
ENTERTAINMENT AND HOSPITALITY POLICY

INTENT

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that public standards of accountability of Council's expenditure in relation to entertainment and hospitality is maintained and the objectives of this policy are consistent throughout the organisation.

SCOPE

This policy applies at all Councillors and staff.

DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Conflict of Interest	Occurs when your private interests interfere, or appear to interfere, with your duty to put the public interest first.
Councillors	Mayor and Councillors
Entertainment and Hospitality	The provision of food and/or beverages to Councillors, staff or third parties.
Official Purposes	Any activity and/or function that forms part of Council's operations.
Staff	Any person who has been an employee of Council (permanent, part-time and/or casual), volunteers, work experience, contractors or consultants either current or past

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POLICY STATEMENT

Council recognises that there are circumstances where expenses on entertainment and hospitality are appropriate in the conduct of local government business. However, as Council is a publicly funded body, it must ensure that funds are spent for the purpose of Council operations, and a high standard of accountability for funds are maintained.

This Policy is not intended to be exhaustive in coverage, however, aims to identify overarching principles when expending Council funds on entertainment and hospitality. These overarching principles include:

- Any entertainment and hospitality expenditure incurred must be for official purposes and/or Council approved functions; and
- All entertainment and hospitality expenditure must be incurred in the public interest. This means that the Councillor or Council Officer authorising the expenditure must demonstrate that the expenditure will benefit the community generally or facilitate Council business; and
- The amount spent on entertaining and hospitality must be reasonable, having regard to the benefit to the Council or the community; and
- The expense incurred and associated relevant documentation will satisfy all internal and external audit requirements; and
- The expenditure must be provided for in a budget and must be authorised in accordance with the Council's normal accounting procedures.

In accordance with section 196 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, examples of appropriate and reasonable expenditure for entertainment and hospitality includes:

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

In the ordinary course of Council operations, Councillors and staff will be required to participate, either through organising, hosting or attending, a wide range of functions and events where it is appropriate to incur entertainment and hospitality expenditure. Examples of these functions include, but are not limited to:

- Council Ordinary Meetings, Special Meetings, Workshops and Committee Meetings.
- Where Councillors and/or staff are appointed persons to represent Council – e.g. Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils and Local Authority Waste Management Advisory Committee.

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- Attendance at Conferences and seminars hosted by organisations affiliated with local government – e.g. Local Government Association Queensland, Local Government Managers Association & Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs.
- Civic receptions – e.g. Citizenship Ceremonies, Australia Day Celebrations, Anzac Day Celebrations, Remembrance Day and Official Openings etc.
- Delegations and deputations to Council by visiting dignitaries, local organisations or potential investors into the economy of Cook Shire.
- Professional development and training.
- Employee functions – e.g. length of service celebrations, end of year function.

At all times it is expected that the entertainment and hospitality costs incurred are to be reasonable and to reflect the professional reputation of Council.

In the instances where Councillors or staff accept hospitality from other organisations, officials or individuals, care should be taken to avoid any possible conflict of interest. It is important that situations are not perceived or construed as providing an incentive for any commercial transactions. Entertainment or hospitality may be accepted if it complies with all of the following principles:

- Refusal would offend the organisation, official or individual;
- It conforms to normal business practice or other cultural practices of the giver;
- It does not influence the Councillor or staff member in such a way as to compromise impartiality or create a conflict of interest (real or perceived);
- It is received in the course of duty in respect of work area responsibilities, or prior approval has been received; and
- It meets the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland and Council’s Code of Conduct for staff.

If accepting entertainment or hospitality, reference should be made to Council’s Gift and Benefits Policy to ensure all reporting requirements are met.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	RESPONSIBILITY
Mayor & Councillors	To ensure they are familiar with legislative and policy obligations when incurring entertainment and hospitality expenditure or accepting entertainment and hospitality from third parties.
Council Staff	To ensure they are familiar with legislative and policy obligations when incurring entertainment and hospitality expenditure or accepting entertainment and hospitality from third parties.

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REFERENCES, LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Public Sectors Ethics Act 1994

Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland

RELATED DOCUMENTS

D20/5552 - Code of Conduct Policy

D22/19428 - Benefits and Gifts Policy

IMPLEMENTATION/COMMUNICATION

Upon adoption, this policy will be posted on Council's website.

Directors and Managers are to ensure that the contents of this policy are communicated to all staff through team meetings.

APPROVED BY

Council resolution 2022/264

REVIEW

SPONSOR:	Director of Organisation and Business Services
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW:	Governance Coordinator
ADOPTION DATE:	22 November 2022
REVIEW DATE:	November 2025

THIS POLICY IS TO REMAIN IN FORCE UNTIL OTHERWISE DETERMINED BY COUNCIL

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AMENDMENT HISTORY

VERSION	AMENDMENT DETAILS	AMENDMENT DATE	APPROVAL
V1	New Policy	July 2005	Council Resolution 24543
V2	Minor Amendments	July 2011	Council Resolution 29942
V3	Minor Amendments	August 2018	Council Resolution 2018/69
V4	Detailed Review and Amendments	August 2019	Council Resolution 2019/199
V5	Review, no amendments	November 2022	Council Resolution 2022/264

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