

# Council Meeting Attendance

Council Policy



Owner	Elected Members		
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance		
Decision Number	R-21-2026		
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## 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set clear expectations for the attendance and participation of Elected Members, Committee members, and the public at Alice Springs Town Council (Council) meetings. This policy also ensures Council's compliance with 95(3a) of the *Local Government Act 2019* (the Act), which requires councils to authorise members' attendance by means of audio or audiovisual technologies.

## 2 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
<b>Apology</b>	A formal notification submitted by an elected member when they are unable to attend a meeting. Generally used for a one-off absence from a single meeting.
<b>Council meetings</b>	Inclusive of Ordinary Council meetings, Special Council meetings, and Council Forums.
<b>Leave of absence</b>	Permission granted by the Council that enables an Elected Member to be absent from Council Meetings for a period of time without triggering section 47(1) of the <i>Local Government Act 2019</i> . Used for extended periods (e.g., several weeks or months for travel, health, or family reasons).
<b>Livestreaming</b>	The streaming of a video or audio over the internet in real or near time.

## 3 Policy Statement

### 3.1 Elected Member Attendance

Elected Members are expected to attend all Council meetings. Attendance should be in person, but may also be via audio or audiovisual technologies when there is a valid reason to do so.

Elected Member attendance will be published each year in Council's Annual Report.

#### 3.1.1 Apologies

If an Elected Member is unable to attend a Council meeting, they should provide a written apology to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) no later than 24 hours before the meeting, with the reason(s) they are unable to attend.

The CEO is to include the apology in the agenda for the relevant Council meeting.

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A Council decision, by way of resolution, will be made to either accept or reject the apology. If the apology is rejected, Council should provide details on the reasoning behind the decision.

### 3.1.2 Leave of absence

Elected Members may apply for a leave of absence if they know they will be absent for an extended period of time. This should be through a written request to the CEO, before or at the start of the period of absence, detailing dates, which Council meetings will be missed, and reason for absence. This will be tabled at the next Ordinary Council meeting for Council's consideration.

A Council decision, by way of resolution, will be made to either accept or reject the leave of absence. If the leave of absence is rejected, Council should provide details on the reasoning behind the decision.

There is no maximum period of time for a leave of absence.

If the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor requires a leave of absence, this is also to be as per section 59 of the Act.

### 3.1.3 Absence without permission

In accordance with section 47(1) of the Act, an Elected Member can be disqualified if they are absent, without permission of the Council, from two consecutive Ordinary Council meetings.

Managing absences without permission must be done in line with regulation 101 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*.

### 3.1.4 Appeals

An Elected Member who wishes to appeal a decision of Council in relation to attendance should be given the opportunity to do so at the next Ordinary Council meeting following the absence.

Applications for appeal should:

- be made in writing and provide details of any special circumstances (including any support letters) that should be taken into account; and
- be submitted to the CEO seven calendar days in advance of the Council meeting.

If the appeal is successful, Council will rescind the previous resolution of non-acceptance.

## 3.2 Council Committee Attendance

Council committee members are expected to attend all committee meetings. Attendance should be in person, but may also be via audio or audiovisual technologies when there is a valid reason to do so.

Council committee members should provide apologies in line with 3.1.1. If a Council committee wants to reject an apology, it needs to recommend this to Council, and Council will make the decision.

## 3.3 Media and Public Attendance

The media and public's attendance at Council meetings is to occur as per the Alice Springs (Council Meetings and Procedures) By-Laws 1987.

Audio or video recording of a meeting by members of the public, including the media, is prohibited.

## 3.4 Online Participation

### 3.4.1 Remote attendance

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Elected Members and Committee members should inform the CEO as soon as practicable if they are intending to remotely attend a meeting, along with the reason(s) for requiring this.

As per 95(3)(c) of the Act, if an Elected Member or Committee member attends a meeting via audio-visual or audio technology, they will be provided the same opportunity to participate as if they were physically present.

Council expects that Elected Members and Committee members who are participating remotely act as if they are in the room, including always voting and having their camera on.

As per Council's Conflict of Interest Policy, a person who has declared a conflict of interest in a matter must not be present when that matter is under consideration; therefore, if attending remotely, a person declaring a conflict must disconnect from the online meeting for that relevant agenda item.

Confidentiality must be maintained by those participating via audio-visual technology to the extent that would be expected if they were present in person, and in line with Council's Confidential Information and Business Policy. Elected Members should therefore ensure that people who are not members cannot see, overhear or listen to the member or the meeting when in confidential.

The general public and media will not be provided online meeting details to join Council meetings remotely.

### 3.4.2 Livestreaming

All Ordinary Council meetings will be livestreamed for the general public and media's viewing, and published on Council's website, subject to being closed for the consideration of confidential business.

## 4 Responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for implementing this policy.

## 5 Related Legislation and Documents

- *Local Government Act 2019*
- *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*
- Alice Springs (Council Meetings and Procedures) By-Laws 1987
- Code of Conduct (Council Members, Council Committee & Audit Committee)
- Confidential Information and Business Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy

## 6 Communication and Training

Will this policy be communicated through consultation to teams?	No
Where will this policy be available?	Council Website
Will training needs arise from this policy? If yes, who will be responsible.	CEO/ Manager Governance