

## Draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy — Summary of main changes

Clause	Change
General expenses (cls 5.1–5.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend cl 5.2 to allow the General Manager, in extenuating circumstances—and in consultation with the Executive Manager, Governance—to approve the payment of expenses or provide facilities not explicitly addressed in the policy. The aim of this change is to address any inequity that could arise from a strict application of the policy. It does not allow the payment of general expenses.</li> </ul>
Long-distance travel (cls 6.5–6.12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce budget from \$12,000 to \$2,000 per year. This expense is rarely incurred and is less relevant with the increased use of video conferencing. In addition, the cost of long-distance travel to conferences is covered by the conference budget.</li> </ul>
Professional development (cls 6.24–6.26 and appendix 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broaden definition as follows:  ‘Includes a seminar, conference, training course, program, event, or other education/development opportunity relevant to the role of a Councillor or the Mayor that may further their professional development, as well as membership of professional bodies.’</li> <li>Add a statement of commitment to the ongoing professional development of Councillors, as recommended by the OLG’s Councillor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines.</li> </ul>
Conferences (cls 6.29–6.32)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend definition to clarify that this expense is for forums where Councillors are attending on behalf of Council, e.g. the Local Government NSW Annual Conference and the National General Assembly of Local Government (i.e. not professional development).</li> <li>Increase budget from \$15,000 to \$30,000 per year, as Councillors are now regularly attending the National General Assembly of Local Government.</li> </ul>
ICT equipment (cls 6.33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broaden definition as follows:  ‘including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Computers (desktops/laptops) and tablets.</li> <li>Printers and scanners.</li> <li>Mobile phones.</li> <li>Accessories, e.g. keyboards, mice, hard drives, headphones, cases.</li> <li>Maintenance, support and insurance of ICT equipment.</li> <li>Any other ICT equipment approved by the General Manager in consultation with the Executive Manager, Governance.’</li> </ul> </li> <li>Move home office equipment (e.g. desks, chairs, filing cabinets) to home office clause/budget.</li> </ul>
ICT usage (cls 6.33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broaden definition as follows:  ‘including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone plans.</li> <li>Internet/data plans.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SIM cards.</li> <li>○ Software and software subscriptions.</li> <li>○ Cloud storage.</li> <li>○ Newspaper subscriptions (digital and/or hard copy).'</li> </ul>
Carer expenses (cls 6.36–6.41)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For budgeting purposes only and to reflect past expenditure, reduce budget from \$2,000 per Councillor per year (\$24,000) to \$12,000 in total per year for all Councillors. Under the policy, Councillors can claim \$40 per hour in carer expenses to attend official business. There is currently no cap, and therefore an arbitrary allowance of \$2,000 per year is allocated per Councillor. Past expenditure across all Councillors has been low, and therefore a reduced, 'pooled' and capped amount is recommended. There is no change to the hourly rate. Officers will monitor spend against this budget and increase it in future years if required.</li> </ul>
Home office (cl 6.42)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broaden definition as follows:   'including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stationery.</li> <li>○ Printer ink cartridges.</li> <li>○ Desks and chairs.</li> <li>○ Filing cabinets.'</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increase budget from \$1,200 to \$1,800 per year to address past shortfalls.</li> <li>• Allow the second year's allowance to be spent in the first 12 months of a term to account for home office equipment now being covered by this clause.</li> </ul>
Facilities (cls 9.1–9.7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combine Resident Parking Permit (Councillor) and Beach Parking Permit into a single Councillor Parking Permit to reflect current practice.</li> </ul>
Approval, payment and reimbursement arrangements (s 11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add clause recommending that Councillors consult the IT department before purchasing ICT equipment to achieve best value for money and to ensure that adequate security, maintenance and insurance are provided. Similarly, under cl 11.5, allow Council to directly pay the cost of ICT equipment (with the amount deducted from the relevant Councillor expenses budget). These changes address an outstanding internal audit recommendation.</li> <li>• Add new clauses (11.16–11.19) to clarify the allocation of budgets, including in the first and final years of a term.</li> <li>• No change to the time frame for reimbursement (six months) is proposed based on past Councillor feedback, noting that the OLG template and an outstanding internal audit recommendation recommend three months.</li> </ul>