

Aligned City Value/s	Approachable	Responsive	Transparent	Innovative
Responsible Directorate	Chief Executive Officer			
Responsible Business Unit/s	Governance			
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance			
Affected Business Unit/s	All Business Units			

Objective

This policy complies with section 5.90A of the *Local Government Act 1995* by supporting Elected Members and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in attending events that benefit the community. The policy will provide a framework for the acceptance of invitations to Events and provide transparency on the acceptance and payments of tickets to events.

Scope

This policy applies to all Elected Members and the CEO of the City of Stirling (the City).

Policy

Elected Members and the CEO attend Events to fulfil their leadership role in the community. Elected Members and/or the CEO will receive tickets or invitations to attend Events to represent the City on Council Business.

Tickets and invitations to Events require:

- a) a payment with City Funds;
- b) an Access Pass be allocated for Council or CEO representation while on Council Business; or
- c) the estimated ticket value of associated costs be disclosed as a gift (when valued at \$300 or more, or multiple tickets within a 12 month period from the same donor) in accordance with section 5.87A – 5.87C of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

1. Pre-Approved Events

For pre-approved events, tickets and invitations must be received by the City.

The City pre-approves attendance at the following Events, for Council Business, by Elected Members and the CEO:

- a) Advocacy lobbying, Mayoral representation or Ministerial briefings;
- b) Industry and economic briefings, specifically related to the operation of local government;
- c) Community cultural and sporting Events, festivals and art exhibitions within the City;
- d) Opening or launch of an Event or Facility within the City;
- e) Professional development in accordance with the Elected Member Training Policy;
- f) Networking in accordance with the Elected Member Entitlements Policy;

- g) Conference or formal representation by the CEO in accordance with the Employee Conference Management Practice and/or City contract; and
- h) Where Mayoral or CEO representation has been formally requested.

Events hosted, run or sponsored by:

- i. The City;
- ii. The community (including meetings) held within the City, to which the Elected Members or the CEO have been officially invited;
- iii. Major professional bodies associated with local government, such as WALGA and Local Government Professionals;
- iv. Local, State or Federal government agencies; and
- v. Educational institutions within the City.

Attendance at Pre-Approved Events is considered an “excluded gift” as defined in section 5.62(1B) of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

2. Sponsored Events

The City sponsors events, shows, festivals, sporting contests and other community activities. Supporting sponsored events is an important part of the Civic life of the City.

Special care must be taken in relation to the provision of tickets to sponsored events.

The following rules must be followed in relation to ticketed events:

- Sponsorship agreements must not provide free tickets to employees or Elected Members to sponsored events.
- Employees must not accept free tickets to sponsored events.
- Where an employee is to attend a sponsored event in the normal course of their duties, they should be provided with an access pass, and not a free ticket.
- Where an Elected Member is to attend a sponsored event to give a speech or take part in ceremonial duties, they should be provided with an access pass, and not a free ticket.
- Where an Elected Member wishes to attend a sponsored event where tickets come at a cost, the Elected Member must pay for the ticket from their networking allowance (unless invited to give a speech or take part in ceremonial duties).

3. Approval Process

Where an invitation is received to an Event that is not pre-approved, it may be submitted for approval no later than three business days prior to the Event as follows:

- (a) Events for the Mayor will be approved by the CEO; and
- (b) Events for Councillors or the CEO will be approved by the Mayor.

Considerations for approval of the Event must:

- Include any justification provided by the applicant;
- Details of the Event’s benefit to the City;
- How the event relates to the attendee’s role;
- Alignment to the City’s Strategic Community Plan; and
- The number of City representatives already approved to attend.

4. Gift Disclosure

Elected Members and the CEO must declare any Gift/s received in relation to their role at the City when valued at \$300 or more (either one gift or cumulative gifts over 12 months from the same donor). The recipient must disclose the Gift (and any other associated hospitality) within 10 days to the City.

Where an Elected Member or the CEO is offered a ticket to an Event, and the ticket falls under the definition of a Gift, details of the ticket are to be disclosed in accordance with sections 5.87A – 5.87C of the *Local Government Act 1995*. The disclosed information will be listed on the City's website. If there are more Elected Members who wish to attend than tickets provided, the Mayor shall allocate the tickets.

5. Declaration of Interest

Where a donor of a Gift at/over \$300 has a matter before Council, the Elected Member and/or CEO must disclose a Conflict of Interest and remove themselves from the meeting (unless approval is granted by the Council or the Minister, depending on the value of the Gift).

A Gift is excluded from the Conflict of Interest provisions when:

- (a) the Gift relates to attendance at a pre-approved Event in this policy; or
- (b) the Gift is from the specified entities prescribed in section 20B of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996.

6. Payment of Tickets

Where an Elected Member attends a pre-approved Event and there is a Cost associated with the Event, then the Cost of the attendance (including the attendance of a partner) is to be paid out of the Elected Member's related allowance in accordance with the Elected Member Entitlements Policy.

Where the CEO attends a pre-approved Event and there is a Cost associated with the Event, the Cost of the attendance (including the attendance of a partner) is to be met by the City.

If the Event is ticketed and the Elected Member or the CEO pays the full ticketed price from their Personal Funds, and does not seek reimbursement, or if the Event is free to the public, then no action is required.

6.1 Free Tickets

A ticket is only considered free when there are no associated costs through hospitality, catering, and event viewing that are of a financial benefit to the guest.. All events have a value and it is required that:

- (a) a ticket be purchased;
- (b) the estimated ticket value of associated costs be disclosed as a gift in accordance with section 4 of this policy; or
- (c) be an Access Pass as per section 2 of this policy.

7. Non-Approved Events

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

All Events are considered Non-Approved if attendance would breach a local, State or Federal declaration of emergency, a controlled border or a Commonwealth travel advisory.

The Cost of the following Events is not permitted to be met by City funds:

- Party political Events and fundraisers;
- Personal Social Events; and
- Cultural and sporting Events held outside of the City unless approved in accordance with section 3 of this policy.

8. Record of Attendance at Events

Elected Members and the CEO must:

- Inform the City of their attendance at an Event under this policy; and
- Submit any invitation and records relevant to their attendance for recording in the City's corporate record keeping management system.

9. Community Engagement Events

The City approves attendance by Elected Members and the CEO at the following Community Engagement Events for Council Business. The partner of each Elected Member may attend the following Community Engagement Events as one of the invited Guests.

9.1 Community Engagement by Elected Members

The City will host events for Elected Members to engage with the Community. These events will be hosted and paid for by the City, and will be held under the following conditions:

- (a) Each Elected Member, or any combination of Elected Members, may request an event at any time by submitting a request to the Mayor.
- (b) Each event must be for an identified purpose that allows Elected Members to fulfill their role and advance the purposes of the City.
- (c) Each Elected Member may suggest a guest list for the event and all guests must relate to the purpose of the proposed event.
- (d) Final guest lists are to be approved by the Mayor's office which retains sole discretion as to whether an event is to be held and, if so, the format of the event and who is approved to attend.
- (e) Once every year the City will host a dinner for all Elected Members, who may each invite up to nine personal friends and Relatives. This is in recognition of the contribution made by people close to an Elected Member due to the public nature of their role, their performance in the local community, and the need to support Elected Members undertaking their role out of core business hours.
- (f) Other than the annual dinner referred to in point (e), guests may not include relatives or close personal friends of the Elected Member without approval of the Mayor.

The Mayor may request to host Community Engagement Events that meet the strategic community engagement needs of the City throughout the year. The format of the community Event is to be advised to the City in advance and with Suitable Notice. The final decision of allocation of Guests is to be made by the Mayor.

10. Invitations and Attendance by Dignitaries

Invitations to Parliamentary and Vice-Regal dignitaries must be managed in accordance with:

- the protocols of the State and Federal Government and Parliaments;
- the protocols of the Vice-Regal Offices;
- any funding agreements with State and Federal Governments; and
- the requirements of the Mayoral office to ensure appropriate Parliamentary and Vice-Regal representation.

The preparation of invitation lists at City events is a responsibility of the Mayor who may grant authorisation for another person to prepare and issue invitations.

11. Recognition Events

Recognition Events and the installation of recognition plaques must be arranged in accordance with the Recognition Events Management Practice. The management practice sets the requirement to invite Elected Members to attend the commencement or completion of a project, facility or program and the installation of recognition plaques.

12. Dispute Resolution

Any disputes under this policy are to be resolved by the Mayor and the CEO.

Definitions

The following terms are defined by *Local Government Act 1995* and apply to this policy: Event, Relative, Gift.

Accompanying Person means person/s who have been officially invited by an Elected Member to attend a Community Engagement Event for Council Business.

Community Engagement Event means a function hosted by the Mayor to which all Elected Members are invited to engage with a section of the Community.

Cost means an amount of money to be paid in relation to attendance at an Event. This includes the price of the ticket, travel to the event and any other expenses incurred as a result of attending the event.

Council Business means any business where an Elected Member:

- a) Represents the interests of electors, ratepayers and residents of the district;
- b) Provides leadership and guidance to the community in the district;
- c) Facilitates communication between the community and the Council; or
- d) Performs such other functions as are given to a Councillor by *the Local Government Act 1995* or any other written law.

Elected Member means a person elected under the *Local Government Act 1995* as a member of the Council. The City's Elected Members include the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

Facility means a building, park or open space located within the City.

Free Event means an event where there are no associated costs through hospitality, catering, and event viewing that are of a financial benefit to the guest.

Personal Funds means a private payment of money from an individual, not the City.

Social Events means an Event of a personal nature that has no benefit to the City and its community.

Suitable Notice means providing advance notification of the event to enable coordination.

Ticketed means a ticket that requires financial payment.

Relevant management practices/documents

Community Engagement Event Guest Registration Form
Election Caretaker Policy
Disclosure of Gift Form
Elected Member Training Policy
Elected Member Entitlements Policy
Recognition Events Management Practice

Legislation/local law requirements

City of Stirling Employees Code of Conduct
Elected Member Code of Conduct
Local Government Act 1995
Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996

Office use only			
Relevant delegations	Not Applicable		
Initial Council adoption	19 November 2019	Resolution #	1119/010
Last reviewed	Date 29 October 2024	Resolution #	1024/022
Next review due	Date 2026		