.
13. Elected Members should use the following internal Council services to an appropriate and reasonable level as determined by the Chief Executive or his/her delegate:
 - Postage and courier service;
 - Photocopying;
 - Information technology advice/assistance for Council-owned equipment;
 - Meeting rooms; and
 - Allocated Elected member carparking

Communications Expenses and Allowances

1. On receipt of supporting tax invoices, the Governance Lead may authorise reimbursement for Council-related telephone calls made on private telephones (including mobile phones).
2. International calling, text, and data can be purchased at the Elected Member's expense.

Childcare Allowance

3. Council will pay a childcare allowance, in accordance with the relevant sections of the [Local Government Elected Members Determination](#), to an eligible member as a contribution towards expenses incurred by the member for childcare provided while the member is engaged on local authority business.

¹ IT Usage Standards and Guidelines (to be developed based on HCC Information Services IT Management Policy and attached to this EM Support Policy)

Training, conference and transportation costs

4. Any training or conference paid for by the Council must:
 - i. be relevant to Council business or governance, as determined by the Chief Executive (if required);
 - ii. be booked through Council staff with the Council's preferred agents and at the most economic cost available (where possible) at the time of the booking, unless all costs are being met privately or by a third party; and
 - iii. not fall within the three-month period prior to the triennial Elections.
5. If Elected Members wish to attend professional development training or conferences of their own choice, they must make a written request to the Governance Lead for funding from the Elected Members' professional development discretionary budget. Each member is entitled up to a maximum of \$6,000 per annum (ex GST). This includes the cost of travel, accommodation and meals (excluding alcohol), noting that the cost of accommodation and meals should not exceed a midrange, reasonable and justifiable level.
6. Once approved, the Governance team will organise the necessary registrations, bookings and payments.
7. On receipt of supporting tax invoices, Elected Members are entitled to the reimbursement of travel fares (including Taxi, Uber, Mevo and Ola) when travelling on Council business outside of the City boundary, instead of private vehicle or public transport, y for the following reasons:
 - i. Council business is occurring outside normal business operating hours; or
 - ii. For safety/security of an Elected Member
8. Elected Members are eligible for reimbursement of actual and reasonable costs incurred by Members who use public transport (long distance coach, local bus, train or ferry), micromobility vehicles (such as e-bikes and e-scooters) and bicycles for travel on local authority business and upon the production of receipts or evidence satisfactory to the Governance Lead.
9. Where the Council has formally appointed Elected Members to external organisations or approved Elected Members' attendance at training or a conference, the Council will pay or reimburse Elected Members for appropriate and reasonable costs incurred for representing Council outside of the City boundary within the relevant budget provision. For clarity, such expenditure does not fall within an Elected Member's discretionary allocation of \$6,000.
10. The Chief Executive may on a case-by-case basis approve the payment of a contribution to a host in lieu of accommodation for actual and reasonable costs. This reimbursement is paid to cover actual and reasonable costs incurred when staying in private accommodation (friends/relatives) when travelling on Council business. The maximum amount payable will be \$50 per night.

Vehicle Mileage Allowance and Travel-Time Allowance

11. Elected Members are entitled to a mileage allowance when using their own vehicle for Council business within the parameters, and at the rates, set out in the Local Government Members' Determination and this Policy.
12. A mileage allowance is payable for any distance travelled in relation to eligible travel as determined by the relevant Authority determination, including:

- i. if it occurs at a time when the member is not provided with a motor vehicle by the local authority; and
 - ii. if the Member is travelling in a private vehicle on local authority business by the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances.
13. The maximum payable per annum is set out as per the [Authority determination](#).
14. Elected Members must maintain an accurate record of travel undertaken in their private vehicle related to any claimed mileage allowance (e.g. logbook) and provide a copy to the Governance Lead on request to support any mileage claim.
15. However, if an Elected Member of a local authority travels from a place where the Elected Member permanently or temporarily resides that is outside the local authority area, to the local authority area on local authority business, the Elected Member is only eligible for a vehicle-kilometre allowance for eligible travel after the member crosses the boundary of the local authority area as per the relevant Remuneration [Authority determination](#).
16. Elected Members may access and use Council electric vehicle charging stations where Council has the functionality to record and charge back electricity costs to an individual. Elected Members will be required to reimburse Council for these costs.

Mayoral Vehicle

17. If Council approves the provision of a vehicle for the Mayor, the policy must be included in the council's elected members' expenses, and this Policy.
18. The Mayor is provided with a vehicle, and salary deductions are made in accordance with the Authority's determination and rules. The vehicle is serviced and maintained in accordance with manufacturers recommendations and Council's fleet management practices.

Items of Possible Private Benefit

19. The Authority has issued clear guidelines on the following items of possible private benefit. The following matters that are for private benefit will not be paid for or reimbursed unless otherwise stated:

- i. **Medical Insurance**

Elected Members are permitted to opt-in to optional discounted staff Medical Health Insurance through an independent third-party provider , at no cost to the Council.

The Elected Member will continue to receive their full remuneration as shown in the determination and the deduction from salary, if they decide to opt in the scheme, will subsequently be made by Payroll.

If the Elected Member opts in, they understand that Hamilton City Council's Chief Executive may in the future change providers or elect to end the scheme as a staff benefit.

- ii. **Staff Discounts**

The Authority has authorised the Council to extend its flu vaccination benefit to elected members. Elected Members are otherwise not permitted to access any other discounts offered to Council staff for their own personal purchases.

- iii. **Life, Accident and Income Replacement Insurance**

Council will not take out any insurance policy on behalf of Elected Members where the payment of a claim is made to the elected representative or his or her estate.

iv. Airpoints

Airpoints earned by an Elected Members on travel and accommodation paid for by the Council should be used by that member towards his/her future travel or accommodation that is required for Council business.

Gifts, Corporate Hospitality and Entertainment

20. It is appropriate that from time to time, hospitality and entertainment is extended for official business, commercial and networking purposes and for building relationships which benefit the strategic aspirations of the city. Elected Members must follow the [Corporate Hospitality and Entertainment Policy](#) when extending hospitality or participating in Council hosted events.
21. Elected Members should refer to the [Council's Code of Conduct](#) in relation to gifts and hospitality received by, and in their capacity as, Elected Members.
22. Elected Members should also refer to the Office of the Auditor General – [Controlling Sensitive Expenditure: Guidelines](#) for public entities for further guidance.

Hearing Fees

23. An Elected Member who acts as a chairperson or a member who is sitting as part of a Council hearing is entitled to be paid a fee per hour of hearing time related to the hearing as per the relevant Remuneration [Authority determination](#).
24. Hearing fees as an additional payment to remuneration are not available to a Mayor or Acting Mayor. For Acting/Mayors, fees may only be considered in exceptional circumstances if:
 - there is a shortage of experienced hearing commissioners on the Council; and
 - there is significant hearing of a lengthy duration, which would create undue time pressure on the Acting/Mayor; and
 - fees are approved by the Remuneration Authority prior to payment.

Policy Administration

25. The expenses and allowances payable, and supplies, consumables or services administered, under this Policy are provided:
 - i. at no cost to Elected Members, but only while they are holding office (e.g. not on a leave of absence or absent without leave)²; and
 - ii. for Council-business use only. They cannot be used for electioneering purposes, personal use or communications, or any other specific use as notified by the Chief Executive from time to time.

² It is for each elected member to assess and determine his/her own tax payable, if any, in relation to payments and allowances received under this Policy.

26. All claims for reimbursement of expenses must be submitted on the councillor expense claim form to the Governance Lead. Claims must be signed by the Elected Member, and all expenses claimed must be supported by a tax invoice.
27. The Governance Lead will approve all expenses claims that are in accordance with this Policy, with the exception of any claims that are unusual and items outside of this policy which must be approved by the Chief Executive.
28. A summary of Elected Members' expense claims and reimbursements paid under this Policy may be published on the Council's website.