



An **ORDINARY MEETING** of the Douglas Shire Council will be held on **TUESDAY 28 JANUARY 2014** at **10.00a.m.** at the Council Chambers, 64-66 Front Street, Mossman, and the attendance of each Councillor is requested.

### **AGENDA**

#### **'ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY'**

*'I would like to acknowledge the Kuku Yalanji people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land. I would also like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians who are present'.*

1. *Attendance & Apologies.*
2. *Conflict of Interest/Material Personal Interest.*
3. *Mayoral Minutes*
4. *Confirmation of Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on **Tuesday 14 January 2014***
5. *Agenda Items as Listed.*
6. *General Business.*
7. *Closed Session*
  - *Agenda Items.*
8. *Consideration of matters discussed in Closed Session.*

**NEXT MEETING –18 FEBRUARY 2014**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Jeff Tate".

Jeff Tate  
**ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL**

**ORDINARY MEETING**

**TUESDAY 28 JANUARY 2014**

**10.00 A.M.**

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| <b>28 JANUARY 2014</b>          |          |

EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Darryl Crees – General Manager Corporate Services

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Council adopt the amended Expenses Reimbursement Policy for Elected Representatives.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Council recently discussed the possibility of amending the Expenses Reimbursement Policy for Elected Representatives to provide greater flexibility in the approval process in relation to payment for, or reimbursement of, the expenses involved in attending conferences, workshops and training courses.

This report proposes the addition of expense thresholds into the policy to achieve the required flexibility.

**BACKGROUND:**

At the Ordinary meeting of Council held on 14 January 2014 discussions were held regarding the possibility of amending the conferences, workshops and training courses portion of Section A of the Expenses Reimbursement Policy for Elected Representatives to provide greater flexibility in the approval process by establishing criteria where approval, other than by Council resolution, could be provided in relation to payment for, or reimbursement of, the expenses involved.

To achieve this, it is suggested that the policy be amended to include the following expense thresholds:

- the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer can provide approval for attendance by Councillors where the expenditure is not expected to exceed \$800 (for any one attendance); and
- the Chief Executive Officer can provide approval for attendance by the Mayor where the expenditure is not expected to exceed \$2,000 (for any one attendance).

Beyond these thresholds the existing requirement for a Council resolution would still apply.

These thresholds are based upon an estimation of travel and accommodation costs, meals, taxi/transport costs and registration fees. The estimation assumes that in most instances attendance will be within reasonable proximity of Douglas, however there will be occasions where the Mayor will be required to travel greater distances, for example to Brisbane.

**PROPOSAL:**

That the Expenses Reimbursement Policy for Elected Representatives be amended to include expense thresholds up to which approval can be granted in relation to payment for, or reimbursement of, the expenses involved in attending conferences, workshops and training courses. Payment for, or reimbursement of, expenses above these thresholds would still require approval via a Council resolution.

**FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

Estimated costs to be incurred by Council in relation to this policy have been included in the 2013/14 budget.

**RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:**

By adopting the amended Expenses Reimbursement Policy for Elected Representatives Council is still legislatively compliant therefore mitigating reputational risk. In addition, the requirement under the *Local Government Regulation 2012* for Council to publish the policy on its website provides transparency to Councillor related expenses.

**INTERNAL/EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:**

Key management staff were consulted in the drafting of the proposed amendments to this policy.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Attachment 1** – Expenses Reimbursement Policy for Elected Representatives (with proposed amendments).

**ATTACHMENT 1****DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL****NO.****General Policy****EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES**

**Intent** To clarify the extent of expense reimbursement and facilities provided to Councillors.

**Scope** This policy applies to all Councillors.

**PROVISIONS****1. REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES**

In accordance with section 249 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Council must prepare and adopt by resolution an Expenses Reimbursement Policy.

This policy must provide for:

- a. Payment of reasonable expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by Councillors discharging their duties and responsibilities as Councillors
- b. Provision of facilities to the Councillors for that purpose

**2. SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT AND FACILITIES****SECTION A EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT**

Councillors are eligible for the following:

- Upon receipt of a claim with relevant documentation, a maximum amount of \$600 per annum will be reimbursed to Councillors for home communication (including internet) expenditure. Claims must be submitted in the financial year to which the expenditure relates.
- If a Councillor uses a private vehicle for official Council business, reimbursement may be claimed based on log book substantiation of the relevance of the travel to Council. The log book detailing the use must be submitted within one (1) month of use and reimbursement is to occur within (3) months of use. Official Council business is deemed to be:
  - Travel to Council meetings and/or workshops;
  - Travel to attend meetings of external bodies/community groups to which the Councillor is the Council appointed representative;
  - Travel to conferences or training courses when Council has resolved the relevant Councillor attend.
- Where Councillors obtain approval to attend conferences, workshops or training courses, Council will cover the following expenses:
  - Registration fees;
  - Accommodation including breakfast (where appropriate);
  - Economy airfares (any upgrades will be at Councillor's own expense);
  - Reasonable meal expenditure (will only be reimbursed upon presentation of receipts/tax invoices);
  - Reasonable taxi fares or public transport costs (will only be reimbursed upon presentation of receipts/tax invoices)

Such approval can be provided as follows:

- a. The Mayor and Chief Executive Officer can provide approval for attendance by Councillors where the expenditure is not expected to exceed \$800 (for any one attendance)
- b. The Chief Executive Officer can provide approval for attendance by the Mayor where the expenditure is not expected to exceed \$2,000 (for any one attendance)
- c. By Council resolution for all other attendances.

## **SECTION B PROVISION OF FACILITIES**

Councillors will be provided with the following facilities and support:

Mayor:

- Office accommodation with Administration Support.
- Fully maintained vehicle for use in Council duties with full and unrestricted private use. Vehicle is to have a favourable Green Star Rating and purchase price is not to exceed \$40,000.

Deputy Mayor and other Councillors:

- Basic administration support to assist with conferences, workshops or training attendance, including travel and accommodation arrangements.

Each Councillor will be provided with a single standard laptop and mobile telephone to be used for Council purposes. Each laptop will be provided with appropriate hardware and software applicable to enable Councillors to perform their role.

Support for the Council supplied laptops and mobile telephones will be supplied by Council's Information Technology Unit during standard business hours.



### **Policy Requirements:**

**That this policy remains in force for a period of no longer than six (6) months after the next local government quadrennial election.**

**General Manager Responsible for Review:            General Manager Corporate Services**

**ORIGINALLY ADOPTED:**

**CURRENT ADOPTION:**

**DUE FOR REVISION:** September 2016

**REVOKED/SUPERSEDED:**

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING****28 JANUARY 2014****2****VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCIES UPDATE****Jeff Tate, Acting Chief Executive Officer:****RECOMMENDATION:****That the report be noted.**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Thirteen of the 18 transferred employees from Cairns Regional Council who were offered voluntary redundancies have accepted them. The process set out in the Certified Agreement is being followed to determine the future of the remaining five employees.

Contact has been made with the office of Minister Crisafulli but to date there has been no direct discussion with him regarding the potential for him to assist in facilitating redundancies.

**BACKGROUND:**

Council resolved on 3 January 2014 to offer voluntary redundancies to 18 employees transferred from Cairns Regional Council (CRC) and to seek discussions with The Hon David Crisafulli MP, Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience regarding the potential for him to assist in facilitating the redundancies.

At the time of writing this report 13 of the employees have accepted the voluntary redundancies.

The process to consider the future of the remaining five employees with the organisation has begun in accordance with the *Cairns Regional Council Certified Agreement 2012* and they have been invited to interviews to clarify their skillsets and to consider options for retraining. Those interviews will be conducted by a consultant engaged for that purpose. Once the interviews have been concluded we will attempt to place the employees in any vacancies that may be available and to pursue relevant training if required.

Contact has been made with the Minister's office but at this stage no conversation has taken place with him.

**PROPOSAL:**

The proposal is for the report to be noted.

**FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

The cost of employing the five remaining be a de-amalgamation cost until such time as they are either placed in a vacant position in the organisation or leave.

**RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:**

As indicated in the previous report on this matter there are some complexities between various legal instruments. To reduce the associated risks we are working closely with our legal advisors.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Nil.



**CLOSED  
SESSION**

**DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL**

**ORDINARY MEETING**

**TUESDAY 28 JANUARY 2014**

**CLOSED SESSION**

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