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# ENTERTAINMENT AND HOSPITALITY EXPENSES POLICY

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**CONTROL:**

Policy Type:	Administrative
Authorised by:	Council
Head of Power:	Local Government regulation – Section 196
Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Adopted / Approved:	Minute No. 2020.02.15-OM-14
Last Reviewed:	December 2020
Review:	December 2022
Version	5

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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**1.1 PURPOSE:**

To set standards for entertainment and hospitality expenditure incurred on Council's behalf which meet legislative and community standards and comply with Council's Code of Conduct.

**1.2 POLICY OBJECTIVES:**

To ensure accountability and proper use of Council funds when providing entertainment and hospitality purposes.

**1.3 COMMENCEMENT OF POLICY:**

This Policy will commence on adoption and replaces any existing entertainment and hospitality expenses policy.

**1.4 SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all Councillors and staff when engaging in the provision or receipt of entertainment and hospitality.

## 2. POLICY

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### 2.1 CONTEXT:

Council is required by legislation to maintain a policy about the provision of entertainment and hospitality. Council can only provide entertainment and hospitality in line with this policy.

### 2.2 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.

### 2.3 SCOPE

This policy relates to expenditure by Council for entertainment and hospitality, providing guidelines for both Councillors and Council officers.

## 3. STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

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### 3.1 SPECIFIC AND STANDARD

Council recognizes that provision of appropriate entertainment and hospitality can result in significant benefits to Council. Council is also committed to the efficient, economic and responsible use of public resources and believes reasonable expenditure on entertainment and hospitality is in the public interest and underpinned by the following principles:

- The expense is for official purposes and must be reasonable in the circumstances; and
- The expense is properly authorised, documented and subject to audit scrutiny;
- The expense is publicly defensible.

### 3.2 OFFICIAL PURPOSES

Where Council has provided entertainment and hospitality attendees must ensure that there is no conflict of interest or breach of Council's Code of Conduct by their attendance or participation.

#### Official Visitors

The provision of entertainment and hospitality to visitors, dignitaries or other government officials is considered reasonable where Council has an interest in, or a specific obligation towards, facilitating the visit. Official visitors may include intrastate, interstate and overseas delegates, representatives of business, industry, trade unions, recognised community organisations, the media, and other levels of Government.

#### Members of the Public

The provision of entertainment and hospitality to members of the public is considered reasonable and appropriate where it supports events that provide community recognition; helps promote; raise the profile of; encourage participation in; or launch a Council initiative, project or major policy undertaking.

Examples include:

- Consultative meetings – engaging with community on Council initiatives, projects or major policy undertakings.
- Civic Functions – such as citizenship ceremonies, Christmas celebrations and the like, that provide community recognition or a welcome by the Council.
- Commemoration of Significant Events or Achievements – such as Remembrance Day, Anzac Day, Australia Day, reaching 100 years age.
- Condolences on death or injury – floral presentations, gifts or charitable donations are considered reasonable for:
  - Current employees and their immediate family
  - Past employees, still resident in the shire, with over five years service
  - Past Mayors and Councillors of the Diamantina Shire
  - Serving Mayors of the RAPAD family
  - Community members at the Mayor's discretion

### **Council Officers**

The provision of entertainment and hospitality to Council officers is considered reasonable and appropriate where officers are required to work during a meal time and an alternative break is not available. This may apply when officers are attending meetings, seminars, workshops or other forums as part of the officer's duties and organized by Council.

### **Councillors**

The provision of entertainment and hospitality to Councillors is considered reasonable and appropriate where Councillors are performing their official duties or obligations as a Councillor. Councillors may be reimbursed for hospitality expenses in accordance with the Expense Reimbursement –Councillors Policy.

### **Associated person(s)**

Where the attendance of an associated person is of demonstrated benefit to Council, the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer may specifically approve Council expenditure relating to entertainment and hospitality of an associated person.

## **3.3 PROVISION AND CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL**

Alcohol may only be provided at an official Council function if it has been approved prior to the function by the Mayor, CEO or their nominee.

## **3.4 AUTHORISATION AND DOCUMENTATION**

Expenditure not in accordance with this policy 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.

Officers must not authorise their own expenditure. Expenditure by the CEO must be authorised by the Mayor. Expenditure by a Manager or other officer must be authorised by the CEO.

## **3.5 EXPENDITURE THAT IS NOT REASONABLE AND APPROPRIATE**

Examples of expenditure which is generally considered not to be reasonable and appropriate and therefore to be treated as private expenditure include:

- Tips or gratuities (in Australia) – tipping is not customary in Australia however, when travelling overseas and tipping is the custom, this will be considered official expenditure;
- Stocking of bar fridges – except in the instance of the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer for small scale entertainment;
- Gifts – with the exception of those defined in the Human Resources Policy and those considered appropriate and presented by the Mayor, Chief Executive Officer or a Councillor;

- Dinners/functions at the private residence of a Councillor or Council officer unless specifically authorised and there is a clear public benefit identified;

## 4. REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 4.1 DEFINITIONS:

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

Word / Term	Definition
Council	means Diamantina Shire Council.
Entertainment and Hospitality	Provision of food and beverages
Immediate Family	Parents, siblings and children

### 4.2 RELATED POLICIES, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS:

Links to supporting documentation
Local Government Act and regulation
Code of Conduct
Expense Reimbursement-Councillors Policy
Human Resources Policy

### 4.3 VERSION CONTROL:

Previous Version Number	Adopted/Approved Date
Version 1 (Original)	October 20 2014, Minute No. 2014.10.20-OM-15
Version 2	September 18 2017, Minute No. 2017.09.18-OM-6
3	December 20 2017; Minute No. 2017.12.20-OM-6
4	December 16 2019; Minute No. 2019.12.16-OM-19