**Background**

The Councillor Expenses and Entitlements Policy 2018 (‘the Policy’) is incorporated in the Councillor Code of Conduct 2017 and identifies the facilities, services and resources which are made available to Councillors. It establishes the circumstances under which the Council organisation will cover the cost for the identified expense.

The Policy was prepared with reference to the State Government Information Guide. The Guide is designed to assist Councils, Council staff and the community to understand the entitlements of Mayors and Councillors with respect to expenses reimbursement and the provision of facilities and resources support.

Significant demands and expectations are placed on Councillors in carrying out their civic and statutory functions. In carrying out their policy development and community representative roles – Councillors will incur expenses such as purchasing of tickets for attending community events, the cost of training courses to ensure they are equipped to make decisions as well as technology costs for mobile phone/internet to be contactable by residents.

As part of Council’s commitment to open and transparent governance, Council has resolved that the details of Councillor expenses be reported to the community on a six monthly basis.

**Expense Categories**

**1. Internet/Phone Charges**

This category covers communication costs associated with ensuring that Councillors are accessible and are able to communicate with constituents, stakeholders, other Councillors and Council officers while conducting Council business. This category comprises costs associated with use and provision of a mobile phone and internet services. Wyndham City utilises a standard plan for each service area.

**2. Equipment**

Wyndham City provides Councillors with an iphone and tablet/laptop device to utilise for Council business. This category includes the $800 printing allowance provided for in the Expenses and Entitlements Policy for printing of Council documents by the Councillors. In some instances, Councillors may have additional needs or requests that fall outside of these provisions and these are highlighted as an additional expense in this category. This category also includes the cost of replacing lost/damaged or defective equipment.

**3. Mileage/Cab Charge/Parking**

In undertaking Council duties, Councillors are often required to drive to meetings or functions using their own vehicles outside of the City (excluding the Mayor who is provided with use of a Council vehicle.) This category covers the cost of mileage, public transport costs and parking in these instances. At times, Councillors my need to utilise a taxi when they are unable to use their own vehicle or where they have sought alternative transport (car-pooling, public transport) and require transportation home.

**4. Functions/Events**

In performing their representative role, Councillors are invited to attend a range of events and functions – many of which require the purchase of a ticket. This category includes the cost of a Councillor to attend an event or function where there is a cost involved.

**5. Family Care**

Council will cover the cost of necessary carer expenses incurred by Councillors in the course of carrying out their duties. This covers child care and other forms of care needed to support immediate family members, so that Councillors may perform their duties and roles. Providing support such as child care ensures that individuals who have family commitments are still able to represent their community as a Councillor.

**6. Memberships**

In performing their duties, Councillors may require membership of various peak bodies and organisations to continue their professional development. This may include membership for a specific area of focus or for a professional body such as the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Memberships costs will be covered where it relates to the fulfilment of Council duties.

**7. Training/Conferences**

This category covers registration fees associated with attendance by Councillors at conferences, seminars and one-off or short-term professional development courses. These are held by local government related organisations, professional bodies, educational institutions and private/industry providers. Councillors are strongly encouraged to undertake training throughout the duration of their term in recognition of the complex and major policy decisions that Councillors are required to make.

**Councillor Expenses for the period 1 January to 30 June 2018**

