



GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

**COUNCILLOR
RESOURCES AND
FACILITIES POLICY**

Effective: 23 July 2024



COUNCILLOR RESOURCES AND FACILITIES POLICY

Version:	2
Business Unit:	Corporate Governance
Responsible Officer:	Manager Corporate Governance
Adopted By:	Council on 23 July 2024
Next Review:	23 July 2028

1. PURPOSE

Section 42 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) ensures that the Mayor and Councillors are provided with the tools, services and facilities reasonably necessary to enable them to effectively perform their role.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to ensure that the Mayor and Councillors are provided with reasonably necessary resources and facilities to effectively perform their duties.

This policy ensures that Council's provision of resources and facilities are consistent with and in accordance with the Act and its Regulations.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Councillors of Greater Shepparton City Council including the Mayor.

4. DEFINITIONS

Reference term	Definition
Council	Greater Shepparton City Council
Councillor	A person who holds the office of member of Council
Eligible Council Business	<p>Any function or action which directly relates to the role of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor, as defined in Sections 18, 21 and 28 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act).</p> <p>This may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance at meetings, including Council Meetings, Briefings or Committee Meetings• Professional Development opportunities, as defined in the Councillor Expense Policy• Event representation on behalf of Council.
Event Representation	A conference, seminar, forum, delegation or similar event where the Councillor in attendance is representing Council, and the cost of attendance is funded by Council.
Hospitality	Refreshments, finger food or a meal of a reasonable and appropriate standard, not including alcohol, except where exemptions are made in this policy.
Refreshments	Tea, Coffee, non-alcoholic beverages, and a light meal considered suitable for morning tea

5. POLICY

The policy outlines the range of resources and facilities provided to Councillors to enable them to effectively perform their role.

This policy is not intended to prescribe every possible situation that may arise. Should a situation arise that is not adequately covered by this policy, the matter will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for determination.

5.1 Transport

5.1.1 Mayoral Vehicle

The Mayor will be provided with a Council-maintained vehicle for official council purposes which includes private use, in accordance with the following conditions:

- The Mayors partner or children are permitted to drive the Mayoral vehicle, provided they hold a current drivers licence and the Mayor is in the vehicle at the time of travel.
- A fuel card will be issued which can be used to purchase fuel for the Mayoral vehicle at selected stations. This card cannot be used to purchase fuel for any other vehicle, regardless of whether the Mayor is a passenger or driver of that vehicle.
- Maintenance and services of the Mayoral vehicle will be coordinated by Councils Fleet department. The Mayor is responsible for notifying the Executive Assistant when a service or any form of maintenance is required.
- The Mayor is responsible for keeping the vehicle in a clean and tidy manner. Smoking and vaping are strictly prohibited in any Council vehicle. If the car is not maintained in an acceptable standard, the Mayor may be held personally responsible for the cost of detailing the vehicle.
- The Mayor is personally responsible for the payment of any parking / driver related offences and infringements issued to the Mayoral Vehicle registration, unless proof can be provided that the Mayor was not the driver at the time.
- The Mayoral vehicle is strictly prohibited from use for any activities relating to electioneering. This includes, but is not limited to, the display of election material on the vehicle or any transportation which directly relates to campaign activities.

5.1.2 Access to a Council Pool Vehicle

A council vehicle will be provided, when availability permits, for a Councillor to attend eligible Council business including event representation.

Use of a council vehicle must be in accordance with Council's Fleet Operational Policy.

No vaping is permitted in any Council vehicle.

Should a pool vehicle not be available, Councillors may elect to utilise their own vehicle. The reimbursement rate to Councillors for the use of their personal vehicle when attending eligible business will be calculated at the rate set by the Australian Taxation Office (cents per km rate) per financial year.

5.1.3 Parking Permit

All Councillors may elect to be provided with one parking permit which is to be affixed to the windscreen of their primary vehicle. The vehicle registration is to be provided to the Council at the time the permit is issued.

This permit will enable Councillors to park in any standard parking bay within the municipality free of charge and park for longer than the time indicated on the parking sign, when performing eligible council business. The permit must not be used when other drivers are occupying the vehicle, unless the Councillor is also present.

This permit must be provided back to Council at the closing of nominations immediately prior to a General Election.

Note: this permit does not enable a Councillor to park in a disabled parking bay, loading zone or other statutory areas. A failure to clearly display the parking permit or meet these requirements may result in an infringement being issued.

5.2 Resources and Facilities for Mayor and Councillors

The following additional resources and facilities are provided to support Councillors performing their duties while undertaking Council business and discharging duties of civic office.

5.2.1 Office of the Mayor

The Office of the Mayor operates to provide those functions of the Council carried out by the Mayor. It is allocated a budget by Council on an annual basis to allow the Mayor to fulfil their civic role.

Council will provide the following facilities for the Office of the Mayor:

- Office suitably equipped with quality furniture and shelving, including a desk and meeting table.
- Mobile phone.
- Executive Assistant and other administrative support during normal office hours as required.

5.2.2 Building Access

Each Councillor will receive a swipe card allowing access to the Welsford Street Office, including the Councillor Suite and access to the Mayoral Office.

Councillor access to the Mayor's Office is limited to business hours only.

Councillors must not provide building access to any other individual through the use of their swipe card.

5.2.3 Councillor Suite

Councillors will have full access to a private suite which is to be utilised as a workspace.

The suite will contain basic refreshments, a lounge and dining area, and docking / charging stations for electronic devices. Each Councillor will also have a pigeon hole for the distribution of correspondence and the storage of personal belongings.

Access to the Councillor Suite will be strictly limited to the Mayor and Councillors, Executive, Governance staff, members of the emergency response team.

There may be circumstances where it is appropriate and permissible for a Councillor to be accompanied by another person/s, for example, a dependent in their care. This is subject to the person being supervised by the Councillor at all times and ensuring that the individuals presence does not interfere with any other Councillors use of the facility.

5.2.4 Insurance

Councillors are covered by the following Council insurance policies, while performing eligible Council business:

- Council's workers compensation insurance
- Councillors and Officers Liability Insurance (limitations apply)
- Travel insurance for interstate and international travel.

Council will pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any eligible claim made against a Councillor arising from the performance of Council business where any claim is accepted by Council's insurers, whether defended or not.

Council equipment provided to Councillors to assist in performing their role, is covered for damage or theft under Council's insurance policies.

Councillors are expected to exercise due care in protecting the equipment from damage or theft.

Councillors must notify the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as soon as possible after they become aware of a potential claim.

5.2.5 Administrative Assistance

Limited administration assistance will be made available to Councillors for work directly related to the performance of duties of eligible Council business.

All administrative assistance should be coordinated through the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillors and approved by the CEO.

5.2.6 Stationery

Upon request, Councillors will be provided with standard stationery held or obtained generally for organisational requirements.

No Greater Shepparton City Council letterhead will be provided.

5.2.7 Information and Communication Technology Expenses

Council will provide the Mayor and Councillors with fit for purpose electronic devices to enable the efficient performance of their duties.

Council will arrange for the installation and maintenance of relevant equipment and provide any associated products required for their operation.

Training is provided as part of a Councillor's induction on all equipment issued to Councillors. Any queries regarding the provision or maintenance of this equipment should be addressed to the Executive Assistant to Mayor and Councillors.

Accessories or services beyond the standard allocation will be considered through written request to the CEO. The additional cost of any accessories provided may be charged to the Councillor.

Council provides the Mayor and Councillors with these devices to aid in the reduction of the use of paper in the organisations transition to a paperless work environment and promotion of zero emission target.

5.2.7.1 Usage Requirements and Restrictions

Equipment

- the equipment must be used predominantly for the performance of Council business, however limited private usage of electronic devices is permitted.
- the phone number and any equipment provided to Councillors remain the property of Council.
- the equipment strictly cannot be used for electioneering purposes.
- Councillors must ensure the integrity and configuration of equipment provided is maintained at all times.
- Councillors must ensure the protection and safe keeping of all equipment issued.
- The terms and conditions which govern the provision and use of Council-provided equipment must be strictly adhered to.
- Use of Council devices, and connection to Council's computer network, internet or email will be in accordance with Council's Use of Information, Communication and Technology Systems Procedure, Information Security Policy and the Councillor Code of Conduct.

All internet usage and telephone and text log data may be monitored by Council to ensure compliance.

All documents contained in any Council-supplied electronic devices are the property of Council.

All devices are encrypted with an application to enable Council to remove all information from the device remotely and may be used in the event the usage requirements and restrictions are not adhered to.

International Travel

Should a Councillor request to take a Council device on International travel, they must notify the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillors (EA) of this intention prior to travel. The EA will liaise with the Technology and Business Transformation department to identify and implement appropriate measures to avoid excess data roaming charges.

Should the Councillor fail to notify the EA prior to travel, or fail to implement the measures recommended by the organisation, they will be personally liable to pay any usage costs incurred for the duration of the travel.

Damaged / Lost / Stolen Equipment

Upon written application and subject to CEO approval, a Councillor may receive one 'replacement device' at no personal cost in the event that the device is lost, stolen or damaged during the four year Council term.

Any further requests for replacement equipment will be at the Councillor's own expense.

Equipment that is faulty or experiencing technical difficulties will be assessed by the Technology and Business Transformation department. If the assessment confirms that the device is faulty and the problems do not relate to mistreatment, it will not be considered a 'replacement device' against that Councillor.

Return of Council Equipment

All equipment and stationary issued to the Mayor and each Councillor remains the property of the Council and must be returned to Council prior to Election Day without exception.

This process will be coordinated by the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillors.

It will be the responsibility of each Councillor to ensure that any personal data stored on a Council device has been transferred to their own personal device/s prior to the equipment being returned.

Should a Councillor be re-elected, the equipment will be returned to that Councillor, or new equipment will be issued, in accordance with this policy.

5.3 Meals and Refreshments

Councillors will be requested to complete a form outlining the Councillors' catering and Dietary Requirements at the commencement of their term of office.

Meals

Where Council meetings or Councillors Briefings are held at times which extend through normal meals times, Councillors will be provided with suitable meals served on the premises in accordance with Council's Catering Procedure.

Councillors will be notified of the meal arrangements for such meetings. Appropriate meals will be arranged by the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillors.

Refreshments

Councillors will have access to basic refreshment in the Councillor Suite.

5.4 Event Representation

A Councillor who is funded by Council to attend an event shall participate as a representative of Council, not as an individual.

Council will allocate funds during the budget process each year to enable Councillors to attend events on behalf of the Council. This will cover the costs of the registration fee, transport, meals, and accommodation for the duration of the event.

Accommodation shall be organised for approved Event Representation at the event location where possible, or a suitable alternative location close to the event venue.

Councillors wishing to make alternative accommodation arrangements will be responsible for all costs over and above those which would otherwise apply.

5.5 Attendance at Functions

Through the exercise of performing their duties, Councillors may get invited to social functions which require the payment of an attendance charge. It is predominantly the role of the Mayor to represent Council at these functions, with attendance costs being met by the Council. If another Councillor is requested to attend on behalf of the Mayor, or in addition to the Mayor, these attendance costs will also be met by the Council.

Individual Councillors who have not been officially invited to a function but, would also like to attend may choose to do so at their own cost.

Where a Councillor elects to have their partner to accompany them to a social function, it is up to the Councillor to request this through the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillors. Upon approval, it is up to Councillors to make arrangements for their partner to attend and all expenses relating to the partner will be met by the Councillor.

5.6 Limitations

In accordance with Council's Election Period Policy, Councillors must ensure that benefits contained within this Policy are not used as part of any election campaign.

6. RELATED POLICIES

- Council Media Policy
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Councillor Gift Policy
- Councillor Expenses Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Catering Policy
- Election Period Policy

7. RELATED LEGISLATION

- Local Government Act 2020
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2015
- Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014

8. REVIEW

The Manager Corporate Governance is to review the Councillor Resources and Facilities Policy every four years, within 12 months prior to a general election.

Suggested revisions are to be submitted to the Executive Leadership Team and Council for consideration.

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version #	Date Adopted	Date Effective
1.	18 August 2020	18 August 2020
2.	23 July 2024	23 July 2024