# Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council

# Councillor Remuneration, Expenses Reimbursement and Resources Policy E001

## HEAD OF POWER

Local Government Regulation 2012 Section 249 - 252

## 1.0 OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council’s councillors can receive reimbursement of reasonable expenses and be provided with necessary facilities in performance of their role. The policy clarifies the extent of remuneration, expense reimbursement and the provision of facilities, vehicles and resources to Councillors.

## 2.0 APPLICATION

This policy applies to all duly elected Councillors of Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council (PASC).

## 3.0 BACKGROUND

This policy complies with the legislative requirements and the guidelines as issued by the Department of Local Government as set out below:

• Reasonable expenses reimbursement to Councillors;

• Public accountability and transparency;

• Public perceptions and community expectations;

• No private benefit to be derived;

• Equity and participation.

## 4.0 POLICY STATEMENT

**4.1 REMUNERATION**

In accordance with Section 183 of the *Local Government Act 2009*, the Local Government

Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal is responsible for:

a. Establishing the categories of local governments; and

b. Deciding which categories each local government belongs to; and

c. Deciding the remuneration that is payable to the Councillors in each of those categories.

In accordance with Chapter 8, Part 1, Division 1 of the Local Government Regulation 2012, the Tribunal must, on or before 1 December each year and for each category of local government, decide and publish the remuneration schedule that may be paid in the following year to a Mayor, Deputy Mayor or a Councillor of a local government in each category.

The remuneration may include, or may separately provide for, remuneration for the duties a Councillor may be required to perform if the Councillor is appointed to a committee, or as chairperson of a committee, of a local government.

The remuneration fixed by the Tribunal is all inclusive and no additional remuneration is payable for sick leave, annual leave, or any other benefits otherwise applicable to employees other than superannuation. The remuneration can not include any amount for expenses to be paid or facilities to be provided to a Councillor under its expenses reimbursement policy.

The local government must, by resolution adopt the remuneration schedule within 90 days of the schedule being gazetted. In adopting this remuneration amount Council recognises that:

1. Councillors are called upon by the demands of their office to attend civic duties requiring a commitment on their time equivalent, or average, to at least standard full-time working hours.

2. Council considers that the role of Councillors requires, by its very nature, extensive evening and weekend work to service the community’s requirements.

**4.2 SUPERANNUATION AND TAX**

At the time of writing, PASC is an "eligible local governing body", and is a participant in the Local Government Superannuation Scheme (LGsuper).

This empowers the withholding of Councillors' income tax and automatic payment of superannuation contributions as per LGsuper’s rules.

**4.3 EXPENSES**

Reimbursement of Expenses under the Local Government regulation 2012 Section 249 will be paid to a Councillor through administrative processes approved by a Council’s Chief Executive Officer subject to:

* The limits outlined in this policy;
* The expenses are reasonable, and

• Council endorsement by resolution.

## 5.0 EXPENSE CATEGORIES

**5.1 Professional development**

A Local Government will reimburse expenses incurred for:

* Mandatory professional development; and
* Discretionary professional development deemed essential for the Councillor’s role.

**5.2 Travel as required to represent Council**

A Local Government may reimburse local and in some cases interstate and overseas travel expenses (e.g. flights, car, accommodation, meals and associated registration fees) deemed necessary to achieve the business of Council where:

• A Councillor is an official representative of Council; and

• The activity/event and travel have been endorsed by resolution of Council.

Councillors are to travel via the most direct route, using the most economical and efficient mode of transport. Council will pay for reasonable expenses incurred for overnight accommodation when a Councillor is required to stay outside the Local Government’s region.

NOTE: Any fines incurred while travelling in Council-owned vehicles or privately owned vehicles when attending to Council business, will be the responsibility of the Councillor incurring the fine.

**5.3 Travel bookings**

All Councillor travel approved by Council will be booked and paid for by Council. Economy class is to be used where possible although Council may approve business class in certain circumstances. Airline tickets are not transferable and can only be procured for the Councillor’s travel on Council business. They cannot be used to offset other unapproved expenses. (e.g. cost of partner or spouse accompanying the Councillor.)

**5.4 Travel transfer costs**

Any travel transfer expenses associated with Councillors travelling for Council approved business will be reimbursed e.g. trains, taxis, buses and ferry fares. Cab charge vouchers may also be used if approved by Council where Councillors are required to undertake duties relating to the business of Council.

**5.5 Private vehicle usage**

Councillor’s private vehicle usage may be reimbursed by Council if the:

• Travel has been endorsed by Council resolution

* Claim for mileage is substantiated with log book details and

• Total travel claim does not exceed the cost of the same travel using economy flights plus the cost of taxi transfers.

**5.6 Accommodation**

All Councillor accommodation for Council business will be booked and paid for by Council. Council will pay for the most economical deal available. Where possible, the minimum standards for Councillors’ accommodation should be three or four star rating. Where particular accommodation is recommended by conference organisers, Council will take advantage of the package deal that is the most economical and convenient to the event.

**5.7 Meals**

A Local Government will reimburse costs of meals for a Councillor when:

* The Councillor incurs the cost personally; and

• The meal was not provided:

- within the registration costs of the approved activity/event

- during an approved flight.

The following limits apply to the amount Councils will reimburse for meals:

• Breakfast $19.60

• Lunch $20.05

• Dinner $34.55

No alcohol will be paid for by Council.

**5.8 Incidental allowance**

Up to $20 per day may be paid by a Local Government to cover any incidental costs incurred by Councillors required to travel, and who are away from home overnight, for official Council business.

## 6.0 ADDITIONAL EXPENSES FOR MAYOR

**6.1 Hospitality**

Local Governments may reimburse mayors up to $1,000 per annum for hospitality expenses deemed necessary in the conduct of Council business.

## 7.0 PROVISION OF FACILITIES

All facilities provided to Councillors remain the property of Council and must be returned to Council when a Councillor’s term expires.

**7.1 Private use of Council owned facilities**

Based on the principle that no private benefit is to be gainedthe facilities provided to Councillors by PASC are to be used only for Council business unless prior approval has been granted by resolution of Council.

The Council resolution authorising private use of Council owned facilities will set out the terms under which the Councillor will reimburse Council for the percentage of private use. This would apply when Councillors have private use of Council owned motor vehicles and /or mobile telecommunication devices.

### 8.0 FACILITIES CATEGORIES

**8.1 Administrative tools**

Administrative tools should be provided to Councillors as required to assist Councillors in their role.

Administrative tools include:

* Office space and meeting rooms;
* Computers;
* Stationery;
* Access to photocopiers;
* Printers;
* Facsimile machines;
* Publications;
* Use of Council landline telephones and internet access in Council offices.

Secretarial support may also be provided for Mayors and Councillors.

Council may provide a Councillor with home office equipment including computer, internet access if necessary.

**8.2 Maintenance costs of Council owned equipment**

Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and reasonable wear and tear costs of Council-owned equipment that is supplied to Councillors for official business use. This includes the replacement of any facilities which fall under Council’s asset replacement program.

**8.3 Name Badge and Safety equipment for Councillors**

A Local Government may provide Councillors with:

* A name badge
* The necessary safety equipment for use on official business e.g. safety helmet /boots.

**8.4 Use of Council vehicles on Council business**

Councillors may have access to a Council vehicle for official business. Fuel for a Council owned vehicle used for official Council business will be provided or paid for by Council.

**8.5 Car parking amenities**

Councils are to provide Councillors with:

• Car parking at the Local Government office premises; and /or

* Reimbursement of parking costs paid by Councillors while attending to official Council business.

**8.6 Private use of vehicles**

Private use of Council owned vehicles is permitted if prior approval has been granted by resolution of Council. Council will, in its resolution authorise private use, set out the terms for the Councillor to reimburse Council for the private use.

**8.7 Private use of vehicles - Mayor**

The Mayor is in charge of a fully paid vehicle as part of his salary package.

**8.8 Telecommunication needs – mobile devices**

Mobile phones will be made available to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to the value of $100 per month. Each month on the review of the phone account any private calls over $100 maybe recovered from user.

**8.9 Insurance cover**

A Local Government will indemnify or insure Councillors in the event of injury sustained while discharging their civic duties. The Local Government will pay the excess for injury claims made by a Councillor resulting from conducting official Council business.

## **REVIEW TRIGGERS**

This Policy is reviewed internally for applicability, continuing effect and consistency with related documents and other legislative provisions when any of the following occurs:

1. The related documents are amended.
2. The related documents are replaced by new documents.
3. Amendments which affect the allowable scope and effect of a Policy of this nature are made to the head of power.
4. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by a resolution of Council.

Notwithstanding the above, this Policy is to be reviewed annually for relevance and to ensure that its effectiveness is maintained.

## QUESTIONS

If a workplace participant is unsure about any matter covered by this Policy, a workplace participant should seek the assistance of CEO.

## VARIATIONS

PASC reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

## ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

* Councillor Conduct Policy

## POLICY VERSION AND REVISION INFORMATION

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| Policy Authorised by: Edward Natera  Title: CEO | Original issue: 1/03/2012 |
| Policy Maintained by: Catherine Kaehne  Title: Governance and Ad min Manager | Current version: 23/08/2015 |
|  | Review date: 23/08/2016 |