

1. POLICY INTENT

To establish a policy which provides a working framework to manage hospitality and entertainment expenses, to obtain the most cost-effective outcome and which meets the requirements of legislative and community standards.

2. SCOPE

This policy is to apply to all Councillors and Officers of Tablelands Regional Council.

3. BACKGROUND/SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Entertainment and hospitality spending as defined by the Local Government Regulation 2012 includes, for example:

- Entertaining members of the public in order to promote a local government project;
- Providing food and beverages to a person visiting the local government in an official capacity;
- Providing food and beverages for a conference, course, meeting, seminar, workshop or another forum that is held by the local government for its Councillors, Officers or other persons;
- Paying for a Councillor or Officer to attend a function as part of the Councillor's or Officer's official duties or obligations as a Councillor or Officer.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Council may spend money on entertainment or hospitality only if the entertainment or hospitality is in the public interest.

All entertainment and hospitality expenditure must be:

- reasonable;
- cost effective;
- within the relevant budget allocations;
- for official purposes; and
- able to withstand public scrutiny.

Officers incurring and authorising the expenditure must demonstrate that the expenditure will benefit the Council and has been authorised for official purposes.

Expenditure deemed by this Policy to be inappropriate or unreasonable must be repaid to the Council within 14 days of being issued a notification of the expenditure being inappropriate.

Entertainment and hospitality expenditure must be properly documented so as to satisfy audit, legislative and reporting requirements.

Entertainment and hospitality expenditure incurred on Council premises may be authorised by requesting Officers up to their financial delegation limit. Entertainment and hospitality expenditure incurred externally of Council premises must be approved by the requesting Officers Manager or above. The person approving the expenditure must ensure that:

- The expenditure is in accordance with this Policy;
- Fringe Benefits matters have been considered;
- The cost is available in the relevant budget item and meets the usual requirements for expenditure approvals.

The following are the types of entertainment or hospitality services that Council considers appropriate for the use of its funds:

Type of Function	Definition	Guidelines
Civic Reception	Formal functions hosted by Council generally for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting dignitaries • Recognition of significant achievement(s) of individual(s) and group(s) • Economic development and furthering business links in the community • Citizenship ceremonies 	Receptions that meet the guiding principles are supported by this policy subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorisation by the Mayor • Availability of funds during the Financial Year • Records being maintained in a Register that identifies the purpose of the function, number of attendees and an itemised cost associated with the Reception.
Council Function	Entertainment provided by Council generally for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting dignitaries • Recognition of significant achievement(s) of individual(s) and group(s) • Economic development and furthering business links in the community 	Those functions that meet the guiding principles are supported by this policy subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorisation by the Mayor or CEO • Availability of funds during the Financial Year • Records being maintained in a Register that identifies the purpose of the function, number of attendees and an itemised cost associated with the Function.
Employer Function	A formal function hosted by Councillors and Officers (may include members of family) generally for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of service • Christmas celebrations 	Those functions that meet the guiding principles are supported by this policy subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorisation by the Mayor or CEO • Availability of funds during the financial year (Note: Proposed functions must be included in the Council's adopted budget for the financial year and expenditure is limited to the budget provision) • Records being maintained in a Register that identifies the purpose of the function, number of attendees and an itemised cost associated with the Function.

Type of Function	Definition	Guidelines
Business Hospitality	Food and Drink provided to Councillors and Officers by external parties in the form of official business.	<p>Councillors and Officers shall be available to attend functions hosted by business (in their capacity as an employee) subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's Code of Conduct Principles being met • The amount of hospitality being minor, that is, less than \$ 100/head (should the amount be greater, the hospitality shall be recorded in the Register or the individual may elect to contribute to the cost of the hospitality) • The individual not feeling obliged to undertake works that may compromise the organisation or are not considered accountable during the daily course of operations.
Sponsored Meal	Food and drink provided by Council to Councillors, Officers and agents of Council on a working day at a venue other than Council Premises.	<p>It is allowable for Councillors and Officers to be provided with entertainment during the course of their daily business e.g. business lunch at an off-site venue subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorisation by the Mayor or CEO; and • Authorisation is limited to \$50 /head.
Working Meals	Food and drink provided by Council to Councillors, Officers and agents of Council on a working day at Council premises.	<p>Provision of entertainment to Councillors and Officers during the course of their daily business e.g. a working lunch on premises, is supported subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorisation by the CEO or accountable Manager; and • Authorisation is limited to \$50 /head.

4.1 FRINGE BENEFITS TAX

Details of attendees including the number of staff attending are to be reported to the Finance Group for fringe benefit tax purposes for all entertainment and hospitality expenditure. Council's Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) Policy and Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) Guide provide further information and apply to all entertainment and hospitality purchases.

4.2 CORPORATE PURCHASE CARDS

Purchase cards may only be used for payment of entertainment/hospitality expenses by those persons issued with a Corporate Purchase Card under Council's Procurement Policy. Payment of entertainment/hospitality expenses by purchase card must be in accordance with the normal conditions of use of the purchase card and such expenditure must also be in accordance with the requirements of this Policy.

5. REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Chief Operating Officer to monitor the adequacy of this policy and recommend appropriate changes. This policy will be formally reviewed every three years or as required by Council.

This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.