

POLICY NAME: **Entertainment and Hospitality Policy**

POLICY NUMBER: **CG013**

ADOPTED: **19 March 2025**

POLICY OWNER **Chief Executive Officer**

PURPOSE: To establish a framework for managing expenditure on entertainment and hospitality for councillors, employees and visitors.

1 SCOPE

This policy sets out the requirements for expenditure on entertainment and hospitality. For the purposes of this policy the following will be regarded as entertainment or hospitality:

- a) The provision of food or beverages;
- b) The provision of a performance; and
- c) Attendance at a function

Entertainment and hospitality expenditure may relate to:

- a) Councillors;
- b) Council employees; and
- c) Members of the public, suppliers or customers or other visitors to the Council.

2 POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Policy is to establish when expenditure for entertainment and hospitality may be reasonably and appropriately incurred by Council..

3 HEAD OF POWER

Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)

Local Government Regulation 2012 (Qld)

Fringe Benefits Assessment Act 1986 (Cth)

4 POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Background

Section 196 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* provides:

1. The local government must prepare and adopt a policy about the local government's spending on entertainment or hospitality (an entertainment and hospitality policy).
2. The local government may spend money on entertainment or hospitality only in a way that is consistent with the local government's entertainment and hospitality policy.

Examples of appropriate and reasonable entertainment or hospitality expenditure include:

- a) entertaining members of the public in order to promote a local government project;
- b) providing food or beverages to a person who is visiting the local government in an official capacity;
- c) providing food or beverages for a conference, course, meeting, seminar, workshop or another forum that is held by the local government for its councillors, local government employees or other persons; and
- d) paying for a councillor or local government employee to attend a function as part of the councillor's or employee's official duties or obligations as a councillor or local government employee.

4.2 Overall considerations

- a) Entertainment and hospitality expenditure incurred must be in the public interest or necessary to facilitate Council business.
- b) The amount spent on entertainment and hospitality must be reasonable having regard to the benefit to the Council or the public.
- c) Entertainment and hospitality expenditure must be procured in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.
- d) Entertainment and hospitality expenditure which is deemed to be not reasonable or of a private nature, must be repaid to Council by the person incurring the expenditure.
- e) Entertainment and hospitality expenses may only be charged to a corporate credit card in accordance with Council's Credit Card Policy.

4.3 Alcohol

Council is not liable for the cost of alcoholic drinks at a function or event except:

- a) when alcohol is provided as inclusive of the fee for or is integral to attending a function, meeting or event
- b) for the reasonable cost of drinks with a meal as determined by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or
- c) when specifically approved by the Mayor or CEO.

Alcohol may only be provided at a Council organised function or event if it has been approved in advance by the Mayor or CEO.

4.4 Training courses, meetings, events and functions

Council may pay the cost for a councillor or employee to attend an event or function as a Council representative including the cost of entertainment, meals and drinks.

Council may provide sustenance for Council training courses, meetings, events or functions which extend over a normal meal period. Such refreshments are to be reasonable in relation to the purpose and nature of the event and the expected attendees.

Council may provide reasonable entertainment at public or Council functions at no cost to councillors or employees if it has been approved in advance by the Mayor or CEO.

4.5 Acceptable Entertainment and/or Hospitality Expenditure

The following are examples of expenditure which would be considered appropriate:

1. Civic and Public Functions

A service or function provided by Council for hosting and entertaining of:

- a) invited members of the public for promoting an initiative or project of Council; and
- b) government officials, dignitaries, or elected politicians from all levels of government visiting the local government area in an official capacity.

Included are citizenship ceremonies, community engagement activities, volunteers functions, hosting prospective senior staff, developers and investors, community organisations, media, and other significant community events.

2. Conference, Functions, Workshops, Meetings and Seminars

Approved attendance at a conference, function, course, meeting, seminar, workshop, or another forum that is:

- a) held by Council for its Councillors, employees, or other persons; or
- b) paid for a Councillor or Officer to attend a function as part of their official duties or obligations.

3. Sanctioned Social Functions

Approved social functions hosted by Council for its Councillors or employees. Included are annual Christmas parties and employer reward and recognition presentations for provision of services to the public, retirement functions, and functions in honour of a long-standing employee or elected member.

4.6 Inappropriate Entertainment and/or Hospitality Expenditure

Examples of inappropriate and unreasonable expenditure for entertainment and hospitality includes, but is not limited to:

- a) paying tips or gratuities;
- b) dinners/functions at the private residence of a Councillor or employee;
- c) stocking of alcohol (except where approved by the Mayor or CEO); and
- d) mini bar expenses.

4.7 Guiding Principles for Entertainment and Hospitality Expenditure

The following guiding principles apply for entertainment and hospitality expenditure:

- a) Councillors and employees incurring expenditure must be able to identify the benefit to the community and how the expenditure contributes to promoting Council's policy and strategic outcomes (that is, the expenditure must be justifiable).
- b) Approval from the relevant authorised officer should be sought before expenditure is incurred. Where this is not practical, reimbursement may be sought subject to the guiding principles of this policy.
- c) Private expenditure must not be paid by Council. Specific examples of private expenditure include tips or gratuities, paid functions at a private residence and excessive food and drink costs. Expenditure incurred by Council which is identified as being not reasonable and appropriate must be repaid to Council within ten (10) working days of being paid.
- d) Expenditure is to be approved by a Council employee who has the appropriate financial delegation and the expenditure is within budget for the financial year. In

granting approval for expenditure, the relevant authorised officer must ensure that such expenditure complies with the principles of this policy.

- e) Entertainment and hospitality for Council visitors, guests, and benefactors will typically take the form of meals and should be undertaken involving the minimum number of Councillors and employees who will be able to advance Council business by their attendance.
- f) The consumption of alcohol has social connotations and its provision has characteristics of entertainment. As representatives of Council, employees may consume alcohol only in moderation for the purposes of hospitality. Employees must be able to perform their duties in a safe manner in accordance with Council policy and the law.
- g) Purchases of alcohol on behalf of Council must be authorised by the CEO prior to the purchase being made.
- h) Spouse/partner entertainment, accommodation and hospitality costs will be met by Council in instances where the spouse/partner of a Councillor or staff member is invited by the Council or the CEO to attend an approved function.
- i) A corporate credit card may only be used to pay for entertainment and hospitality expenditure where such expenditure is consistent with this policy and payment by purchase order is not appropriate or possible.
- j) Any expenditure must comply with legal, financial, audit, and ethical requirements.

5 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

HR005 – Code of Conduct Policy