

Council Policy – Elected Member and Chief Executive Officer Attendance at Events

Responsible Directorate	Corporate Services
Responsible Business Unit/s	Governance
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance
Affected Business Unit/s	Governance Office of the Chief Executive Officer

Objective

To address attendance at any events, including concerts, functions, or sporting events, whether free of charge, part of a sponsorship agreement, or paid by the local government and to provide transparency about the attendance at events of elected members and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Shire of Ashburton (the Shire).

Scope

This policy applies to all elected members and the CEO of the Shire.

Policy Statement

Elected members and the CEO occasionally receive tickets or invitations to attend events to represent the Shire to fulfil their leadership roles in the community. The event may be a paid event, or a ticket/invitation may be gifted in kind, or indeed it may be to a free/open invitation event for the community in general.

Attendance at an event in accordance with this policy will exclude the recipient from the requirement to disclose a potential conflict of interest if the ticket is a gift from a donor and the value of the donation or discount is valued over \$300 and the donor has a matter before Council.

Any gift of a free or discounted ticket or attendance received that is \$300 or less (either one gift or cumulative over 12 months from the same donor) also does not need to be disclosed as an interest.

All values quoted in this policy are exclusive of GST where relevant.

If an elected member receives a gifted or discounted ticket in their name, in their role as an elected member, of \$300 or greater value, they are still required to comply with normal gift disclosure requirements.

An event does not include training, which is dealt with via Council Policy – Elected Member Continuing Professional Development.

Attendance at an event by an elected member or the CEO not contemplated by this policy shall be determined by the Council.

Pre-approved events

To meet the policy requirements, tickets and invitations to events must be received by the Shire (as opposed to in the name of a specific person in their role with the Shire).

Individual tickets and associated hospitality value over \$1,000 (inclusive of travel if relevant) provided to the Shire, elected member or the CEO are to be referred to Council for determination.

Council approves attendance at the following events by elected members and the CEO:

- Advocacy or lobbying of Members of Parliament or Ministerial briefings,
- Any free event held within the Shire,
- Events run by ALGA, WALGA, LGIS or major professional bodies associated with local government at a local, state, and federal level and Local, State or Federal Government or Government Agency or Department,
- Meetings or events hosted by clubs, organisations, schools or Not for Profit Organisations within the Shire or District to which the elected member or CEO has been officially invited,
- Shire hosted, run or sponsored ceremonies, tournaments, functions and events,
- Community art exhibitions within the Shire or District,
- Cultural events/festivals within the Shire or District,
- Opening or launch of an event or facility within the Shire or District,
- Recognition of service events within the Shire or District,
- Returned and Services League of Australia events within the Shire or District,
- Meetings or events hosted by the Shire State Agreement Strategic Partners (Rio Tinto Iron Ore and Chevron Australia Pty Ltd), and
- Where elected member or CEO representation has been formally requested.

Elected members and the CEO are entitled to attend a pre-approved event. If there are more elected members wishing to attend the event than free or discounted tickets provided, the Shire President shall allocate the tickets.

Approval process

Where an invitation is received to an event that is not pre-approved, it may be submitted for approval prior to the event as follows:

- Events for the Shire President may be approved by the Deputy Shire President.

- Events for elected members may be approved by the Shire President.
- Events for the CEO may be approved by the Shire President.

Considerations for approval of the event includes any justification provided by the applicant when the event is submitted for approval, the benefit to the Shire of the person attending, alignment to the Shire's Strategic Objectives and the number of Shire representatives already approved to attend.

Where an elected member or the CEO attends a pre-approved event or has an event approved through this process and there is a fee associated with the event, including for attendance of a partner, then the cost of the event, together with reasonable cost of accommodation and travel, if required, may be authorised for payment by the CEO from the Shire's relevant budget line.

Other matters

Any event that is not pre-approved above, is not submitted through an approval process as detailed herein or is received personally is considered a non-approved event and must be submitted to the Council for determination, except under the following circumstances:

- The event is a free event to the public.
- The event is ticketed and the elected member or CEO pays the full ticketed price and does not seek reimbursement.

Conferences

Expenses related to the attendance at a conference shall be dealt with in accordance with Council Policy – Elected Member Continuing Professional Development.

Dispute resolution

All disputes regarding the approval of attendance at events by Councillors and the CEO are to be determined by the Shire President.

Disputes regarding the approval of attendance at events by the Shire President shall be determined by the CEO.

Protocols

Formal duties

Where Council representation is required (for formal duties) at an event, the following protocols apply:

1. The Shire President is the principal representative of the Council and will be invited to attend in the first instance.
2. Where the Shire President is unable to attend, the Deputy Shire President will be invited to attend.

3. Where the Deputy Shire President is unable to attend, the Shire President in consultation with the Deputy Shire President, will nominate another elected member to represent the Council.

Invitations from outside organisations

Organisations that desire attendance at an event by a particular person(s), such as the Shire President, Deputy Shire President, Councillor or the CEO, should clearly indicate that on the offer, together with what is expected of that individual, should they be available, and whether the invite/offer or ticket is transferable to another Shire representative.

Open invitations

Free or discounted invitations/offers or tickets that are provided to the Shire without denotation as to who they are for, are provided to the CEO and attendance determined by the CEO, in liaison with the Shire President, based on relative benefit to the organisation in attending the event, the overall cost in attending the event, inclusive of travel or accommodation, availability of representatives, and the expected role of the relevant elected member.

Forms and templates

The 'Gifts Register Report' Form is required to be completed and lodged within 10 days if a gift of a ticket or attendance is made to the recipient for a concert, conference, function, or sporting event to them in their name, due to or as part of their role with the Shire, as follows:

- If the gift is provided to the elected member and the discount or free value is over \$300, with the CEO, or
- If the gift is provided to the CEO and the discount or free value is over \$300, with the Shire President.

Definitions

District means the Pilbara Region of Western Australia and includes the local government areas of Karratha, Port Hedland, East Pilbara, Meekatharra, Upper Gascoyne, Carnarvon, and Exmouth.

Elected member includes the Shire President and all Councillors.

Event is as defined in section 5.90A(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Gift means a single gift or cumulative gifts within any rolling 12-month period and is not limited to either calendar or financial year.

Relevant policies/documents

Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates
Council Policy – Elected Member Continuing Professional Development

Relevant legislation/local laws

Section 5.90A of the *Local Government Act 1995*

Office use only				
Relevant delegations	Nil			
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Reviewed/modified	Date		Resolution #	
Next review due	Date	2024		