

02.17 – Attendance at Events

Section: Council/Members

History:

- Adopted:17 October 2020
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INTRODUCTION:

Section 5.90A of the Local Government Act 1995 provides that a local government must prepare and adopt an Attendance at Events policy.

This policy is made in accordance with those provisions.

PURPOSE:

This policy addresses attendance at any events, including concerts, conferences, functions or sporting events, whether free of charge, part of a sponsorship agreement, or paid by the local government. The purpose of the policy is to provide transparency about the attendance at events of council members and the chief executive officer (CEO).

There are certain events whereby attendance by Council Members and/or the CEO provides a clear benefit to the Shire, the community and /or the professional development of the respective Council Member or the CEO, and due to this benefit the respective Council Member and/or the CEO are encouraged to attend.

Attendance at an event in accordance with this policy will exclude the gift holder from the requirement to disclose an interest if the ticket is above \$300 and the donor has a matter before council. Any gift received that is less than \$300 (either one gift or cumulative over 12 months from the same donor) also does not need to be disclosed as an interest. Receipt of the gift will still be required under the gift register provisions.

LEGISLATION:

5.90A. Policy for attendance at events

- (1) In this section —
event includes the following —
 - (a) a concert;
 - (b) a conference;
 - (c) a function;
 - (d) a sporting event;
 - (e) an occasion of a kind prescribed for the purposes of this definition.
- (2) A local government must prepare and adopt* a policy that deals with matters relating to the attendance of council members and the CEO at events, including —
 - (a) the provision of tickets to events; and
 - (b) payments in respect of attendance; and
 - (c) approval of attendance by the local government and criteria for approval; and
 - (d) any prescribed matter.

* *Absolute majority required.*

- (3) A local government may amend* the policy.

* *Absolute majority required.*

- (4) When preparing the policy or an amendment to the policy, the local government must comply with any prescribed requirements relating to the form or content of a policy under this section.
- (5) The CEO must publish an up-to-date version of the policy on the local government's official website.

[Section 5.90A inserted: No. 16 of 2019 s. 44.]

DEFINITIONS:

- Donor – means the giver of a gift
- Event(s) – means concerts, conferences, functions, sporting events and other hospitality occasions.

ATTENDANCE AT EVENTS:

1. Any Event invitation accepted by a Council Member or CEO without payment, where a member of the public is required to pay, unless noted in this policy, will generally be classified as a gift to which the declaration of interest provisions apply.
2. Where attendance by a Council Member or the CEO at an Event where a member of the public is required to pay is in the interests of the Shire (such as for their professional development or to undertake a function as a Council Member), the Shire may pay for the cost of the Event. The declaration of interest provisions would not apply.
3. If the Event is a free Event to the public, then no action is required.
4. If the Event is ticketed and the Council Member or CEO pays the full ticketed price and does not seek reimbursement, then no action is required.
5. If the Event is ticketed and the Council Member or CEO pays a discounted rate or is provided with a free ticket, then the recipient must adhere to the gift and declaration of interest provisions.

PROVISION OF TICKETS TO EVENTS:

Invitations

1. All invitation or offers of tickets for a council member or CEO to attend an event should be in writing and addressed to the CEO.
2. Any invitation or offer of tickets not addressed to the CEO is not captured by this policy and must be disclosed in accordance with the gift and interest provisions in the Act.
3. A list of events and attendees authorised by the local government in advance of the event is at Attachment A.

Approval of attendance

1. In making a decision on attendance at an event, the council will consider:
 - a) who is providing the invitation or ticket to the event,
 - b) the location of the event in relation to the Shire of Meekatharra (within the district or out of the district),
 - c) the role of the council member or CEO when attending the event (participant, observer, presenter) and the value of their contribution,
 - d) whether the event is sponsored by the local government, e) the benefit of local government representation at the event, f) the number of invitations / tickets received, and g) the cost to attend the event, including the cost of the ticket (or estimated value of the event per invitation) and any other expenses such as travel and accommodation.
2. Decisions to attend events in accordance with this policy will be made by simple majority of Council or by the CEO in accordance with any authorisation provided in this policy.

Approval Process Considerations

1. The following are pertinent factors that must be considered in determining approving attendance at a non- pre-approved event, subject to 3.2:
 - a) The donor providing the invitation or ticket to the Event (for example, the donor is a person who is undertaking or seeking to undertake an activity involving a Council discretion)

- b) The location of the Event in relation to the Shire (whether within the Shire or not)
 - c) The role that the Council Member or CEO will have when attending the Event (participant, observer, presenter) and the value of their contribution
 - d) Whether the Event is sponsored by the Shire
 - e) The benefit to the Shire of a Council Member or CEO attending.
 - f) The number of Shire representatives already approved to attend
 - g) Any justification provided by the applicant when the Event is submitted for approval.
2. Events that will not be considered for approval are:
- a) Political party Events and Fundraisers
 - b) Social Events
 - c) Entertainment Events with no links to the Shire
 - d) Events that primarily benefit Council Members or the CEO in a personal capacity or in a role other than their role at the Shire.

Attachment A – Events authorised in advance

- That the President and Chief Executive Officer may arrange for guests to address Councillors during Council Meetings and to join Councillors for a meal.