



EMP-COM-005 | Attendance at Events

Strategic Context

Strategic Link	Policy Objective
✓ United ✓ Safe & Healthy ✓ Beautiful & Respected ✓ Prosperous & Equitable	To establish transparent and accountable arrangements for the acceptance of invitations and attendance at events by Council Members and the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with section 5.90A of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .

Introduction

1. The Shire of Halls Creek (the Shire) recognises that Council Members and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may be invited to attend events, functions, conferences and other activities as representatives of the Shire.
2. Attendance at these events can provide opportunities for advocacy, professional development, regional collaboration, community engagement and the promotion of the Shire and its district. However, the acceptance of tickets, hospitality, travel contributions or other benefits may create an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest if it is not appropriately assessed, disclosed and managed.
3. Council Members and the CEO must ensure that attendance at events is consistent with their statutory responsibilities, the applicable code of conduct and the principles of transparency, accountability, integrity and responsible use of public resources.

Purpose

4. To ensure the Shire actively considers the purpose of and benefits to the community from Council Members and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) attending events, and to promote transparency and accountability in attendance at events by Council Members and the CEO.

Policy Scope

5. This policy applies to invitations or tickets to events provided to the Shire, including invitations addressed to the Council, a Council Member or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
6. An invitation or ticket provided directly to an individual Council Member or the CEO is to be treated as a gift, as defined in section 5.57 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, unless it is referred to the Shire and approved in accordance with this policy.
7. Council Members and the CEO may accept such invitations or tickets, subject to complying with the gift disclosure requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995*. Where the value of the gift, or the cumulative value of gifts received from the same donor within the prescribed period, exceeds \$300, it must be disclosed and recorded in the Shire's public Register of Gifts.
8. A Council Member or the CEO may attend an event without disclosing the attendance as a gift where they personally purchase the ticket, receive no reimbursement from the Shire and receive no other financial or in-kind benefit associated with their attendance.



Policy Statement

9. The Shire is committed to ensuring that attendance at events by Council Members and the CEO is undertaken in a manner that is transparent, accountable, ethical and consistent.
10. The Shire recognises that attendance at events, including the acceptance of tickets, hospitality, sponsorships, invitations or other benefits could be perceived as a real or potential conflict of interest. Which has the potential to create community distrust, if not managed appropriately.
11. Council Members and the CEO are expected to exercise sound judgement and act with integrity, impartiality and in a professional manner when attending events in their official capacity.

Principles Underpinning the Policy

Principle Name	Principle Definition
Transparency and Accountability	Decisions relating to the acceptance of invitations, including the provision of tickets, hospitality, sponsorship benefits or payment of expenses are to be undertaken in an open, transparent and accountable manner consistent with legislative requirements and community expectations.
Representation of the Shire	Council Members and the CEO attending events in an official capacity are expected to represent the Shire professionally and, in a manner, consistent with the role and responsibilities as per section 2.8 Role of the Mayor or president, 2. 10 Role of Councillors and section 5.41 Role of the CEO of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .
Public Interest and Community Benefit	Attendance at events by Council Members and the CEO is to support the interests of the Shire of Halls Creek community and be beneficial to progressing the Shire's Strategic Community Plan outcomes from an economic, cultural or strategic development.
Good Governance and Ethical Conduct	Council Members and the CEO must act with integrity, impartiality and professionalism when attending events in their official capacity and ensure their conduct maintains confidence in the Shire.
Appropriate Use of Public Resources	Council funds and resources associated with attendance at events must be used responsibly, reasonably.
Consistency and Equity	Any requests for attendance at events or the offer of invitations or hospitality will be assessed consistently and fairly against the criteria outlined within this policy.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Events	In accordance with section 5.90A of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> , a. a concert b. a conference c. a function d. a sporting event e. An occasion of a kind prescribed for the purposes of this definition.



Gift	As the meaning given in section 5.57(a) of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> a conferral of a financial benefit (including a disposition of property) made by one 1 person in favour of another person unless adequate consideration in money or money's worth passes from the person in whose favour the conferral is made to the person who makes the conferral. It includes any contributions to travel. For the purposes of both disclosure of receipt and disclosing an interest when a matter comes before Council, a gift is any gift valued at over \$300 or a cumulative value of \$300 where the gifts are received from the same donor in a 12-month period.
Excluded Gift	As the meaning in section 5.62(1B)(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> and section 20B of the <i>Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996</i>
Council	The Council of the Shire of Halls Creek.
Elected Member/ Council Member	A Councillor of the Shire of Halls Creek, including the Shire President and Deputy President.
Donor	Is the person or organisation who provided the invitation to the events which includes one or more of the following; a. tickets to an Events; b. payments in respect of attendance at an Event; c. hospitality, entertainment and/or professional advice at an Event; d. Travel Contribution.
Ticket	Includes complimentary, purchased or allocated admission to an event, including invitations, passes, memberships or hospitality packages.
Travel Contribution	As the meaning given in section 5.57(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .
Shire	The Shire of Halls Creek.
Hospitality	Food, beverages, entertainment, accommodation or associated benefits in connection with any event or invitation.
Official Capacity	Attendance at an event where a Council Member or the CEO is representing the Shire of Halls Creek, undertaking civic duties, networking, advocacy, professional development or participating in an approved role connected with their official responsibilities. Undertaking Civic duties includes the following; 1. Performs a speaking, presentation or ceremonial role; 2. Has a role that includes welcoming, acknowledgement or opening address; 3. Participates on judging or panel discussion; 4. Presenting awards or prizes on behalf of the Shire; 5. Representing the Shire that is a direct result of the sponsorship from the Shire.



Policy Details

12. Invitations

- 12.1 All invitations or offer of tickets are to be in writing and addressed to the relevant Council Member or Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Electronic invitations or ticket offers are to be sent to official Shire email addresses only (shire@hcsire.wa.gov.au). Hard copy invitations or offers of tickets are to be directed to the Shire's administration office. Any invitations or offer of tickets provided outside the requirements of this policy will be reviewed by the CEO and the Director of Governance and Sustainability.
- 12.2 All copies of invitations or offer of tickets will be recorded in the Shire's official record keeping system.

13. Approved Events or Invitations

- 13.1 In accordance with section 5.62(1B)(b) of the *Local Government Act 1995* and section 20B of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*. The council approve the following organisations;
- a. Events hosted or invitations provided by the Western Australia Local Government Association (WALGA);
 - b. Events hosted or invitations provided by the Australian Local Government Association Limited;
 - c. Events hosted or initiations provided by the Local Government Professionals Australia WA;
 - d. Events hosted or invitations provided by LG Professionals Australia;
 - e. Events hosted or invitations provided by a department of the Public Service;
 - f. Events hosted or invitations provided by a government department of another State, Territory or the Commonwealth;
 - g. Events hosted or invitations provided by a local government or regional local government.
- 13.2 The council also recognises and approves the following events for Council Members and the CEO;
- h. Shire hosted or sponsored ceremonies, functions and or events;
 - i. Events where the Shire and its program and or services are being showcased;
 - j. Events hosted or invitations provided by the Kimberly Regional Group;
- 13.3 Attendance at these listed events as listed in this policy are considered 'Excluded Gifts' as defined by section 5.62 (1B) of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

14. Complimentary Invitations and or Tickets

- 14.1 Where a Council Member or the CEO is offered complimentary or discounted attendance at an event for which a member of the public would ordinarily be required to purchase a ticket or pay any entry fee. In considering approval under this policy, the approver must determine whether attendance at the event is in the public interest and provides a demonstrable benefit to the Shire.

15. Approval of Attendance

- 15.1 When a Council member is offered an invitation or ticket to an event, the CEO will approve attendance. Where the CEO is offered an invitation or ticket to an event the Shire President will approve attendance. Any approvals must consider the following:
- a. who is providing the invitation or ticket;



- b. the location of the events in relation to the Shire (is the event within the district or outside of the district);
- c. the number of invitations/tickets received;
- d. the cost to attend the Event, including the costs of the ticket (or estimated value of the event per invitations) and any expenses such as travel and accommodation (refer to clause 7.8 Expenses); and
- e. does the invite or event require the Council Member or CEO to perform official duties.

15.2 All approved decisions (including relevant documentation) will be recorded in the Shire's record keeping system.

16. Tickets Offered to the Shire

16.1 Where tickets and or Invitations are provided to the Shire and not specifically addressed to the CEO or an individual Council Member, the following allocation process will apply:

- a. the ticket or invitation will first be offered to the Shire President;
- b. if the Shire President is unavailable or unable to attend, the ticket or invitation will be offered to the Deputy Shire President;
- c. where the Deputy Shire President is also unavailable or unable to attend the CEO may nominate an appropriate Council Member to attend on behalf of the Shire; or alternatively
- d. the Shire President may offer the ticket or the invitation to the CEO (*caretaker policy)

17. Conference and Professional Development Events

17.1 The Shire supports Council Members and the CEO in attending conference and professional development events. Each year through the budget process. Council will allocate sufficient funds for eligible Council Members and the CEO to attend the Annual WALGA conference.

18. Excluded Events

18.1 The following events will not be considered for approval:

- a. political party events and fundraisers;
- b. entertainment events that have no association with the Shire ; and
- c. any Events or Invitations that only benefit the Council Members or the CEO in a personal capacity or in a role that is not associated with their role in the Shire.

19. Gift and Travel declaration

19.1 Where a Council Member or the CEO accept an invitation or attend the *Act* section 5.87A and section 5.87B require Council Members and the CEO to disclose gifts in writing.

20. Expenses

20.1 The Shire will reimburse the following expenses when attendance for an event within the Shire district that is approved;

- a. event registration or ticket costs;
- b. milage;
- c. meals and incidental expenses; and
- d. accommodation.



20.2 For events or invitations outside the district a report will be submitted for Council to approve by simple majority, as a guide the following information is to be included in the report;

- a. a breakdown of estimated costs-
 - i. event registration or ticket costs;
 - ii. airfares and other transportation costs (taxi, ride share, public transport, vehicle hire, parking);
 - iii. accommodation; and
 - iv. meals and incidental expenses; and
- b. budget availability.

20.3 The report should also provide enough information for the Council to make an informed decision to demonstrate that;

- a. the event and or invitation supports the strategic objectives of the Shire;
- b. provides a demonstratable benefit to the Shire and its community;
- c. involves representation of the Shire in an official capacity; and
- d. supports advocacy, regional collaboration, economic development, tourism promotion or government relations activities.

21. Number of Attendees

21.1 The Shire is committed to accountable decision making and ensuring that expenditure of public funds is spent in the best interests of the community the following;

- a. attendance at any event within the Shire district will be limited to two Council Members and or the CEO unless otherwise approved;
- b. attendance at events outside the Shire District will be limited to one Council Member and or the CEO unless otherwise approved;
- c. the Shire will not pay for partners of Council Members or the CEO to attend events; and
- d. where the Shire is a sponsor, partner, presenter or has a significant interest in the event, additional representatives may be approved.

Accountability

22. Interests' obligations

22.1 The acceptance of an invitation, tickets, hospitality or the attendance at an event may create a perception of influence or obligation between the donor and the recipient.

22.2 Where a matter connected to the donor is later considered by Council, the recipient is required to disclose the interest.

- a. A Council Member that has an interest, must disclose the interest to the CEO before the meeting;
- b. If the CEO has the interest, they are not providing advice to the Council and are required to disclose the interest to Shire President.



23. Responsibilities

- 23.1 The CEO is required to publish an update version of this policy on the Shire's website.
- 23.2 A register of invitations and events will be maintained by the CEO; the register will include the following information:
- name of Applicant, Donor Information, Name of Event, Total estimated costs/value offered by the Donor, Details of the Event, Events relation or benefit to the Shire; and
 - application approved by and date.
- 23.3 The CEO is responsible for all relevant documents to be saved into the Shire's Record Keeping system.

Related Documentation / Legislation

Legislation	Shire of Halls Creek Documentation
<i>a. Local Government Act 1995 (WA)</i>	a. EMP-GOV-001 - Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates
<i>b. Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 (WA)</i>	b. Delegations and Authorisations Register
<i>c. Model Code of Conduct</i>	c. Business Continuity Plan
<i>d. State Records Act 2000 (WA)</i>	

Policy Review

24. This Policy will be reviewed every two (2) years from the date of endorsement, or earlier in the event of legislative change, audit findings or a resolution of Council.

Document Control

Relevant delegations	Nil		
Risk Evaluation	Moderate		
Council adoption	27/08/2026	Resolution	2026/090
Next review due	August 2028		