EM05: Member Allowances, Expenses and Benefits

Policy Title	Member Allowances, Expenses and Benefits	**Policy Number**	EM05
Status	Reviewed and Approved	**Category**	Administrative
Endorsement Date	4th August 2026	**Resolution**	
Version	3.0		

Background

Belyuen Community Government Council is committed to:

- Members should be provided with support that is necessary or expedient to the performance or discharge of their official functions and duties;
- Members should not be out-of-pocket because of performing and discharging their official Council functions and duties; and
- All facilities, services and support provided to the Members, other than those specifically provided to the position of Mayor will be available to all members equally.

This Policy clarifies the expenses to be paid to members, including travel, and defines approved Council activities. The Policy also identifies what allowances are payable and the benefits members may receive.

Each allowance is determined by the Council with conditions and maximum levels contained in the Ministerial Guidelines and applicable legislation.

Council will provide all allowances in a manner that adheres to the Local Government Act 2019 and its statutory instruments.

Legislative References

- Section 71 of the *Local Government Act* (Allowances and Expenses)
- Section 109 of the *Local Government Act* (Expenses and benefits)
- *Guideline 2* and the *General Instruction No. 2* (Allowances for council members)

Scope

This policy applies to all Council members and members of Council committees.

Policy

Approved Council Activities

The following activities are automatically approved under this policy. Other activities may be authorized, from time to time, subject to a separate resolution by the Council.

- Council and Council Committee meetings (of which they are member or to which they are invited) including Special Meetings and workshops
- Working Groups such as those established to promote cooperation between Councils
- LGANT meetings and LGANT Executive Committee meetings
- Professional Development activities arranged by the Council
- Conferences arranged by the Council
- Attendance at official events arranged by Council

Approval prior to attendance at training courses, conferences and civic events is required to ensure the costs associated with attendance at these events can be paid under this policy.

Allowances

The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Elected Members will be paid 100% of the maximum amount of base allowance as outlined in *Guideline 2: allowances for council members - Table 2* as published by the Department of Local Government.

Council may at any time, by resolution, reduce the number of allowances paid to Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Elected Members.

Elected Member allowance rates are set annually by the Remuneration Tribunal.

External Committee members will be paid at the equivalent rate of Class A2: Level 2 statutory body as defined by the *Classification Structure Determination* as published by the Office of the Chief Minister.

Allowances cannot be paid in advance.

Extra Meeting Allowance

The extra meeting allowance is a capped sum of money provided when an Elected Member attends an extra meeting or activity deemed to be above the normal meetings as set out by the Council. The extra activity allowance is claimable by the Elected Member for each day of the extra activity. The payment of this allowance will be in arrears. The eligibility for Extra Meeting Allowance is determined by the Remuneration Tribunal. Extra Meeting Allowance cannot be paid in advance.

Extra meeting allowance is claimable to a maximum amount established by Table of Maximum Council Member Allowances as published by the Department of Local Government.

When a council member is required to travel to attend an approved extra meeting, the council member may claim an extra meeting allowance for each full day of travel, unless that travel falls on the same day on which the meeting is held. In this context, a full day of travelling means at least four hours of travelling, which may include time in transit.

Extra Meeting allowance to include attendance at Audit and Risk Management Committee meetings of Belyuen Community Government Council

Claims must be made using the forms approved by the council.

Expenses

Members are entitled to travel expenses related to approved council activities. Travel expenses include:

- Mileage based on the ATO's "Cents per kilometer method"
- Expenses incurred for meals where the travel requires the member to be away from home more than four (4) hours or over a recognized mealtime
- Expenses incurred for meals, accommodation and incidentals when travelling away overnight for council activities, such as going to an interstate conference
- Air, bus, train, tram, and taxi fares
- Car parking and car-hire fees.

Expenses will be reimbursed based on the following:

- Travel in a member's own car is permitted provided the member has given a signed and witnessed statement that indemnifies (protects) the Council against all claims that may arise due to the use of a private vehicle.
- Accommodation is arranged by the Council
- Meals are not provided by the Council or as part of the activity or accommodation. Benefits

Members are entitled to the following benefits and facilities:

- Use of a desk and council computer, printer, and telephone for official use (within the Council Office).
- The council assigned email address.
- Postage of official correspondence.
- Personal insurance whilst on official Council business.

Professional Development Allowance

The professional development allowance is payable to Elected Members to attend relevant and Council approved conferences or training courses. Professional development allowance is to be used to cover the cost of the registration or entry fee into the conference or course, travel, meals and accommodation.
The professional development allowance is claimable and available:

1. To all Elected Members.
2. Multiple times each year but shall not exceed the maximum amount specified by the Remuneration Tribunal.
3. Only when participating in approved courses and conferences consistent with Council policy.

Alternatively, when Council has recommended and organised attendance at a conference and/or training session, Council will pre-pay any and all costs of relevant conferences or training courses, travel, accommodation, and travel allowance. If Council has paid the professional development costs directly, no professional development allowance is to be paid directly to the Elected Member.

Travel Allowance

Travel allowance is the sum of money provided when Elected Members are undertaking work related travel that requires an overnight stay in a location other than their primary residence. Travel allowance comprises components for accommodation, meals and other incidental expenses based on rates determined by the Australian Taxation Office recommendations or at an appropriate, Council-approved rate. It is a sum of money paid to the Elected Member, prior to their travel to cover all travel costs in the route and mode of transport that is most economical to Belyuen Community Government Council. Travel Allowance forms are to be completed for each claim to be processed.

The travel allowance is claimable by the Elected Member and must be pre-approved by the authorising Manager before the travel has been undertaken. When an Elected Member is required to travel for work related purposes, the Governance Officer for Council will submit a 'Travel Allowance Form' to the authorising Manager on the Elected Member's behalf for approval of payment. Once approved, the payment will be made into the Elected Member's nominated bank account in the earliest pay run from submission of the Travel Allowance Form.

The claim conditions in which one can apply for the components of travel allowance are as follows:

Incidentals:

1. A set amount per day.
2. Shall only be claimed after the first 24 hours of travel away from primary place of work/residence or cannot be claimed during the first 24 hours of travel.
3. Shall only be claimed in compliance with applicable Council policy and/or policy support Document.

Breakfast:

1. A set amount per meal. Any breakfast expenses over the set breakfast allowance amount will be at the Elected Member's own expense.
2. Shall only be claimed in compliance with applicable Council policy and/or policy support document.
3. Shall only be claimed if Belyuen Community Government Council have not pre-paid or ordered catering or not supplied by the event attending from 0600hrs to 0900hrs for this meal.

Lunch:

1. A set amount per meal. Any lunch expenses over the set lunch allowance amount will be at the Elected Member's own expense.
2. Shall only be claimed in compliance with applicable Council policy and/or policy support document.
3. Shall only be claimed if Belyuen Community Government Council have not pre-paid or ordered catering or not supplied by the event attending from 1200hrs to 1500hrs for this meal.

Dinner:

1. A set amount per meal. Any dinner expenses over the set dinner allowance amount will be at the Elected Member's own expense.
2. Shall only be claimed in compliance with applicable Council policy and/or policy support document.

3. Shall only be claimed if Belyuen Community Government Council have not pre-paid or ordered catering or not supplied by the event attending from 1900hrs to 2359hrs for this meal.

Accommodation:

1. Shall only be claimed if Belyuen Community Government Council is not paying for the accommodation by submitting the applicable Council Reimbursement Claim Form.
2. Will only cover the most basic room rate available. Any upgrades of room type or room charges will be paid by the Elected Member at their own expense.

Mileage:

1. A set amount per kilometre.
2. Shall only be paid if travel is conducted in a personal vehicle that has been pre-approved. Pre-approval of a vehicle can be obtained by providing the Governance Officer for Council with the vehicle's current registration and insurance documentation.
3. Shall only be paid for travel from the Elected Member's primary place of residence to the destination in which Belyuen Community Government Council requires them and return, with both journeys undertaken by the shortest practicable route.
4. Shall only be paid once, per vehicle per trip, to the owner/operator of the vehicle being used for the trip. It does not apply to other Elected Members who are vehicle-sharing as passengers.

Members shall not use Council facilities and property for personal or family business or to further their political careers. Council may resolve to provide reasonable additional facilities and expenses for Members with a disability, to allow them to perform their civic duties.

Annual Resolution of Allowances

The amount of Council Member Allowances including the amount of the Extra Meeting Allowance is determined by the Remuneration Tribunal annually as per legislative requirements. The resolution of Council Member Allowances for the financial year must be made when it adopts the Regional Plan for the financial year in accordance with Local Government Act 2019.

Document Control

Policy Owner	BCGC
Endorsed by	BCGC/ARMC
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