

COUNCIL POLICY

Councillor Resources, Support & Facilities	Adopted By Council:	18/10/11	
	Date/s Revised:	24/02/16	
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	Directorate:	<u>Executive</u> CEO	
	Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer	

CONTEXT

This policy applies to Councillors in relation to resources, support and facilities that will be provided and is a requirement under Section 42 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and excludes Council staff.

It is important that Councillors are provided with a range of resources to enable them to effectively carry out their role including Councillors that have a disability or are in a carer position (in accordance with Section 4 of the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*).

Section 42 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states:

Council must make available to the Mayor and the Councillors the resources and facilities reasonably necessary to enable them to effectively perform their role.

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the resources, support and facilities that will be provided to Councillors to effectively exercise their duties as an elected Councillor.

POLICY

The following resources, facilities and support will be provided to Councillors to assist in performing their official duties as an elected member.

1. Insurance

Councillors are covered under the following Council insurance policies on a 24 hour basis, while discharging their duties of office, including attendance at meetings of external bodies as the Council's representative.

- Public Liability
- Professional Indemnity
- Councillors and Officers Liability
- Personal Accident/Corporate Travel (accompanying partners are also covered)

Council will pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any claim made against a Councillor arising from Council business where any claim is accepted by the 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.

2. Administrative support for the Mayor and Councillors

Councillors should utilise the services of the Executive Assistant to the CEO, Mayor, & Councillors.

Administrative support will be made available, through the Executive Assistant to the CEO, Mayor, & Councillors, for the Mayor and Councillors to assist them with diary management and in responding to correspondence, enquiries and requests for service as part of their official duties as a Councillor. Councillors are now required by the Local Government Act 2020 to complete ongoing professional development training and will be notified of ~~relevant~~any third-party professional development and local government training opportunities as received by Council staff as well as having a professional development training plan prepared for them by officers.

Council business papers, mail and other Council information will be ~~couriered~~delivered to Councillors' place of residence (or agreed alternative) as required.

When Councillors wish to gain access to the executive services area and any other non-public areas of the Council Offices, the following procedure will apply:

- Customer service staff will:
 - (a) greet the Councillor in a courteous and professional manner;
 - (b) notify the office, either via email or the public address system, of their presence in the office (For Example "Councillor last name, is entering the office"); and
 - (c) allow access to the non-public area as soon as possible without the issuing of a Visitor Badge.
- In the case of an emergency, the office Fire Wardens will be responsible for the visiting Councillors' safety.

3. Office for Mayor and Councillors

Councillors will be provided with after hours electronic access to the Town Hall foyer and hall, and the Council office reception area, including meeting rooms.

Councillors can book meeting rooms owned and controlled by the Council for meetings, interviews and other functions where the primary purpose is to allow the Councillor to discharge their duty. The Councillor must be in attendance.

4. Vehicle for Mayor and Councillors

Council has a pool vehicle available which may be booked by Councillors to use for Council business.

The vehicle will be housed at the Council offices and will be fully maintained. When Councillors are not using the vehicle it may be used by staff members of the Council on a pool basis. Again the vehicle will only be used for travel directly related to duties of the officers.

Council does not accept any responsibility for traffic fines, including parking infringements and toll infringements. In the event of an infringement, and subsequent receipt of "Infringement Notice", the driver shall complete the driver identification form. Any fines that are incurred will be allocated to the driver of the vehicle at that time for prompt payment.

The vehicle has a log book which must be filled out by all users of the vehicle. The responsibility of the person using the vehicle is to ensure that they write down the starting mileage, time of day which the vehicle was picked up and then to record the final mileage at the end of the trip and the time at which the vehicle has been returned to the Council premises. On occasions where Councillors need to use the vehicle early in the morning or late into the evening, it is possible to arrange for the vehicle to be garaged overnight at the premises of the Councillor.

The Mayor will have priority over the use of this vehicle and Councillors will have priority over staff in regards to the use of this vehicle. The priority of Councillors other than the Mayor will be on the basis of first application to use the vehicle.

Where there is conflicting demand for the vehicle it is possible that another vehicle may be available and every endeavour will be made to ensure that where possible that Councillors do not have to use their own vehicles.

5. Information Communication Technology

All Councillors will be provided with the following equipment for the purpose of conducting Council related business only:

- One laptop/notepad computer
- One mobile phone with minimum 1GB data plan; and
- Relevant computer software, including full suite of Office 365⁹ programs and tools

Council will arrange installation and pay all connection fees, service charges and call charges related to Council business.

Personal calls/texts and data usage should be minimised and where significant personal use has occurred, costs must be reimbursed to Council. Councillors will be supplied with a Borough of Queenscliffe email address. This email address will be promoted on Council's website and will appear on Councillors' business cards.

Councillors must adhere to the standard operating procedures for security, maintenance and use of equipment, which may be amended or changed from time to time.

The Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, shall maintain a register of all equipment provided to Councillors for Council business. All equipment remains the property of the Council and must be returned at the end of a Councillor's term of office or upon retirement/resignation of the Councillor.

6. Stationery

Councillors will have the same access as staff to the Council stationery for stationery requirements related to Council business. The stationery may include, but not necessarily be limited to paper, writing implements, diaries, writing pads/books, interview pads, ~~USB devices~~, envelopes and the like. Corporate letterhead will not be supplied to Councillors. All correspondence to be sent using letterhead must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

All Councillors will be supplied with corporate business cards upon request from the Councillor.

Council stationery may only be used for carrying out duties as a Councillor. Requests for stationery shall be made to the Executive Assistant to the CEO, Mayor, & Councillors. All resources remain the property of the Council and must be returned at the end of a Councillor's term of office or upon retirement/resignation of the Councillor.

7. Access to printer/copier

Councillors will have access to the Council's printer and photocopier, located in the non-public area of the Council Offices, for needs related to Council business.

8. Website development as part of Council website

The Borough of Queenscliffe website at www.queenscliffe.vic.gov.au features a 'Council' section that includes a profile of each Councillor with their photograph and contact details.

9. Catering at Meetings

Councillors will be provided with a meal when attending scheduled formal and informal meetings that commence prior to and continue over recognised mealtimes.

10. Election Campaigning

The use of Council resources is prohibited for the purpose of election campaigning.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This policy will be reviewed on a continuous basis, but as a minimum every ~~3~~four years.

OTHER REFERENCES

Local Government Act 2020

Council policy CP021 Election Caretaker Period

Council policy CP005 Councillor Code of Conduct

Council policy CP016 Reimbursement for Expenses of Councillors & Member of Council Committees

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