Policy M7 – Attendance at Events and Functions

1. Introduction

Section 5.90A of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) provides that a local government must prepare and adopt an Attendance at Events policy. This policy is made in accordance with those provisions.

2. Policy Intention

This policy provides a framework for Council Members and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) attendance at any events, including concerts, conferences, functions or sporting events or other prescribed occasions, whether free of charge, part of a sponsorship agreement, or are paid by the local government.

An effective framework provides transparency about the attendance at events by Council Members and the CEO.

3. Policy

This policy applies to Council Members and the CEO of the Shire of Murray (Shire).

4. Policy Statement

In accordance with Section 5.90A of the Act an event is defined as:

- a concert;
- a conference;
- a function;
- a sporting event; or
- an occasion prescribed by the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* (the Regulations).

4.1 Pre-Approved Events

In order to meet the policy requirements, tickets and/or invitations to events must still be received by the Shire as outlined in clause 4.2(a)(I) in the case of any external groups or organisations, notwithstanding that attendance at the following by Council Members and the CEO is pre-approved:

- any public free event held within the Shire district;
- events hosted by Clubs or Not for Profit Organisations within the Shire district;
- Shire hosted or run ceremonies, functions, tournaments or events;
- Shire sponsored ceremonies, functions, tournaments or events;
- Peel CCI Small Business Awards or similar awards for local businesses held within or outside the Shire district;

- Community cultural events/festivals within the Shire district;
- opening or launch of an event or facility within the Shire district; and
- other events where the Shire representation has been formally requested by invitation, including events from:
  - Western Australian Local Government Association;
  - Australian Local Government Association Limited (ABN 31 008 613 876);
  - Local Government Professionals Australia WA (ABN 91 208 607 072);
  - LG Professionals Australia (ABN 85 004 221 818);
  - a department of the Public Service;
  - a government department of another State, a Territory or the Commonwealth; or
  - a local government or regional local government.

All Council Members and the CEO are entitled to attend pre-approved events. If there are more Council Members than tickets or invitations provided, then the CEO, after consultation with the Shire President, shall determine attendance at their discretion.

If there is a fee or any other cost associated with a pre-approved event, the fee or other cost will be paid for by the Shire out of the annual budget (either beforehand or by way of reimbursement).

Any costs relating to accompanying partners to any pre-approved event will be the responsibility of the relevant Council Member or the CEO.

4.2 Non-Pre-Approved Events

(a) Provision of Tickets (Invitations)

(I) All invitations or offers of tickets for Council Members or the CEO to attend an event must be in writing, (no later than five business days prior to the event or the RSVP date, whichever occurs first), addressed to the Shire, using formal position titles and sent by mail to PO Box 21, Pinjarra WA or by e-mail to mailbag@murray.wa.gov.au

(II) Any invitation or offer of tickets not addressed to the Shire is not captured by this policy and must be disclosed in accordance with the gift and interest provisions in the Act and the associated Regulations.

(b) Approval of Attendance

(I) Events addressed to Council Members will be assessed and authorised by the CEO.

(II) Events for the CEO will be assessed and authorised by the Shire President.

(c) Considerations for Approval for a Non-Approved Event

Retrospective approval will not be given. In making-a-decision on attendance at an event, consideration will be given to:

(I) who is providing the invitation or ticket to the event;

(II) any justification provided by the applicant when the event is submitted for consideration;

(III) the location of the event in relation to the Shire (within the district or outside of the district);

(IV) the role of the Council Member or CEO attending the event (participant, observer, presenter) and the value of their contribution;

(V) the number of invitations/tickets received;

(VI) 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;

(VII) the direct benefit of attendance to the Shire;

(VIII) alignment to the Shire's Strategic Objectives; and

(IX) the number of Shire representatives already approved to attend.

(d) Payments in Respect of Attendance

(I) For any non-approved event, where a member of the public is required to pay, unless a pre-approved event under clause 4.1, the CEO and/or the Shire President will determine whether it is in the best interests of the Shire for a Council Member or the CEO to attend using the considerations provided in this subclause.

(II) If the CEO and/or the Shire President determines that a Council Member or CEO should attend a non-approved event, the Shire will pay the cost of attendance and reasonable expenses, such as travel and accommodation from the Shire's budget (either beforehand or by way of later reimbursement).

(III) Any costs relating to accompanying partners to any event will be the responsibility of the relevant Council Member or the CEO, unless otherwise approved by a specific resolution of Council.

(IV) Where an invitation or ticket to an event is provided free of charge, the CEO may decide that the Shire contributes to appropriate expenses for attendance, such as travel and accommodation, including events outside the district, after applying the considerations provided in this subclause and making-a-determination.

Note: Any event that is not pre-approved, is not submitted through an approval process, or is received personally is considered a non-approved event.

5. Other Matters - Excluded

(a) Where a Council Member is appointed by Council to be directly involved with a local community/sporting group or not for profit organisation in an official capacity, this policy does not apply to the groups or organisations normal business activities.

(b) The attendance by Shire employees at pre-approved, non-approved events is determined by the CEO and this policy is not applicable. However, the gift and travel reporting requirements under the Act and the associated Regulations remain applicable, as are any legislative provisions relating to conflict of interests.

(c) The attendance by Shire employees at training or conferences at pre-approved, non-approved events is determined by the appropriate Director or the CEO and this policy is not applicable. However, the gift and travel reporting requirements under the Act and the associated Regulations remain applicable, as are any legislative provisions relating to conflict of interests.

(d) Council Member ongoing professional development and mandatory training paid for the Shire.

(e) CEO attendance at conferences or training paid for by the Shire to assist in achieving the organisations goals and objectives.

6. Disclosure of Interests

Any gift received over $300 is specifically excluded from the conflict of interest provisions if:

- the gift relates to attendance at an event where attendance has been approved under this policy; or
- the gift is from the pre-approved specified entities.

Regulation 20B of the Regulations prescribes the specified entities as WALGA (but not LGIS), ALGA, LG Professionals, a State public service department, a Commonwealth, State or Territory government department or another local government or regional local government.

Excluded gifts are still a gift that must be disclosed and published on the gifts register if over the value of $300 and received in the capacity of Council Member or CEO.

7. Gifts Generally

The policy provides guidance to Council Members and the CEO when an invitation to an event or function, or other hospitality occasion, ticketed or otherwise, is offered.

Any contribution to travel or the provision of tickets, subject to the exceptions in section 5.83 of the Act**,** must still be disclosed in writing to the CEO within 10 days of receipt, if over the value of $300.

8. Legislative and Strategic Context

The Act and the associated subsidiary legalisation provides' the broad framework within which this policy operates.

9. Review

This policy is to be reviewed biennially.

10. Associated Documents

Other documents that have an association to this policy and that may be useful reference material are:

- Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries - Operational guideline - Attendance at Events Policy
- Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries - Disclosure of gifts and disclosure of interests relating to gifts

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Policy Detail		
Responsible Directorate	Corporate Services	
Responsible Department	Governance	
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance	
Next Policy Review / Schedule	2027 (3-yearly)	
Council Adoption	**Date / Resolution**	19 December 2019 (OCM19/269)
Amendment Record	**Date / Resolution**	22 April 2021 (OCM21/062)
		23 June 2022 (OCM22/070)
		19 December 2024 (OCM24/159)