



Quarterly Declaration of Councillor Expenses

1 July to 30 September 2015



diverse
vibrant
exciting
inclusive

Quarterly Declaration of Councillor Expenses

1 July to 30 September 2015

In September 2011, the Yarra City Council resolved that in order to ensure the highest levels of transparency and accountability, all Councillor expenses be made available to the public through a quarterly statement published on Council's website. This statement has been published quarterly ever since.

Councillor Allowances and Expenses

The Local Government Act 1989 provides that the Mayor and Councillors are paid an allowance and also provided with appropriate tools and support to enable them to properly undertake their statutory obligations. The extent of support is generally recommended by Local Government Victoria.

There are very substantial time commitments required of Councillors in order for them to properly represent their constituents and perform their significant legal responsibilities, often requiring travel and late hours. Therefore the provision of efficient communications equipment, reimbursement of official travel and telephone expenses and if applicable, child care expenses is generally provided by municipalities across the state in order to assist Councillors to maximise their responsibilities.

Local Government (Councillor Remuneration Review) Panel

In 2008, the State Government convened a Councillor Remuneration Review. In its final report, the independent panel responsible for that review concluded:

"Councils and Councillors and their peak bodies expressed the view that the amount of allowances has a significant impact on the decision to stand for Council and to return for a second or third term. In particular, surveys have shown that women, single parents and young adults with or without children were under-represented in candidacies as were business owners and young professionals, This view was strongly supported in submissions from the community and especially by advocacy groups for women and young people.

The panel formed the view that allowance levels do present a barrier to candidacy for those women, young people and mid-career professionals both standing for election for the first time and those standing for re-election.

Submissions and hearings pointed out that for most Councillors becoming Mayor involves a full-time commitment to the role and the sacrifice of income if an individual takes unpaid leave for his or her previous employment. The duties of a Councillor demand time, energy and commitment and many reduce their time in paid employment to meet the demands of the role.

Becoming a Councillor also incurs costs for travel, accommodation and child and dependent care, which are not always reimbursed by the Council.

Some of the work of a Councillor occurs in ways that are not able to be discreetly separated from other activities for the purposes of reimbursement, for example, representations about municipal matters received during non-Council activities. The submissions the panel received were almost unanimous in describing the financial sacrifices and the failure of the current level of allowances to compensate this.

The Panel believes it is necessary to adjust the value of the allowance.

Overall the Panel believes the acceptance of recommendations on increases to the quantum would encourage diversity and, in particular, increase the likelihood that women, young people and people of non-English speaking background will nominate for election to their local Council."

Understanding Councillor Expenses

The Local Government Act 1989 requires that a Council must adopt and maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors and members of Council committees. To that end, Council has adopted the *Councillor Support and Reimbursement of Expenses Policy* which sets out, among other things, the level of resources and support that are provided to Councillors to enable them to effectively discharge of their official duties.

The policy also sets out the procedures that apply in circumstances where Councillors require reimbursement of expenses incurred, and those circumstances where prior approval is required.

A copy of this policy is available on Council's website.

The Councillor Expense Declaration

Yarra City Council has long held the view that the community has a right to know the level of expenses incurred by each Councillor, and that this information should be available quarterly, and without the need to visit Council offices and make a formal request.

The following pages set out the formal attendances for each Councillor at meetings where he or she is Council's official delegate. In addition, each Councillor attends regular Council Meetings, Councillor Briefings and is rostered to participate in Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee. In addition to these, a typical Councillor's workload includes meeting with residents and staff; community consultation sessions and other opportunities to engage with constituents; correspondence with the community by mail, email and telephone; site inspections and visits; community celebrations and ceremonial functions; and extensive reading of reports, briefings and other preparation to support effective decision-making.

The following pages also set out the expenses incurred by each Councillor in the following categories:

Councillor Allowances includes statutory allowances for the Mayor and Councillors, inclusive of a provision paid in recognition of the fact that Councillors do not receive superannuation or any other retirement benefit.

Communication Costs includes the capital costs, monthly fees and usage costs associated with Councillor mobile phone, land lines and computer equipment. They do not include any costs associated for personal use which are reimbursed by Councillors.

Travel Expenses – Local includes taxi fares, public transport costs and reimbursement to Councillors for kilometres travelled in their private vehicles associated with Council related travel within the City Of Yarra and elsewhere in Victoria.

Conferences and training – Local includes any registration fees, travel and accommodation costs associated with attendance or participation in conferences or professional development programs within Victoria.

Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas includes any registration fees, travel and accommodation costs associated with attendance at conferences outside Victoria.

Other Costs includes professional memberships, carer expenses, printing and other incidental expenditure incurred by Councillors in performing their Councillor role.

Change to the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014

In 2015, a change was made to the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 to require Councils to disclose the details of the expenses for each Councillor, divided into certain defined categories. This change is to take effect for the 2015/2016 financial year.

Council welcomes this change, and will continue to exceed this requirement by making quarterly disclosures on its website through these reports. From 2015/2016 onward, some minor changes to the expense categories above has been made to ensure consistency with the Regulations.

Cr Phillip Vlahogiannis (Mayor to 12 November 2015)



In addition to regular Council Meetings and meetings of Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee, Cr Vlahogiannis attended the following formal meetings during the quarter as Council's delegate:

- Dying Matters Forum - You Only Die Once (Yarra Active Ageing Advisory Group) - 21 July 2015
- Inner South Metropolitan Mayors Forum - 14 August 2015
- Aboriginal Advisory Committee - 18 August 2015
- Audit Committee - 25 August 2015
- Youth Advisory Committee - 27 August 2015

Cr Vlahogiannis incurred the following expenses during the quarter:

Expense category	
Councillor Allowances	\$ 26,584.56
Communication Costs	\$ 288.71
Travel Expenses – Local	\$ 365.11
Conferences and training – Local	\$ 1,593.64
Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas	\$ 0.00
Other Costs	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 28,832.02

Cr Geoff Barbour



In addition to regular Council Meetings and meetings of Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee, Cr Barbour attended the following formal meetings during the quarter as Council's delegate:

- Yarra Health Advisory Committee – 27 July 2015
- Heritage Advisory Committee – 5 August 2015
- Yarra Arts Advisory Committee – 12 August 2015
- Audit Committee – 22 September 2015

Cr Barbour incurred the following expenses during the quarter:

Expense category	
Councillor Allowances	\$ 8,591.80
Communication Costs	\$ 205.00
Travel Expenses – Local	\$ 348.99
Conferences and training – Local	\$ 0.00
Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas	\$ 0.00
Other Costs	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 9,145.79

Cr Roberto Colanzi



In addition to regular Council Meetings and meetings of Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee, Cr Colanzi attended the following formal meetings during the quarter as Council's delegate:

- Metropolitan Transport Forum – 1 July 2015
- Yarra Energy Foundation – 23 July 2015
- Bicycle Advisory Group – 29 July 2015
- Metropolitan Transport Forum - 5 August 2015
- Business Advisory Group– 20 August 2015
- Audit Committee– 25 August 2015
- Metropolitan Transport Forum – 2 September 2015
- Audit Committee – 22 September 2015

Cr Colanzi incurred the following expenses during the quarter:

Expense category	
Councillor Allowances	\$ 8,591.80
Communication Costs	\$ 433.94
Travel Expenses – Local	\$ 0.00
Conferences and training – Local	\$ 290.91
Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas	\$ 0.00
Other Costs	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 9,316.65

Cr Misha Coleman



In addition to regular Council Meetings and meetings of Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee, Cr Coleman attended the following formal meetings during the quarter as Council's delegate:

- Collingwood Childrens' Farm Management – 24 September 2015

Cr Coleman incurred the following expenses during the quarter:

Expense category	
Councillor Allowances	\$ 8,591.80
Communication Costs	\$ 475.41
Travel Expenses – Local	\$ 187.31
Conferences and training – Local	\$ 109.09
Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas	\$ 718.41
Other Costs	\$ 3,124.09
TOTAL	\$ 13,206.11

Cr Jackie Fristacky



In addition to regular Council Meetings and meetings of Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee, Cr Fristacky attended the following formal meetings during the quarter as Council's delegate:

- Metropolitan Transport Forum – 1 July 2015
- Disability Advisory Committee – 14 July 2015
- Metropolitan Transport Forum – 5 August 2015
- Disability Advisory Committee – 11 August 2015
- Metropolitan Transport Forum - 2 September 2015
- Bicycle Advisory Committee – 3 September 2015
- Disability Advisory Committee – 8 September 2015

Cr Fristacky incurred the following expenses during the quarter:

Expense category	
Councillor Allowances	\$ 8,591.80
Communication Costs	\$ 594.25
Travel Expenses – Local	\$ 36.83
Conferences and training – Local	\$ 2,890.35
Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas	\$ 4,500.00
Other Costs	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 16,613.23

Note:

Council made an upfront payment of \$6818.18 for Cr Fristacky's participation in the Cycling Promotion Fund Study Tour to the Netherlands. Cr Fristacky later made a reimbursement payment to Council of \$2,318.18 to ensure the cost to Council was \$4,500 in accordance with Council's resolution. The \$4,500 is recorded here.

Cr Sam Gaylard



In addition to regular Council Meetings and meetings of Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee, Cr Gaylard attended the following formal meetings during the quarter as Council's delegate:

- Yarra Energy Foundation – 23 July 2015
- Heritage Advisory Committee – 5 August 2015
- Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action – 10 August 2015
- Municipal Health Plan Advisory Committee – 12 August 2015
- Bicycle Advisory Committee – 3 September 2015

Cr Gaylard incurred the following expenses during the quarter:

Expense category	
Councillor Allowances	\$ 8,591.80
Communication Costs	\$ 623.47
Travel Expenses – Local	\$ 172.78
Conferences and training – Local	\$ 1,839.70
Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas	\$ 0.00
Other Costs	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 11,227.75

Cr Simon Huggins



In addition to regular Council Meetings and meetings of Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee, Cr Huggins attended the following formal meetings during the quarter as Council's delegate:

- Yarra Arts Advisory Committee – 12 August 2015

Cr Huggins incurred the following expenses during the quarter:

Expense category	
Councillor Allowances	\$ 8,591.80
Communication Costs	\$ 360.68
Travel Expenses – Local	\$ 0.00
Conferences and training – Local	\$ 0.00
Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas	\$ 0.00
Other Costs	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 8,952.48

Cr Stephen Jolly



Cr Jolly attended regular Council Meetings and meetings of Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee during the quarter.

Cr Jolly incurred the following expenses during the quarter:

Expense category	
Councillor Allowances	\$ 8,591.80
Communication Costs	\$ 3,159.39
Travel Expenses – Local	\$ 19.85
Conferences and training – Local	\$ 0.00
Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas	\$ 0.00
Other Costs	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 11,771.04

Cr Amanda Stone



In addition to regular Council Meetings and meetings of Council's Internal Development Approvals Committee, Cr Stone attended the following formal meetings during the quarter as Council's delegate:

- Friends of Baucau – 15 July 2015
- Dying Matters Forum - You Only Die Once (Yarra Active Ageing Advisory Group) – 21 July 2015
- Early Years Reference Group – 11 August 2015
- Disability Advisory Committee – 11 August 2015
- Aboriginal Advisory Committee – 18 August 2015
- Inner North Youth Employment Taskforce – 20 August 2015
- Yarra Environment Advisory Committee – 26 August 2015
- Youth Advisory Committee – 27 August 2015
- Active Ageing Advisory Group - Mini Consultation 31 August 2015
- Disability Advisory Committee - 8 September 2015
- Friends of Baucau – 16 September 2015

Cr Stone incurred the following expenses during the quarter:

Expense category	
Councillor Allowances	\$ 8,591.80
Communication Costs	\$ 408.96
Travel Expenses – Local	\$ 45.45
Conferences and training – Local	\$ 0.00
Conferences and training – Interstate or Overseas	\$ 394.02
Other Costs	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 9,440.23