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Sponsor/Group:	General Manager - Corporate

## 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 the option of using Hamilton City Council approved standard IT equipment (mobile phone, and either a laptop OR an iPad). Elected members who are provided with Hamilton City Council approved

standard IT equipment will be connected to Council's IT network and provided with IT support services.

8. All Council equipment must be returned at the end of each 3 year term.
9. Any equipment provided must be used in accordance with the Council's IT Usage Standards and Guidelines<sup>1</sup>.
10. 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.

### Stationery and Services

11. The Council will provide a reasonable supply of stationery requirements to elected members for their use on Council business, including business cards, compliment slips and consumables.
12. Where appropriate, elected members will be reimbursed for consumables purchased directly from suppliers for use on Council business.
13. Stationery supplies or consumables will only be provided or reimbursed for a member's private computer (i.e. paper, printer cartridges, etc) if that member has elected not to use the Council's approved standard IT equipment.
14. Elected members may 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 carparking (subject to displaying an authorised sticker on the member's vehicle and provision of the vehicle's registration number to the Governance Manager).

### Communications Expenses and Allowances

15. Elected members who do not use Council equipment are entitled to a communications allowance at the rate determined by the Remuneration Authority. This includes the use of a member's personal broadband service for the purpose of that member's work on Council business. These allowances are set out in the Local Government Members' Determination.
16. On receipt of supporting tax invoices, the Governance Manager may authorise reimbursement for Council-related telephone calls made on private telephones (including mobile phones).

### Training and conference attendance

17. Any training or conference attendance paid for by the Council must:
  - i. be relevant to Council business or governance, as determined by the Chief Executive (if required); and
  - ii. be made by 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 an outside party.

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

18. If elected members wish to attend professional development training or conferences of their own choice, they must make a written request to the Governance Manager for funding from the Elected Members' professional development discretionary budget. Each member is entitled up to a maximum of \$6,000 per annum. This includes the cost of travel, accommodation and meals (excluding alcohol), noting that the cost of accommodation and meals should not exceed a mid-range, reasonable and justifiable level.
19. Once approved, the Governance team will organise the necessary registrations, bookings and payments.
20. 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.
21. 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 Taxi Costs

22. 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.
23. A mileage allowance is payable for any distance travelled in excess of 80 kilometres per week where the travel claimed is:
  - i. within the city boundary; or
  - ii. to and within the city boundary where the member resides outside the city boundary **and** the claim includes travel to and from that member's place of residence.

For clarity, subject to subparagraph (ii) above, the 80 kilometre threshold does not apply when claiming for travel outside of the city boundary, though such travel cannot count towards the 80 kilometre threshold.

24. The maximum payable mileage allowance to each elected member is \$1,825 per annum.
25. 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 Manager on request to support any mileage claim.
26. On receipt of supporting tax invoices, elected members are entitled to the reimbursement of taxi fares when travelling on Council business, instead of private vehicle or public transport, for the following reasons:
  - i. Council business is occurring outside normal business operating hours;
  - ii. For safety/security of an elected member; or
  - iii. When travelling outside the City boundary, if a taxi is the most appropriate form of transport.

### Items of Possible Private Benefit

27. 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:

- **Medical Insurance**

Elected members are not permitted to obtain medical insurance through the Hamilton City Council medical insurance scheme.

- **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.

- **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.

- **Airpoints**

Airpoints earned by an elected member 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

28. Refer to the [Council's Code of Conduct](#) in relation to gifts received by, and in their capacity as, elected members.

29. Refer to [Council Policy](#) and Office of the Auditor General – [Controlling Sensitive Expenditure: Guidelines](#) for public entities in relation to corporate hospitality and entertainment.

## Policy Administration

30. 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)<sup>2</sup>; 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.
31. All claims for reimbursement of expenses must be submitted on the councillor expense claim form to the Governance Manager. Claims must be signed by the elected member, and all expenses claimed must be supported by a tax invoice.
32. The Governance Manager 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 Officer.
33. The remuneration and allowances paid and all expenses reimbursed to elected members will be reported to all elected members on a monthly basis.
34. A summary of elected members' expense claims and reimbursements paid under this Policy may be published on the Council's website.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.