

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL



HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY STATEMENT REGISTER

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL

DOCUMENT AUTHORISATION

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7	25/11/2021	23.11/21	Update to Policy HR.2.02 Variable Working Hours to add Workshop staff to the eight-day fortnight. Eight-day fortnight conditions updated. General Manager authorised to make limited changes to the Policy without reference back to Council.	MAHR	Council
6	25/03/2021	10.03/21	Update to Policy HR.2.02 Variable Working Hours to change TIL accrual from three days to 26 hours.	MAHR	Council

Note: Document Control continued at Appendix A



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General Manager

6th December 2023

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Date

**GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL
HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY STATEMENT REGISTER**

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<p>Please note that the policy statements in this register are intended to provide a broad outline only. If additional detail or other information is required regarding the operation of these policies, such information may be obtained from Council's Policy Register or the Human Resources Section.</p>

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Our continued success will always largely depend on the effective contribution of our employees, their relationship with each other and with the community. We have a responsibility to create a climate that will permit employees to gain satisfaction from their work and at the same time encourage maximum contribution from each individual to meet the objectives of the organisation and community expectations.

Policies create a framework for all of us to work within.

By consistently and conscientiously adhering to the principles set out below, management will become more effective in administering the Council's Staff policies and in building productive relationships throughout Council.

Human Resources Management Principles

1. All employees whatever their job should feel that they have the opportunity to develop their abilities, to exercise responsibilities commensurate with the requirements of their position and to receive recognition for their successful efforts.
2. Employees should as far as practicable have the opportunity for progression in the Council.
3. Employees realise their fullest potential, make the greatest contribution and attain a high level of personal satisfaction when they are acknowledged and function as part of a team. By allowing employees to express their viewpoint and by consulting and communicating with employees they are aware that they are an integral part of our organisation.
4. Productive and satisfying relationships are best developed and maintained when fairness, equity and trust characterise the attitudes and behaviour of all the people concerned.

This Human Resources Policy Statement Register has been developed and put into a format designed to assist staff and management. The document is dynamic and will be subject to ongoing review and update as new policies are developed. Further advice and assistance is available from the Human Resources Section of Council.

Bernard Smith
GENERAL MANAGER

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SECTION 1

EMPLOYMENT

HR.1.01 Recruitment and Selection Policy

It is Council's policy to ensure that it is appropriately staffed, with qualified employees appointed in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, *Local Government (State) Award 2017* (or its equivalent), *NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*, **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)** principles and Council's obligation to appoint the best applicant. This will be achieved through:

1. Open advertisement – for all permanent positions and fixed term positions over twelve months and, where practicable, positions of a lesser term.
2. EEO and merit based selection – the person demonstrating greatest merit is to be appointed to the position.
3. No appointment is to be made unless the recommended applicant fully meets the essential selection criteria.

HR.1.02 Default Nominee Policy

It is Council's Policy to allow the creation of default nominee lists for positions that have been advertised. Default nominees may be offered the position within twenty six weeks of the date of interview without readvertising, in the event that the recommended applicant does not accept the offer of employment or vacates the position within the twenty six week period. Default nominees will be listed in order of merit and can only be nominated by the selection panel if they fully meet the essential criteria.

HR.1.03 Internal Recruitment Appeals Policy

It is Council's Policy to provide internal applicants for positions with an Internal Recruitment Appeals Process, which may be used if the applicant feels that the selection process may have been procedurally unfair or that he or she may have been unfairly disadvantaged or discriminated against. The General Manager will be responsible for administering and reviewing the appeals process.

HR.1.04 Verification of Qualifications Policy

It is Council policy, where job applicants assert professional and/or academic qualifications as part of their claim to a position, to verify such qualifications with the issuing institution(s) prior to appointment.

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Academic and professional qualifications of successful candidates will in all cases be verified with the issuing institution(s) where they are required for a position or where they are a significant determinant in the decision to appoint an applicant. In other cases academic and professional qualifications will be verified with the issuing institution(s) on a random basis.

HR.1.05 Background Checks Policy

It is Council policy to conduct criminal record checks on all recommended job applicants. Council will conduct a risk assessment on the results of each check to determine a candidate's suitability to occupy the offered position.

It is also Council's policy to verify that all applicants have Australian work rights in accordance with the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth). Council will ensure, as part of its recruitment and selection processes, that all recommended job applicants are Australian citizens, or New Zealand citizens who have a valid passport.

Council will maintain records of its employees showing their Australian or New Zealand citizenship, or permanent residency status.

For all recommended candidates who are not Australian or New Zealand citizens, Council will take reasonable steps to verify that they have a visa that allows them to lawfully work in Australia.

Council will also maintain records of all temporary visa holders' work rights and check the work rights of all temporary visa holders every three (3) months for the duration of their employment, via the Department of **Immigration's Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO)** service.

HR.1.06 Travelling Expenses for Candidates Attending Interviews

It is Council policy to reimburse/contribute to applicants' travelling expenses who attend interviews from outside the Glen Innes Severn Council area, on the following basis:

1. The expense reimbursement/contribution will be calculated based on the mode of transport used:

- (i) Train: First Class Rail Fare;
- (ii) Aeroplane: Economy Air Fare;
- (iii) Car: Under 2.5 litres (nominal engine capacity): 68c/km;
2.5 litres and over: 78c/km,
(or other amount(s) as provided in the Local Government
(State) Award 2017 or its successors)

with the understanding that total travelling expenses will not exceed the cost of an economy air fare ticket.

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2. The mode of travel is to be agreed prior to attendance for interview by the applicant and the applicable Manager and/or Director.
3. Consideration will be given to the reimbursement of reasonable accommodation and meal expenses. As a guide, accommodation reimbursements should be based on the tariff of a four (4) star motel / hotel, and meal expenses should not exceed \$50.00 for a main meal.
4. No interview expenses will be paid to applicants who are successful in selection for the position offered and who then reject the offer of the position.

HR.1.07 Pre-Placement Health Assessment Policy

It is Council policy to require all preferred applicants for a vacant position with Council, except casuals and short term employees (see below), to undertake a pre-placement functional assessment with Council's nominated provider prior to appointment.

In the event that Council's nominated provider is unable to provide an assessment within seven (7) to ten (10) working days, Council may use an alternative provider of its choosing.

The requirement for a pre-placement functional assessment also applies to internal applicants for positions and employees being transferred to a new position, but only where the new position involves duties with physical demands that are substantially different or higher than the employee's old position.

Pre-placement functional assessments will assess the health and fitness of the applicant against the essential physical requirements of the position identified in the position description. In accordance with Council's EEO principles, reasonable accommodations will be made to assist persons with disabilities to fill positions.

This Policy will not apply to casuals or short term employees (those with three (3) months or less service), where it is viewed as impracticable to have a pre-placement functional assessment, except those employees occupying jobs with high physical demands. Casual and short term staff will, however, be required to complete a medical questionnaire and declaration regarding their state of health and general medical condition.

Applicants will also be referred to Council's nominated doctor for examination and assessment if the functional assessment or medical declaration identify any medical condition that requires further investigation and / or referral to specialised medical practitioners.

In addition to all other requirements set out in this Policy, applicants who are employed in noisy occupations are required to undergo a full audiometry test at the time of employment.

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HR.1.08 Payment of Salaries / Wages Policy

It is Council policy that all permanent, temporary and casual staff appointments are conditional on the completion and signing of an authority for the direct crediting of salary / wages to any financial institution that a BSB and account number can be supplied for.

HR.1.09 Contribution to Removal Expenses Policy

It is Council policy to ensure that competent, suitably qualified and experienced employees are attracted to the Glen Innes Severn area. At the discretion of the General Manager, Council will reimburse newly appointed employees for removal expenses incurred, on the following basis:

1. Removalist costs will be paid up to a maximum of \$6,600, on the condition that Council is furnished with at least three (3) quotations, of which Council has the discretion to accept the quote of its choice.
2. Council will pay 50% of such costs upon commencement of duties, and another 50% after 18 months of satisfactory service;
3. In the event of the incumbent leaving the service of Council on his/her own accord within the first 12 months of service, the incumbent is responsible for reimbursement to Council of the full amount already paid.

HR.1.10 Subsidisation of Rental Accommodation

It is Council policy to, where the need arises to attract key staff, subsidise rental accommodation for a maximum period of three (3) months after commencement, at a maximum amount of \$200 per week or half the rental value, whichever is the lesser.

Prior agreement between the General Manager and the applicable Director must be reached regarding the classification of a particular position as being a key position.

A key position is defined as a position that requires a specialised or uncommon skillset, which, if unavailable to the organisation, would result in the delivery of essential services or achievement of corporate goals ceasing immediately or within a very short timeframe (one (1) to two (2) months).

Similarly, the applicable Manager and/or Director must reach agreement with any particular applicant that a subsidised rental accommodation will apply to the position, prior to a letter of offer being issued by Council.

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HR.1.11 Induction Policy and Program

It is Council policy to provide new employees with guidance and information to facilitate their adjustment to the work environment and to enable them to become effective contributors within the shortest possible time.

Such guidance and information will be tailored to the requirements of the job and will include, as a minimum, information on the following:

- Code of Conduct for Council Staff;
- Customer Service Standards;
- General and site-specific Work Health and Safety responsibilities;
- Computer and mobile phone usage;
- Bullying / harassment and anti-discrimination responsibilities;
- Fraud and corruption requirements;
- Internal reporting;
- Record keeping; and
- Site-specific work procedures and routines.

General induction information, which is common to the entire organisation, will be delivered as part of each new employee's online induction. Information on site-specific work procedures and safety requirements will be delivered by the relevant team or site supervisor.

Council will keep a record of all inductions as evidence that new employees have received the knowledge and instruction required to meet their obligations as a Council employee and conduct their work in a safe and efficient manner.

HR.1.12 Promotion Policy

It is Council policy to provide employees with opportunities for advancement in accordance with organisational needs and employees' proven abilities, as demonstrated by performance and potential. Appointments made under this policy must also comply with the requirements of [Policy HR.1.01](#).

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HR.1.13 Lateral Transfer Policy

It is Council policy that employees may be transferred laterally to other positions of a similar skill and salary level within the organisation in order to respond to business requirements, subject to such transfer meeting the definition of Lateral Transfer as set out in Council's Salary System Progression Rules, which state:

Lateral transfer may occur in the following circumstances:

- In accordance with the rules regarding job re evaluation, where there has been a natural progression of responsibilities attached to a position, such as an increase in positions reporting to the position or an increase in budget size / responsibility. Provided the re evaluation results in no more than one grade increase, the existing incumbent shall continue in the position.
- Where a position has been restructured and the new position is no more than one grade higher, Council may laterally transfer the existing incumbent into the new position to mitigate the adverse effects resulting from the restructure

In all other circumstances, positions will be advertised at least internally to allow suitably qualified persons to apply.

Council may consider employees requests for lateral transfer. Transfers will be based on the employee's experience, skills, abilities and qualifications compared to the job requirements.

HR.1.14 Job Vacancy – Review and Redesign

It is Council policy to investigate options whenever a vacancy occurs to ensure work is being carried out in the most efficient way. This provides Council with an opportunity to assess efficiency and affectivity levels in the workplace.

Prior to advertising, every position shall be examined by the appropriate Director or General Manager to ascertain whether the position should be filled and/or whether there is a better job redesign option.

Several principles must be observed in recruiting and selecting a replacement for a vacancy (see Policies HR.1.01 to HR.1.14). All selection must be on a merit basis – the best person for the job. Positions must be advertised in a manner sufficient to enable suitably qualified persons to apply. EEO principles must be observed at all stages of the process.

HR.1.15 Work Experience Policy

It is Council policy to participate in, facilitate and assist, whenever practicable, government labour market and community based work experience programmes.

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HR.1.16 Market Component Policy

It is Council Policy to provide remuneration that is sufficient to attract and retain suitably qualified and skilled employees in key positions, recognising that there will be occasions when the salary range provided under Council's Salary System will not be adequate to attract and / or retain such employees.

In such circumstances, the General Manager is authorised to negotiate a market component in excess of the Salary System rates, commensurate with the level and importance of the position and the difficulty in filling it.

Such market component shall form part of the employee's ordinary rate of pay and will attract pay increases provided under the Local Government (State) Award and Council's Salary System Progression Rules.

SECTION 2

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

HR.2.01 Award Coverage Policy

Council will abide by and comply with its obligations under the *Local Government (State) Award 2017* (or its equivalent) and, where applicable, any subsequent Award(s) introduced to cover employees in Council's employment.

HR.2.02 Variable Working Hours Policy

This Policy should be read in conjunction with [Policy # HR.6.12 \(Executive Leave\)](#)

It is Council policy to provide, where operationally practicable, a variable working hours scheme(s) for both indoor and outdoor staff, primarily to provide staff with an opportunity to introduce a degree of flexibility in their working hours so that they can meet personal and family commitments during normal work time.

The aim is to provide for an arrangement that is of mutual benefit to employees, the Council and the community that we serve. To achieve this intent, a spirit of cooperation and collaboration between team members and management is required in order to ensure customers and the public are not inconvenienced.

Council operates two (2) main variable working hours schemes, comprising a nine-day fortnight and a four-week rostered day off (RDO).

In addition, approved teams may work an eight-day fortnight during NSW Daylight Saving Time (DST), which generally falls from October to March each year.

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The worksites / staff covered by such arrangements are as follows:

Four (4) Week RDO	Nine (9) Day Fortnight	Eight (8) Day Fortnight *
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration / Finance staff; • Infrastructure administration and technical staff; • Development Planning and Regulatory administration and technical staff; • Life Choices Support Services staff; • Visitor Information Centre staff; • Quarry administration staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works staff; • Parks staff; • Workshop staff; • Stores staff; • Integrated Water Services staff; • Quarry staff; • Waste and Recovery Coordinator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works staff; • Integrated Water Services staff; • Workshop staff.

The conditions applying to the four-week RDO system are:

- To be eligible, employees must belong to one (1) of the participating workplaces listed above, be full-time and be working five (5) days per week;
- Employees who are employed on a 35-hour week will work an additional 22 minutes per day towards their RDO;
- Employees who are employed on a 38-hour week will work an additional 24 minutes per day towards their RDO;
- Subject to enough hours being accrued, an RDO will be taken every four (4) weeks on the agreed date;
- RDOs will not accrue on public holidays or during periods of leave;
- Employees may bank (accrue) a maximum of three (3) days in RDOs;
- An employee who wishes to bank an RDO and not take it on the due date must receive prior approval from his or her manager.

The conditions applying to the nine-day fortnight are:

- Employees will work 76 hours over nine (9) days each fortnight;
- One (1) day each fortnight will be taken as a day off (either a Friday or a Monday, depending on which work group employees belong to);
- The day off must be taken on the day it falls due and cannot be accumulated.

The conditions applying to the eight-day fortnight are:

- The teams or workgroups listed under the Eight (8) Day Fortnight column provided in this Policy comprise those teams which, due to the nature of their work, may be eligible to work an eight (8) day fortnight;

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- The listing of a workgroup or team as being eligible to work an eight (8) day fortnight in this Policy does not guarantee participation in such arrangements, which will be determined annually by agreement and will depend on operational requirements;
- The eight-day fortnight will only be worked during NSW Daylight Saving Time (October to March);
- Employees will work 76 hours over eight (8) days each fortnight;
- Two (2) days each fortnight will be taken as days off;
- The days off must be taken on the day they fall due and cannot be accumulated;
- The eight-day fortnight will only operate in work teams by genuine agreement and only where consensus is reached within the entire team.

In addition to the above arrangements, employees may elect to accumulate **time in lieu (TIL)** of overtime. The right to work overtime and accrue TIL is not automatic and employees must have prior approval on each occasion from the relevant manager / director.

TIL is to be accumulated to a maximum of 26 hours and taken at a mutually convenient time. Time in lieu may also be taken over the Christmas closedown period.

The General Manager is authorised to make changes to the variable working hours arrangements set out in this Policy without reference back to Council.

Such changes will be limited to adding or removing employees or work teams to the different arrangements set out in this Policy and are to be reflected in the next scheduled review of the Human Resources Policy Statement Register.

HR.2.03 Reporting and Recording Attendance Policy

It is Council policy to require all staff (with the exception of the General Manager) to complete attendance records (timesheets, leave sheets, overtime claims, etc), have them authorised and supplied to the pay office.

HR.2.04 Personnel File Policy

It is Council policy to ensure that up-to-date information is confidentially maintained for the administration of benefits and management of each employee.

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HR.2.05 Corporate Uniform Policy – Indoor Staff

It is Council policy to encourage its indoor employees to wear a corporate uniform to enhance the professional image of the organisation. As an incentive to wear the uniform, Council will assist with its purchase and replacement. For a full copy of the rules and conditions relating to the corporate uniform, refer to Council's Corporate Uniform Policy.

Note: Certain classes of indoor staff who are classified as 'at risk' of excessive exposure to UV radiation as part of their normal duties, as identified in Council's Sun Smart and Personal Protective Equipment Policy and Procedures, will be supplied with UV protective clothing in accordance with that Policy (refer to full Policy for details).

HR.2.06 Uniforms and Clothing – Outdoor Staff

It is Council policy to provide all outdoor staff with a uniform that meets both occupational health and safety requirements for outdoor workers and provides staff with a positive image easily recognisable within the community. Where protective clothing is supplied it must be worn for staff safety.

HR.2.07 Staff Identification Policy

It is Council policy to require staff to wear a name badge supplied by Council or, in the case of staff positions where a badge is not practicable, a uniform with appropriate wording / logo. Name badges will indicate:

1. That the wearer is an employee of Glen Innes Severn Council.
2. The employee's first name, last name and position title.

If there is a genuine security issue associated with the display of last names, the relevant Director may apply to the General Manager to have first names only displayed for certain categories of staff.

Employees who are required to enter private homes or properties, as a regular part of their normal duties, will be supplied with photo ID cards to ensure the security of Council's customers.

HR.2.08 Probationary Period Policy

It is Council policy that all new employees undergo a probationary period of three months when they commence with Council.

The only exceptions to this policy are:

1. Casual employees and those on employment contracts of a short term nature.

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2. Government funded trainees, who may be appointed on probation periods of one (1) to three (3) months.
3. The General Manager, Directors and managers who, having regard to the nature of their duties, may be appointed on a probation period of up to six (6) months.
4. Employees appointed under the Professional / Specialist Band of the *Local Government (State) Award 2017*, who may be appointed on a probationary period of up to six (6) months when it can be clearly demonstrated, by reference to the duties and responsibilities of the position, that a longer probation period is justified in order to adequately assess the new employee's suitability for the position.

The appointment of any employee on a probation period that is longer than the standard three (3) months must not be undertaken without sufficient justification and is not to be used in substitution for proper and timely performance management during the probation period.

All new employees who are appointed on a probation period, regardless of its length, are to be given adequate and clear supervision and performance feedback from day one (1) of their employment.

Probation periods will include monthly (bimonthly for six (6) month periods) formal performance reviews, to facilitate early detection of issues and provide new employees with the maximum opportunity for successful completion of their probation.

SECTION 3

REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

HR.3.01 Salary Administration Policy

It is Council policy to pay equitable wages and salaries based upon the principles contained in Council's Salary System and in accordance with the skill descriptors in the *Local Government (State) Award 2017* (or its equivalent).

HR.3.02 Long Term Staff Recognition Policy

It is Council policy to recognise long term staff, with 10 or more year's service, with the presentation of the following rewards:

10 years service	Certificate of Service / \$200 gift voucher
20 years service	Certificate of Service / \$300 gift voucher
30 years service	Certificate of Service / \$400 gift voucher
40 years service	Certificate of Service / \$500 gift voucher

(Gift vouchers, where available, will be with the retailer of the recipient's choosing)

Service recognition awards (10 years or greater) will substitute for termination gifts ([Policy HR.5.07](#)) when received within six (6) months of the employee's termination date.

For the purpose of calculating length of service, periods of casual employment shall count, provided there is no break between the casual employment and permanent employment.

HR.3.03 Mobile Telephone Policy

It is Council policy to provide new technology including mobile telephones to authorised staff in order to increase customer service and the efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

Every effort shall be made to ensure the service acquired is the most cost effective and payment of accounts will only relate to business use.

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HR.3.04 Vehicle Leaseback Policy

It is Council policy, where practicable, to provide employees in nominated positions with the opportunity to have private use of a Council owned vehicle under a vehicle leaseback arrangement. The aim of this policy is to make Council competitive with other employers in terms of attracting and retaining skilled and qualified staff in key positions, without sacrificing the principle of participants in the scheme making an appropriate contribution for private use based on the true cost to Council of providing the vehicle.

Employees entering into a leaseback arrangement must comply with their obligations under Council's Motor Vehicle Leaseback Policy and Motor Vehicle Leaseback Agreement and Terms and Conditions and must pay the leaseback fee nominated by Council.

HR.3.05 Provision of Amenities at Permanent Workplaces

It is Council policy to provide appropriate amenities at all permanent workplaces in accordance with the *SafeWork NSW Code of Practice for Managing the Work Environment and Facilities*.

Such amenities will include, as a minimum, suitable toilets, staff washing facilities, a suitable eating area, hot and cold running water, facilities for washing and storage of utensils, facilities for the hygienic storage and heating of food, facilities for boiling water, adequate seating and tables, appropriate crockery and cutlery, and a refrigerator.

Council will also meet the reasonable cost of tea, coffee, milk and sugar for staff consumption. Cakes, biscuits etc will not be provided by Council.

HR.3.06 Provision of Amenities for Construction Work

Refer to [Policy HR.7.11](#)

SECTION 4

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

HR.4.01 Training and Development Policy

It is Council policy to encourage employees to participate in training and courses of study that improve their skills and knowledge, and will assist them to become more effective members of the work force. Glen Innes Severn Council is committed to providing training for all staff to raise work place skills and develop employees to their full potential. Some training will be compulsory.

HR.4.02 Staff Training and Conferences – Payment of Expenses and Wages Policy

It is Council policy to assist staff (other than senior or executive staff attending conferences – refer to [Policy HR.4.03](#)) with the equitable payment of expenses associated with attending work-related training, conferences and seminars.

Council will meet the following expenses associated with employees' attending work-related training:

Attendance Fees Council will pay the full cost of training and conference fees for employees attending approved work-related training or conferences.

Transport Council will provide a suitable vehicle or will pay reasonable travel expenses to the value of a standard or economy bus / rail / air fare. Should employees be required to use their own vehicles to attend training, reimbursement shall be at the appropriate award rate per kilometre. In the case of air fares, the rate will be based on the nearest available airport.

Accommodation The cost of a standard single motel or hotel room,

Telephone Calls Employees' private calls to a maximum of \$5 per day and the full cost of business calls.

Meals / Drinks Council will reimburse employees' meals and drinks to the maximum stipulated by the Australian Taxation Office and advised through Australia Wide Taxation and Training, with actual amounts to be determined by the location of the training. Human resources staff will ensure that the current rates are updated on 1 July each year and uploaded to Council's intranet.

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- Mini Bar** Council will not pay for any mini bar consumables. All such consumables shall be at employees' own expense.
- Incidental Costs** Council will meet the cost of all work-related incidental expenses and charges such as parking fees, tolls, fares and fuel (where a fuel card is not provided).
- Cash Advances** Cash advances may be made to cover anticipated expenses, subject to the approval of the relevant manager / director and a full account of expenses on return to work. Cash advances not expended and all expense receipts must be returned in full to Council within one (1) week of returning to work following training.
- Wages / Overtime** Due to the mutual benefit that training provides, it is considered reasonable that employees will not claim overtime (including time in lieu of overtime) for travelling to or from or attending training; however, if the training is deemed compulsory then overtime will be paid.

HR.4.03 **Senior / Executive (Manex) Staff Conferences – Travel and Accommodation Expenses Policy**

It is Council policy to consider applications for attendance of senior / executive staff at seminars and conferences, having regard to the merits of each individual case. When evaluating the application, consideration will have regard to:

1. Location of the conference / seminar,
2. Topic value and relevance to Council needs,
3. Achievement of minimum disruption to Council's business,
4. Costs associated with the conference/seminar.

Glen Innes Severn Council further recognises the benefit to Council from attendance by senior / executive staff at the Annual State Conferences of their professional associations. It is Council policy to approve attendance at such conferences on the following conditions:

- Actual travelling expenses up to a maximum amount equivalent to a return air fare ticket between Glen Innes and the place where the conference is held;
- Actual accommodation expenses appropriate to the particular conference venue; as stipulated by the Australian Taxation Office and advised through Australia Wide Taxation and Training.
- Reasonable cost for meals appropriate to the particular conference and/or activity (as a guide, refer to [Policy HR.4.02](#), Meals);

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- Reasonable entertainment expenses that are a scheduled part of the conference activities,
- Payment of the professional association conference fees.

HR.4.04 Conferences – Payment of Registration Fees for Council Staff Presenting Conference Papers Policy

It is Council policy to approve the payment of the full registration fees for those staff members invited to present papers to professional conferences on behalf of themselves and Council.

HR.4.05 Payment of Professional Association Membership Fees Policy

It is Council policy to pay professional association membership fees for staff where the membership of a professional association is essential for the employee's job or was a substantial determinant in selecting an employee. Such payments shall be limited to one (1) membership per employee per year.

HR.4.06 Study Incentives Policy

Glen Innes Severn Council encourages its employees to further develop their knowledge and skills through approved courses which are relevant to the workplace and which are conducted by recognised institutions.

It is Council policy to provide the following study incentives for approved courses that are relevant to an employee's area of work:

Study Grants	Council will reimburse one-half of course fees and other compulsory expenses for successfully completed studies.
Study Loans	Council will provide interest free study assistance loans for approved courses, repayable via payroll deductions.
Study Leave (Exams)	Council will provide paid study leave on full pay for exam preparation (maximum one (1) day per exam) plus leave for exam attendance.
Study Leave (Other)	Council will also provide paid leave amounting to 50% of time off to attend <u>compulsory</u> work placements, residential schools, workshops and lectures. Maximum paid study leave (other) will be one (1) week per financial year.

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Other Incentives Council will approve reasonable use of office equipment and stationery for study and essential communication with training providers.

HR.4.07 Staff Performance Appraisal / Competency Assessment Policy

It is Council policy to ensure that all staff members (excluding the General Manager) have access to skills / performance assessment in accordance with Council's Salary System. Participation in assessments within the Salary System is compulsory.

The General Manager and Directors shall have their performance appraised annually. The aim of the performance appraisal process is to assess performance of the individual against set criteria, assist in the improvement of communication and working relationships, and to establish the developmental needs of the employee.

Staff other than the General Manager and Directors shall have their skills / performance reviewed annually in accordance with the assessment rules and procedures set out in Council's Salary System Progression Rules. Such annual reviews will be tied to salary progression within Council's skills based salary system.

A formal appraisal / assessment should present no surprises, as informal discussions should occur throughout the period leading up to the appraisal.

HR.4.08 Higher Grade / Learning Opportunity Policy

Refer also to Council Policy No. HR.4.09: Manex Members – Acting in Higher Grade

It is Council policy to provide learning opportunities for staff by way of acting-up roles in the organisation. This will only be with prior approval of the appropriate Director and where it meets the needs of the organisation to have a replacement during the absence of the usual incumbent.

When approved to relieve in a higher grade position, employees will be paid the appropriate rate for the position relieved, except when the higher level skills have already been identified and remunerated within the employee's current position description or skill steps.

The higher rate to be paid will be determined by considering the skills / experience applied by the employee relieving in the position but shall be at least the minimum rate for the relieved position in accordance with Council's Salary System. The following rules will apply:

- An employee who is required to relieve in a higher grade position within the salary system, where the two (2) grades are overlapping in pay, will be placed on the higher grade at the step immediately higher than his / her normal rate.

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- Where there is no overlap in pay rates, the relieving employee will be paid at least entry level to the higher grade.

If a staff member is required to relieve in a higher paid position, his or her manager or supervisor must discuss and agree with the employee in advance, on the proportion of the employee's time that will be spent relieving in the higher position. Considering the actual job requirements and the need for higher duties to be performed, the agreed proportion of relief hours will be 50%, 75% or 100%.

For all positions being relieved, except non-supervisory positions in the Operational Band of the Award, the agreed hours and arrangements must be approved in advance by the relevant Director using the form prescribed for this purpose.

Relieving in a higher grade position will not occur automatically but will be subject to proper planning aimed at minimising the need for higher grade work where possible. Generally, it should not be necessary for supervisory or managerial positions to be relieved unless they are vacant for more than five (5) days.

The relieving employee's timesheet must clearly show the time spent in the higher grade position and the appropriate grade / step, and be signed by the employee and direct supervisor. Where applicable, the supervisor should also provide the Pay Officer with the approval form confirming the nature, duration and other details of the relief work, following approval by the Director.

HR.4.09 Manex Members – Acting in Higher Grade

It is Council policy that no appointment shall be made to the temporary position of Acting General Manager or Acting Director unless the General Manager or the Director is absent on leave for a period of five (5) consecutive working days or longer or is outside Australia.

The requirement for a Manex member to be absent for five (5) consecutive working days only applies to periods of annual leave, long service leave, sick leave (including carer's leave) or special leave. No relief appointment will be made when the Manex member is absent from work to attend conferences or other work-related functions, irrespective of the length of the absence.

In the case of a director being absent for work for any purpose, the General Manager can approve a lesser period than five (5) days for another staff member to act as director if this is deemed essential to maintaining operational requirements.

In situations where an Acting General Manager or Acting Director is appointed to act in the absence of the usual incumbent, the person so appointed will be paid higher duties pay.

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HR.4.10 Employee Assistance Program

It is Council policy to establish and maintain an **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** to help employees to maintain healthy levels of emotional and physical well being. The EAP is designed to provide short term counselling and referral services to employees who may be experiencing a range of emotional problems. Participation is voluntary and completely confidential.

SECTION 5

EMPLOYEE SEPARATION

HR.5.01 Issue of Reference under Seal

In accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the Council is not permitted to issue references under the Common Seal of Council as it does not constitute "Council Business".

HR.5.02 Issue of Certificates of Service Policy

It is Council policy to issue, on request, a Certificate of Service to employees on termination from Council. As is required by the Award, Council will provide a Certificate of Transfer to another Council should the employee be eligible for continuous service with that Council.

HR.5.03 References Policy

It is Council policy to only allow persons with delegated authority from the General Manager to issue references on behalf of Council, using Council letterhead. Under no circumstances will staff without that authority issue such Council references.

HR.5.04 Retrenchment/Redundancy Policy

Redundancy is not favoured at Glen Innes Severn Council, particularly for non-management positions. Where practicable, there is guaranteed employment for current permanent staff, subject to:

- (i) Willingness on the part of staff to work and to gain the skills deemed necessary to achieve the required work outcomes in both current and possible new positions.
- (ii) Staff acceptance of the need for flexibility, multi-skilling and improved work practices.
- (iii) Acceptance that jobs in the future may not be the same and that:
 - the nature and expectations of the job may change;
 - employees may be moved to new and different positions provided they are given the required training to obtain the necessary skills.

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Any deemed necessary reduction in staff numbers should be, as far as possible, by natural attrition, except perhaps at senior management or specialist level positions where circumstances may result in suitable alternative employment not being available. Should a redundancy become unavoidable it will be dealt with strictly in accordance with the terms of the appropriate Award.

HR.5.05 Abandonment of Employment Policy

It is Council policy to issue a letter notifying “abandonment of employment”, after seven (7) days, should an employee fail to notify or report for duty, and after reasonable attempts have been made by Council through the employee’s director / manager / supervisor, to contact that employee.

HR.5.06 Exit Interviews

It is Council policy to conduct exit interviews with employees upon retirement, resignation and termination of service, in order to allow such staff the opportunity to state their reasons and provide opinion on how the working environment of Council and/or job satisfaction could be improved.

HR.5.07 Gifts on Termination of Employment

It is Council policy to present employees who have completed at least five (5) years service, and whose service is terminated for any cause other than poor performance or misconduct, with a gift to the value of \$100.00, plus \$10.00 for each completed year of service greater than five (5) years.

If termination occurs within six (6) months of an employee receiving a service recognition award, the service recognition award will count as the termination gift and no further gift will be made (refer [Policy HR.3.02](#)).

SECTION 6

LEAVE

HR.6.01 Annual Leave

It is Council's policy to provide employees with annual leave in accordance with the appropriate award or statute.

The taking of such leave is to be at a mutually convenient time and is to be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor or relevant Director. Except in emergency situations, employees are required to give at least two (2) weeks notice when applying for annual leave.

Line managers / supervisor with delegated authority to approve leave shall only approve annual leave applications of up to four (4) weeks per instance. Leave applications in excess of four (4) weeks shall be referred to the relevant Director for approval.

It is Council's policy to restrict the accumulation of annual leave to eight (8) weeks maximum.

Council may, at its discretion, direct employees to take annual leave in conjunction with:

- an annual close down of up to four (4) weeks, or
- where the employee has accumulated in excess of the maximum accrual.

Under such circumstances, Council shall provide employees with a minimum of four (4) weeks prior notification.

To reduce Council's leave liability, staff with large annual leave entitlements will be actively encouraged to take advantage of provisions in the Local Government (State) Award permitting leave to be taken at either half or double pay, or to be paid in lieu of a period of annual leave. Such arrangements are subject to the approval of the relevant Director.

HR.6.02 Sick Leave

It is Council policy to manage sick leave absences in accordance with the Local Government (State) Award.

It is the responsibility of the person applying for sick leave to ensure that the sick leave is justified and in accordance with the Award.

It is the responsibility of the person approving the leave to be satisfied with the appropriateness of the leave and to ensure that the applicant has enough leave accrued.

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HR.6.03 Long Service Leave

It is Council's policy to provide employees with long service leave in accordance with the appropriate award or statute.

The taking of such leave is to be at a mutually convenient time and is to be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor or relevant Director. Except in emergency situations, employees are required to give at least three (3) weeks notice when applying for long service leave.

Line managers / supervisor with delegated authority to approve leave shall only approve long service leave applications of up to four (4) weeks per instance. Leave applications in excess of four (4) weeks shall be referred to the relevant Director for approval.

It is Council's policy to enforce the taking of long service leave in accordance with relevant award provisions. In the case of the *Local Government (State) Award 2017* (or its equivalent), long service leave shall be taken within five (5) years of it falling due.

To reduce Council's leave liability, staff with large long service leave entitlements will be actively encouraged to take advantage of provisions in the Local Government (State) Award permitting leave to be taken at either half or double pay, or to be "cashed out" if the leave is in excess of what the employee would have accrued under the *Long Service Leave Act 1955*. Such arrangements are subject to the approval of the relevant Director.

HR.6.04 Carer's Leave Policy

It is Council's policy to provide employees with carer's leave in accordance with the Local Government (State) Award.

It is the responsibility of the person applying for carer's leave to complete their leave application fully and provide sufficient evidence that the carer's leave is justified and in accordance with the Award.

It is the responsibility of the person approving the leave to be satisfied with the appropriateness of the leave and to ensure that the applicant has enough leave accrued.

Carer's leave applications must be approved by the relevant Director NOT the supervisor / line manager.

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HR.6.05 Health and Wellbeing Leave

It is Council's policy to provide eligible employees with up to two (2) days paid leave per calendar year from their accrued sick leave balance to participate in an approved health and / or wellbeing activity, subject to the following:

1. The granting of paid leave is at the discretion of Council;
2. The taking of paid leave must not result in the employee having an accumulated sick leave balance of less than two (2) weeks; and
3. Council may require proof of participation in the health and / or wellbeing activity to justify payment.

Health and wellbeing leave is intended to be used for the purpose of attending medical appointments, dental appointments and other activities designed to proactively manage employees' health and wellbeing and that are not covered by usual sick leave. The granting of health and wellbeing leave must meet these guidelines and is subject to the consent of Council.

HR.6.06 Paid Maternity Leave Policy

It is Council's policy to extend the provisions of paid maternity leave under the *Local Government (State) Award 2017* (or its equivalent), comprising nine (9) weeks on full pay or eighteen weeks on half pay, to all female staff employed under other awards or agreements, unless specifically excluded by the individual agreement. Such leave is granted subject to other staff meeting the minimum qualifying conditions in the *Local Government (State) Award 2017* (or its equivalent).

HR.6.07 Defence Service Leave Policy

It is Council policy to encourage and support its employees involved in Defence Reserve service. The Council believes that Reservists are a vital component of the Australian Defence Force and that it is in the national interest to ensure that Reservists are appropriately supported in their employment.

To this end, Council will ensure that employees are not disadvantaged in their employment because of their Reserve service. In addition, Council will provide Reservists with two (2) weeks defence service leave on make-up pay each service year.

HR.6.08 Emergency Services Volunteer Leave Policy

It is Council policy to recognise and support the vital contribution that volunteers make to emergency services.

Council will ensure that employees are not disadvantaged in their employment because of volunteer service with the Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service and Volunteer Rescue Association.

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In addition to Award entitlements, which must be used first, Council will provide volunteers with one (1) weeks leave per service year on full pay to attend legitimate emergencies and essential training exercises within the Glen Innes Severn Council area with one (1) or more of the above organisations, or outside the Council area if called up by the relevant state governing body to attend a state or national emergency.

Note: Emergency services volunteer leave shall not be additional to retained fire fighters leave. The maximum combined total for all types of leave will be one (1) week per year.

HR.6.09 Retained Fire Fighters Leave Policy

It is Council policy to recognise and support the vital contribution that retained fire fighters make to NSW Fire Brigades.

Council will ensure that employees are not disadvantaged in their employment because of retained service with NSW Fire Brigades. In addition to Award entitlements, which must be used first, Council will provide retained fire fighters with one (1) weeks leave per service year without loss of pay to attend fire fighting emergencies and essential training exercises within the Glen Innes Severn Council area.

Note: Retained fire fighters leave shall not be additional to emergency services volunteer leave. The maximum combined total for all types of leave will be one (1) week per year.

HR.6.10 Leave without Pay for Recreational Purposes

Note: This Policy applies to applications for leave without pay taken for recreational purposes. It does not apply to unpaid parental / maternity leave or unpaid sick / emergency leave.

It is Council policy to consider applications for leave without pay from staff members having not less than twelve months service, having regard for the merits of each case and the performance of the employee concerned, subject to the following conditions:

1. Leave shall be taken at a mutually convenient time and Council reserves the right to refuse leave.
2. Other paid leaves (annual, long service, accrued, etc) must be used before leave without pay will be approved.
3. The period of leave without pay shall be no less than one (1) week.
4. The total period of absence on leave, including all paid leaves, shall not exceed three (3) months (thirteen weeks).
5. The employee concerned must agree to pay to Council the employee's contribution to the applicable superannuation fund

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for the period of absence on leave without pay, if applicable in terms of such fund's definition of "Leave Without Pay".

6. The employee must acknowledge in writing that long service leave, sick leave and annual leave entitlements will not accrue during the period of absence on leave without pay.
7. The maximum leave without pay that can be taken shall be one (1) period in every two (2) service years.

All requests for leave without pay for recreational purposes are subject to the approval of the General Manager.

HR.6.11 Accrued Leave

It is Council policy to keep to a minimum the balance owing to staff for accrued leave, being a combination of RDOs (where staff are authorised to accumulate RDOs) and time in lieu of overtime. Managers will be required to monitor accumulations by their staff within the following mechanism:

1. Except under exceptional circumstances, staff cannot accrue more than six (6) days leave, comprising a maximum of three (3) rostered days off and three (3) days time in lieu of overtime.
2. All accrued leave must be taken prior to any use of annual leave or long service leave.
3. Accrued leave must be taken within 12 months of it being accrued.

HR.6.12 Executive Leave

It is Council's policy to grant an additional five (5) days paid leave per financial year to its Executive Management Team members (General Manager and departmental Directors). Such leave shall be given as a token of appreciation for the employees' commitment and the working of additional out-of-office hours, and as an incentive to retain these employees by assisting them to achieve work-life balance. This leave is subject to the following:

1. Employees entitled to Executive Leave shall not be entitled to participate in Council's Variable Working Hours Policy (Policy HR.2.02).
2. No more than two (2) consecutive days leave are to be taken at any one (1) time, except during the annual Christmas close down (Christmas to New Year).
3. Any leave not taken within the financial year in which it is granted will be forfeited and will not be carried forward into the next financial year.
4. Directors must obtain written approval from the General Manager prior to taking any leave, following the approved procedures applicable at the time.

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5. The General Manager must obtain written approval from the Mayor prior to taking any leave, following the approved procedures applicable at the time.
6. The Payroll Officer will be responsible for administrating Executive Leave in accordance with this Policy.

SECTION 7

HEALTH AND SAFETY

HR.7.01 Work Health and Safety (WHS) Policy

It is Council policy to provide a safe and healthy work environment for employees, contractors, volunteers, customers and visitors. This commitment extends to ensuring that the organisation's operations are conducted in such a manner as to minimise the risk of injury or illness to all persons at the workplace.

To achieve this, Council will:

- Provide a safe place of work, including safe plant, equipment and systems of work.
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements and current industry standards.
- Consult with employees on all safety matters.
- Provide written procedures and instructions to ensure safe systems of work.
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to employees, contractors, volunteers and customers to ensure their safety.
- Provide support and assistance to employees.

HR.7.02 Injury Management and Return to Work Policy

It is Council policy to provide a safe, productive and happy workplace and in the event of an accident, a mechanism to ensure that the employee is returned to the workforce, either to full duties or a position which recognises and is within the employee's physical capacity. As such Council shall have in place a safety program and an injury management and return to work program to:

1. Prevent, as far as is practicable, occupational injuries and illnesses by providing a safe and healthy environment.
2. Where injury does occur – ensure the early commencement of occupational rehabilitation by starting the return to work process as soon as possible after injury or illness occurs, in a manner consistent with medical opinion.
3. Develop an attitude within the workplace, which ensures that a return to work as soon as possible after injury is a normal expectation.
4. Provide suitable duties to injured staff members so as to enable them to return to work when they are partially incapacitated and thus participate in the workplace based return to work program.

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5. Consult with staff and, where applicable, any industrial union representing workers, both in the development and implementation of the general return to work program.
6. Develop mechanisms to ensure that participation in a return to work program will not, of itself, prejudice or disadvantage an injured worker.

HR.7.03 Vaccination Policy

It is Council policy to maintain the health and safety of staff by providing protection via a vaccination program to those staff considered to be at risk from occupational diseases such as Hepatitis A and B. To this end, Council will develop an immunisation program in line with recommendations in the National Immunisation Handbook.

HR.7.04 Sun Safety Awareness Policy

It is Council policy that all staff will be offered information regarding skin cancer due to sun exposure. Staff members are required to wear suitable apparel issued by Council (under [Policy HR.2.06](#)), which offers appropriate protection for the skin, including three quarter length sleeved shirts, broad brimmed hats or legionnaire style caps, long shorts or trousers. Staff should use factor 30+ sun screen lotion on all areas of exposed skin and apply this at recommended intervals. Efforts should be made, where possible, to work in the shade.

HR.7.05 Emergency Evacuation Policy

It is Council policy to establish comprehensive procedures to safeguard staff, other personnel on site, neighbouring occupants and dwellings and to minimise disruption to normal business, should an emergency occur. To this end, emergency staff will be appointed and trained and all staff will be made aware of evacuation procedures including regular evacuation drills.

HR.7.06 Alcohol and/or Drug Abuse in the Workplace Policy

It is Council policy to provide a safe workplace environment by ensuring it is free from the influences of drugs and alcohol. This policy is directed towards maintaining a satisfactory level of employee health, safety and work performance and addresses both the welfare of the individual and the health and safety of others.

The use of illicit substances and alcohol in the workplace whilst on duty – including Council premises and buildings, parks, reserves, vehicles and plant – is prohibited. The General Manager (within the law) may waive this requirement where circumstances warrant – for example a staff farewell, staff party, Christmas party or a Council sponsored social event.

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Staff members are required to present themselves for work in an unaffected state. Employees who are taking prescribed drugs that may affect or inhibit their work performance or safety have a duty to report such medications to their supervisor, who will determine an appropriate course of action.

Employees who voluntarily seek help for drug and / or alcohol use / dependence will be offered support via Council's Employee Assistance Program in overcoming this dependence.

HR.7.07 First Aid Policy

It is Council policy to ensure that procedures are in place to ensure that adequate first aid facilities are provided, such facilities are appropriately maintained, relevant information is available to all persons, and appropriate first aid training is provided.

Council will also ensure that first aid responsibilities are included, where appropriate, in position descriptions.

HR.7.08 Driver Licence Policy

It is Council policy that all new employees who are employed to drive Council vehicles (either as a driver, or allocated a vehicle as part of their employment conditions) will hold and continue to hold a valid and current NSW driver's licence. This includes permanent, temporary or casual staff. The Work Health and Safety Coordinator will verify the licence, a copy of which will be placed on the appropriate file.

It is the responsibility of employees to immediately notify Council in the event of loss of licence. Depending on the nature of the employment and individual circumstances, failure to notify loss of licence may result in disciplinary action and / or loss of employment.

HR.7.09 Smoking in the Workplace Policy

It is Council policy to prohibit smoking in enclosed or semi enclosed Council work places, including vehicles and plant, and within 10 metres of any building or work crew, in the interest of maintaining a safe and healthy work environment and protecting employees and visitors from passive smoking illnesses

Council will assist employees who wish to give up smoking by the issue of free QUIT packs and referral to Council's Employee Assistance Program.

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HR.7.10 **Medical Examinations (Pre-Employment) Policy**

It is Council policy to ensure that all employees meet the minimum physical and medical requirements for positions to ensure their health and safety, by undergoing appropriate pre-placement medicals. Refer to [Policy HR.1.06](#) for details.

HR.7.11 **Provision of Amenities for Construction Work**

It is Council policy, where practicable, to provide appropriate amenities at all construction sites in accordance with the SafeWork NSW Code of Practice for Managing the Work Environment and Facilities.

HR.7.12 **Long Distance Driving Policy**

It is Council policy to establish practices and procedures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees who are required to drive long distances as part of their working day.

Employees who are required to drive long distances are to take rest breaks of a minimum of five (5) minutes every two (2) hours to combat driver fatigue. Such breaks are to be recorded in the appropriate logbook or form.

If total combined driving and training / work time is likely to exceed twelve hours in a day, employees are to break their journey by staying overnight in appropriate accommodation.

SECTION 8

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

HR.8.01 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy

Council is committed to providing a workplace that is free of harassment and discrimination and eliminating those factors and barriers that impede access to equal employment opportunities. To achieve this Council will, through its EEO Management Plan and program, ensure that:

- (i) All current and future staff are given equal opportunity when applying for employment, promotion and training;
- (ii) Discriminatory practices are removed from personnel, recruitment and training procedures;
- (iii) Staff are selected on their merits and the skills required for the job, regardless of their age, pregnancy, race, sex, colour, marital status, physical or intellectual disability or sexual preference;
- (iv) Council policies are continuously reviewed to eliminate any discrimination;
- (v) Physical barriers to employment are removed.

HR.8.02 Workplace Discrimination and Bullying / Harassment Policy

Glen Innes Severn Council considers workplace bullying and harassment unacceptable and will not tolerate such behaviour under any circumstances.

Workplace bullying is *'the repeated less favourable treatment of a person by another or others in the workplace, which may be considered unreasonable and inappropriate workplace practice'*. It may include behaviour that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates an employee, or repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, that may undermine an individual's dignity at work.

Council is committed to ensuring that it provides its employees with a work environment that is free from bullying and harassment and accordingly has developed procedures to deal with such behaviour.

Refer to Council's Workplace Discrimination and Bullying / Harassment Policy and Procedures for further information and a full copy of the procedures for resolving bullying or harassment issues.

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HR.8.03 Workplace Grievance Resolution Procedure

It is Council policy to provide a mechanism by which aggrieved employees may receive prompt, fair and consistent consideration of their complaints, employment problems within the organisation are resolved in a spirit of fairness and cooperation, and grievances are minimised by taking early preventative or corrective action.

To this end, Council has Grievance Resolution Procedures, which deal with the resolution of grievances and harassment in the workplace. The procedures are designed to protect the rights of all employees and will contribute to a more consultative and better work environment.

Refer to Council's Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedures for further information and a full copy of the procedures for resolving grievances.

HR.8.04 Unsatisfactory Performance / Disciplinary Procedures Policy

It is Council policy to ensure that all employees are treated with fairness and consistency through the establishment of procedures for dealing with unsatisfactory work performance and/or conduct. The process as described in the relevant award will be adhered to.

Appropriate warnings will be given and / or disciplinary action will be taken if, after establishment of the facts, any staff member is found to be at fault/guilty of any of the following:

- (i) Any form of conduct, in the performance of a staff member's duties, which may cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment or which contravenes Council's Code of Conduct, or which may be interpreted by any reasonable person to constitute misconduct;
- (ii) Using alcohol or illicit substances, or being under the influence of alcohol or illicit substances, while at work,
- (iii) Any wilful disobedience or disregard of any lawful and reasonable direction made or given by any person having authority to give such direction;
- (iv) Negligence or carelessness in the discharge of his/her duties;
- (v) Unsatisfactory work performance, inefficiency or incompetence;
- (vi) Any disgraceful or improper conduct such as to bring discredit on the Council or otherwise prejudice his/her ability to function in their position;
- (vii) Harassment or bullying of other employees;
- (viii) Wilful misuse of council property, irrespective of value;

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- (ix) Theft of or wilful damage to council property, irrespective of value;
- (x) Failure to comply with Work Health and Safety standards and requirements;
- (xi) Poor attendance and/or punctuality;
- (xii) Serious misconduct; or
- (xiii) Corrupt conduct.

Appropriate disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to:

- (i) Counselling of staff member;
- (ii) Implementation of a Performance Improvement Plan (in cases of unsatisfactory work performance);
- (iii) Admonishment or reprimand;
- (iv) A written warning;
- (v) Demotion to a lower grade either permanently or for a period to be determined;
- (vi) Suspension from duty without pay for a specific period;
- (vii) Dismissal, including summary dismissal, for gross misconduct or where continual breaches and counselling have failed to resolve the matter (consistent with the relevant award and legislative requirements).

If disciplinary action is necessary, Council will follow a process that affords the employee the benefit of 'procedural fairness', which means that, following a proper investigation of the facts and circumstances, the employee will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

To ensure procedural fairness, the following minimum steps should be taken:

- (i) A meeting will be held with the employee to discuss the matters that are the subject of the disciplinary process. The employee will be given advance notice of the meeting and what will be discussed at the meeting, and his / her right to have a support person present;
- (ii) At the meeting the issue(s) of concern(s) or allegation(s) will be put to the employee, including, where appropriate, any evidence upon which those concerns or allegations are based. The employee should be provided with sufficient information to enable them to properly understand the nature of the issue(s) of concern or allegation(s);

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- (iii) The employee will be given an adequate opportunity to respond to the concerns or allegation(s);
- (iv) The director / manager will, in conjunction with human resources staff, consider the employee's response and make any further enquires or investigations that may be necessary;
- (v) After making any further enquiries or investigations which may be necessary and after consideration of the response or explanation of the employee, the director / manager will determine whether the concern(s) or allegation(s) have been proven or substantiated on the balance of probabilities;
- (vi) If it is determined that all or some of the concerns or allegations are proven / substantiated and the Council considers that disciplinary action is appropriate, the employee should be given the opportunity to respond to the proposed disciplinary action;
- (vii) At any stage the employee is entitled to request and have a union representative or support person present.

In the event that an investigation is required, Council will endeavour to investigate all allegations of unsatisfactory performance, unacceptable conduct, or wilful or serious misconduct by an employee fairly and promptly.

Before Council takes disciplinary action against an employee, the employee should be provided with written notice of the following:

- (i) The disciplinary action to be taken;
- (ii) The grounds on which the disciplinary action is taken; and
- (iii) The particulars of conduct claimed to support the grounds.

The employee should be given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the information contained in the written notice. Council will give consideration to any issues raised by the employee before disciplinary action is implemented.

The procedures outlined above are intended as a guide only to the disciplinary procedures which may be implemented by Council and should be read in conjunction with the Disciplinary Procedures of the *Local Government (State) Award 2017*. In every case, the actual disciplinary procedure to be adopted will be a matter for Council's discretion, having regard to the employee's position and after consideration of the circumstances of the case as a whole.

Nothing in this Policy prevents Council from issuing a final warning at any stage of the process. Similarly, if the circumstances warrant, nothing in this Policy prevents Council from dismissing an employee at any stage of the procedure set out in this Policy, for example in circumstances involving wilful or serious misconduct by an employee.

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HR.8.05 Workplace Display Material Policy

It is Council policy to maintain a healthy environment, free from harassment and racism and to ensure that its workplace reflects community expectations and does not have the potential to be offensive.

The aim of this policy is to eliminate from Council workplaces the display of sexually and racially denigrating material and any other material likely to cause offence.

HR.8.06 Child Protection (Employment Screening) Policy

Glen Innes Severn Council recognises its responsibility to all children and young people who use Council services and is committed to these services being provided in a safe and healthy environment – without any abuse or ill treatment.

All positions involving child-related employment, as defined in the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*, will be identified and staff appointed to such positions will be required to undergo a *Working with Children Check*.

HR.8.07 Child Protection (Reporting of Allegations of Abuse) Policy

In accordance with legislative requirements, Glen Innes Severn Council will develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures to deal with and report allegations of child abuse made against staff members.

HR.8.08 Interaction Between Staff and Councillors

Glen Innes Severn Council supports the following principles regarding the interaction between staff and councillors:

1. The General Manager is responsible to the Council for the performance and direction of all staff, as well as the day-to-day management of the Council. As such, the General Manager forms the communication link between staff members and councillors. However, the General Manager acknowledges the impracticality of directing all communication through him, and has authorised Directors to assist in this task.
2. It is therefore appropriate that all councillor requests for advice, information and approaches to staff (outside the forum of a Council or Committee Meeting) be directed to the General Manager or applicable Director.
3. Similarly, it is appropriate for staff members not to approach councillors directly on any staffing or political issues. Such approaches should be made via their Director.
4. All written communications (including emails) addressed to councillors are to be signed / undertaken by the General Manager or a Director.

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The last mentioned principle is to ensure that correspondence with councillors is coordinated in a professional manner and to ensure that good, accurate and concise advice, which does not cut across one another or other departments, is always given. The General Manager and Directors are in the best position to formulate advice on across-the-organisation knowledge and Council's general policies. This policy is not intended in any way to restrict information.

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SECTION 9

CODE OF CONDUCT

HR.9.01 Code of Conduct

It is Council policy to rigidly enforce Council's adopted Code of Conduct for Staff, as supplied and explained to every employee on the first day they commence with Council. The induction manual and program also reinforce the standards expected of staff and compulsory training and information will be supplied on a regular basis.

HR.9.02 Misconduct Policy

Council will not tolerate misconduct and members of staff must refrain from any form of conduct, in the performance of their duties, which may cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment or which contravenes the Code of Conduct.

All matters considered as being misconduct will be dealt with under the provisions of [Policy HR.8.04](#) – Disciplinary Policy, the *Local Government Act* and the appropriate Award.

HR.9.03 Dress Code Policy

It is Council policy to require staff to be of neat appearance, dress acceptably and not offend either fellow employees or the public. Casual recreational dress such as jeans, jogging shoes and the like are not appropriate for clerical or community services staff, particularly where an employee may come into contact with customers. This policy should be read in conjunction with [Policy HR.2.05](#) and [Policy HR.2.06](#).

The above will be deemed not to apply for the period of the Glen Innes Severn Celtic Festival, when staff members are encouraged to dress in "Celtic theme" clothing to contribute to the general atmosphere and ambiance of the mentioned festivities.

The dress code may also be waived by the General Manager for other special events / duties, such as Jeans for Genes Day and community services' outings or excursions where less formal clothing is appropriate.

HR.9.04 Tendering by Staff for Impounded Articles Policy

It is Council policy that Council staff and their immediate family are excluded from tendering for impounded articles under any circumstances. This also excludes any other person tendering on behalf of an employee or their immediate family.

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HR.9.05 Secondary Employment and Conflict of Interest Policy

It is Council policy that Council employees are prohibited from engaging for remuneration in any private employment or contract work outside the service of Glen Innes Severn Council, which does or could cause a conflict of interest with the employee (i.e. if the employee's private work leads to or could lead to situations where he/she would have to declare a conflict of interest and refrain from involvement in matters regarded as normal work).

As a guide, the engagement in private work by Council staff is to be generally limited to work with organisations or persons who:

1. Do not undertake work or provide business services for the Council.
2. Do not submit applications to the Council for approval or for any regulatory inspections.
3. Do not or are unlikely to undertake work in the Council area which would require Council approval, inspections, or enforcement of regulations.
4. Do not act in a professional capacity in the alteration or development of land or property; or in relation to any matter requiring Council approval in the Glen Innes Severn Council area.

This policy applies to all staff and may be of particular relevance to those involved in building applications, development applications, subdivision applications, health enforcement, inspections, sign regulations, regulation enforcement and supervision of contractors.

All employees who engage for remuneration in private employment or contract work outside the service of Council where that employment or work relates to the business of the Council or that might conflict with the employee's Council duties, are required to make written application in the prescribed format to the General Manager of the details and the basis of such employment. The General Manager will then consider if such application is in order or whether there is any necessity to prohibit the employee from engaging in that work.

HR.9.06 Gifts of Appreciation – Honesty and Integrity

It is Council policy in relation to gifts to staff that:

1. *Gifts of Substance*

Any gifts of substance (as a guide, over \$50 in estimated value) shall be refused, returned or declared to the General Manager for recording in the central Gifts Register, with a view to return, forwarding to a local charity, or dealing with in some other appropriate manner.

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2. *Gifts of a Token Nature*

Gifts of a token nature (as a guide, under \$50) should only be accepted after giving due consideration to the requirements and obligations of the *Local Government Act*, the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act* and Council's *Code of Conduct*.

Note: A more complete definition of gifts of substance and token gifts can be found in Council's Code of Conduct under Section 7, Personal Benefit.

Remember – the Independent Commission Against Corruption has set out a simple rule that no public official should accept a gift if it could be seen by the public as intended or likely to cause the official to do his or her job in a particular way, or deviate from the proper course of duty.

Under no circumstances should a gift of any kind or any hospitality be accepted from an applicant or person associated therewith in regard to any current application or matter requiring a decision or determination by the Council. Also, under no circumstances are donations, sponsorship or gifts to be sought or accepted to support the holding of any staff social function.

Further, it is Council's policy that no staff member shall accept a gift, of any description or value, from any organisation with which it has a commercial relationship either as a supplier or receiver of goods or services.

HR.9.07 Internal Reporting Policy

Council is committed to the objectives of the NSW *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994*, which aims to encourage and facilitate the disclosure, in the public interest, of corrupt conduct, maladministration, serious and substantial waste, government information contravention, local government pecuniary interest contravention and other wrongdoing in the public sector.

To this end, Council has established an internal reporting system for the reporting of disclosures by Council's staff or councillors. Such internal disclosures may be made to the Disclosure Co-ordinator, nominated disclosure officers, the General Manager, or the Mayor (if the disclosure concerns or involves the General Manager or a councillor).

Council will take all reasonable steps to provide protection to staff who make such disclosures from any detrimental action in reprisal for the making of the disclosure.

SECTION 10

MISCELLANEOUS

HR.10.01 Staff Statements / Comments to the Press

It is Council policy that whilst staff are encouraged to cooperate with the media by providing information of a factual nature, they should not express opinion on matters of Council policy and personal comment on behalf of Council which is the prerogative of the Mayor and General Manager.

HR.10.02 Court Attendance during Council Time

It is Council policy not to allow staff members to attend court during Council time, unless a subpoena has been served. The only exception to this being in cases where action has been initiated by the Council or where an employee is required to attend for jury service.

HR.10.03 Use of Private Vehicles on Council Business

It is Council policy, whenever possible and reasonably convenient, to provide a Council vehicle for the use of employees in the execution of their duties / functions.

It is further Council policy that no employee is permitted to use their own private vehicle on Council business unless the following principles are adhered to:

1. The vehicle is registered for road use, is roadworthy and is generally safe for the intended function or purpose;
2. A current comprehensive insurance cover for the vehicle is in place and the relevant certificate is produced to verify the cover;
3. The employee is authorised in writing by their manager or director to use their private vehicle. Such authority is to be renewed annually when the vehicle's insurance cover is extended or when a replacement vehicle is acquired;
4. The employee is paid the prescribed per kilometre rate as specified in the relevant award.

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HR.10.04 Non-Employees Travelling in Council Owned Vehicles

It is Council policy to permit, if requested, persons other than Council employees to accompany employees to work related functions outside the Glen Innes Severn Council area, where such travel is to be undertaken in a suitable passenger vehicle supplied by Council that requires no higher than a Class C driver's licence to operate.

The presence of such other persons must not compromise safety, infringe legal requirements, expose Council or Council's property to additional risk or damage, impair or detrimentally affect work activities, or result in any additional cost to Council.

Written permission for another person(s) to accompany the employee must be sought in each and every instance from the relevant section manager / supervisor. Council reserves the right to refuse such a request.

Apart from the above circumstances, and those where an employee has the right to have other persons present in a vehicle due to leaseback arrangements, persons other than Council employees are not to be present in any Council vehicle or plant.

Note: This Policy is not intended to apply to non-employees who have a legitimate work related reason for being in a Council owned vehicle, such as community services volunteers or clients. It is intended only to cover those instances where an employee requests permission, on personal grounds, to have a non-employee (such as a family member) present on a journey.

HR.10.05 Blood Donations during Work Hours

It is Council policy to allow staff members to give three-monthly blood donations to the Australian Red Cross Blood Service during ordinary working hours and to be paid their normal wages for such time off, provided donations are given at the Glen Innes Donor Centre, the time taken off is no longer than what is necessary to give the donation, and it does not unduly interfere with work requirements.

HR.10.06 Damage to Council Property due to Negligence of Staff Members

It is Council's policy to pursue compensation from employees who negligently or wilfully cause damage to Council's property and in circumstances where the negligence or wilfulness of the employee's actions is established on the balance of probabilities. Action to recover costs may include, but not be limited to, pursuing compensation through a civil debt recovery claim.

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Appendix A

Document Control Continued

PREVIOUS VERSIONS:	DATE:	RESOLUTION NO:	DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS:	AUTHOR / EDITOR:	REVIEW / SIGN OFF:
5	17/12/2020	19.12/20	Update to Policy HR.6.10 Leave without Pay to include “for Recreational Purposes” in the title and last paragraph.	MAHR	Council
4	26/11/2020	13.11/20	Update to Policy HR.6.01 Annual Leave to summarise measures to reduce leave liability.	MAHR	Council
3	25/06/2020	12.06/20	General revision to HR Policy Statement Register, including changes to recruitment processes, remuneration, variable working hours, long term staff recognition, payment of expenses, higher grade pay provisions and leave provisions.	MAHR	Council
2	26/04/2018	11.04/18	Update to Policy HR.1.07 Pre-Placement Health Assessment Policy.	MAHR	Council
1	28/05/2015	11.05/15	General revision.	MAHR	Council