
Public exhibition of draft Policy: Payment of expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Organisational Services (Helen McNeil)

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Publicly exhibit the revised 'Payment of fees, expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors' policy (**Attachment 1**) for a period of 28 days.
2. Should no public submission be received, revoke the policy titled '[Payment of fees, expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors](#)' and adopt the policy at **Attachment 1** effective as at the end date of public exhibition.
3. Should any public submission be received, consider those submissions at its next meeting in conjunction with consideration of revoking the existing policy and adopting a revised 'Payment of fees, expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors' policy.

Background

Council is required by legislation to adopt a policy for the payment of expenses or the provision of facilities to councillors within the first 12 months of each term of council.¹

Council's existing 'Payment of fees, expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors' policy dated 17 August 2022 is now due for review and the revised policy required to be adopted prior to September 2025.²

Outcome of review

Through the review process, no changes to the Office of Local Government's model 'Payment of expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors' policy, or relevant sections of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW), were identified.

There have therefore been no changes made to Council's existing policy dated 17 August 2022. The policy is recommended for re-adoption without change.

Governance

- **Finance**

Council's Long-Term Financial Plan has budget funding allocated for both the payment of councillor fees and councillor superannuation contributions. In the 2024/25 Financial Year, Council has fixed the annual fee payable to councillors and the chairperson at 100% of the maximum determined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal (LGRT), that being \$11,280 for councillors and \$18,520 for the chairperson.³

In total, Council allocated \$114,000, inclusive of superannuation, to the payment of councillor fees in the 2024/25 Financial Year.

¹ [Division 5, Part 2, Chapter 9 Section 252 \(1\) Local Government Act 1993](#) (NSW)

² [Payment of expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors](#), Rous County Council, 2022.

³ [Determination No. 2](#) – Fees for Councillors and Mayors as per section 241 of the LG Act effective from 1 July 2024, p.27.

Budget funding is also allocated for other expenses, such as attendance at conferences and the provision of childcare while a councillor is undertaking their civic functions.

In the 2023/24 Financial Year, \$39,700 was allocated to such expenditure. A total of \$8,274 was spent on the following:

Councillor attendance at conferences and seminars (including airfares, registrations, meals and accommodation)	\$1,412
Other training of councillors and provision of skill development for councillors	\$6,416
Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child of, or an immediate family member of, a councillor, to allow the councillor to undertake their civic functions	\$446

Given the underspend, an increase in the budget for councillor fees and expenses is not proposed for the 2025/26 Financial year. Where appropriate, Rous will engage with constituent councils to share the cost of professional development for councillors.

- **Legal**

Discussion and adoption of a policy for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to councillors must be made in open council and cannot be closed to the public.⁴

Staff are satisfied that the proposed policy meets the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

Individual councillors may opt out of receiving superannuation contribution payments or opt to receive reduced payments. To forgo or opt to receive reduced payments, councillors must request this in writing to the General Manager.

Council is not permitted to make a superannuation contribution payment to a councillor who has agreed in writing to forgo or reduce the payment.⁵

Consultation

Council is required to invite public submissions for a period of 28 days on its proposed policy for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to councillors prior to adopting or amending the policy.⁶

Conclusion

The revised 'Payment of fees, expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors' policy has been reviewed to ensure it continues to meet legislative requirements. The policy is recommended for re-adoption subject to the public notice/exhibit requirements and receipt of any public submissions.

Attachments

1. Revised 'Payment of fees, expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors' (**for public exhibition**).

⁴ *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* [Section 254](#) Ibid.

⁵ [Section 254B](#) (4) (C) Ibid.

⁶ [Section 253](#) Ibid.