

**Subject:** Accessibility of childcare provisions in the Councillor Expenses and Support Policy

**From:** Brian Densem >  
**Sent:** Friday, 13 August 2021 2:09 PM  
**To:** Louise Crawford - Mayor  
**Cc:** Veronica Jenkin Julie Snowden

**Subject:** Accessibility of childcare provisions in the Councillor Expenses and Support Policy

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Dear Louise,

In response to a motion raised at the 16 June 2021 Ordinary Meeting, the Audit & Risk Committee was requested by officers to meet and further discuss what opportunities might be available to increase the accessibility of childcare provisions in the Councillor Expenses and Support Policy. This meeting was held on Wednesday 4 August 2021.

The agreed purpose of the meeting was to review the recent benchmarking results undertaken with other local government areas, get an understanding of the current experience with reimbursing claims and identify any opportunities to increase accessibility, noting that the Committee is an advisory body only.

The following proposed changes to the policy were discussed and agreed:

Preparatory work:

- Preparatory work should be included in the reimbursement.
- This would be limited to preparatory time for specific meetings, including, council briefing, council meeting, committee time where they are an appointed Councillor representative – it would be a percentage of average hours of meeting time per month.
- All other childcare must meet the definition within the policy of official business of Council.

Working with Children check and First Aid Cert

- Strongly encouraged / recommended however in the absence of one, the onus is on the Councillor – Council accepts no liability as it is a reimbursement

Tax Invoice

- There needs to be something to substantiate the claim. Same as staff expense policy - if a tax invoice unavailable a detailed receipt is required for amounts under \$82.50 and a stat dec for amounts over this amount

Timeframe for submission of claims

- There does need to be a limitation – 30 days is more reasonable than the current 14 days however any change should be consistent with staff expense policy &/or compliance requirements.

Retrospective (for report only)

- Retrospective claims should be allowed, to apply since the beginning of this Councillor term;
- Claims will require sufficient evidence and/or a statutory declaration if no receipts available;
- There should be a top 'cap'.

Age limits

- The current age limit of 13 be increased to a maximum age of 16.
- For caring for dependants with a disability – include a definition of dependant – so that increases the age barrier of 18 years

I trust the above information is sufficient to inform the council in its policy development.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Regards,

*Brian*

Brian Densem  
Audit & Risk Committee Chair

