

Part 8.6

Scheme of Members' Allowances

Scheme of Members Allowances

The Council operates a scheme of members' allowances based upon recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel. All councillors receive a basic allowance and certain councillors and other co-opted members also receive special responsibility allowances as office holders. The scheme is regulated by the Local Government Act 2000, and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003.

1. The Scheme

1.1. This scheme is made in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. It has effect from 1st April 2021 until further notice.

2. Basic Allowance

2.1. A Basic Allowance shall be paid each financial year to each member in twelve instalments. The amount of the allowance to be as shown in the Schedule.

3. Special Responsibility Allowance

3.1. A Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid each financial year in twelve instalments to the postholders identified in the Schedule to this scheme, provided that no individual receives more than one allowance. The amount of each allowance to be as shown in the Schedule.

3.2. If a chair, because of illness or other reasons, is unable to carry out his or her responsibilities for three months or more, then the proportionate part of their Special Responsibility Allowance should be transferred to the vice chair who is taking over their responsibilities.

4. Executive

4.1. The overall allowances allocation to the executive is £153,000 and represents the level of responsibility attributable to the Executive. If that level remains unchanged, but the size of the Executive is reduced, then this allocation should be redistributed amongst the remaining members of the Executive, depending on the way in which responsibilities have been reallocated. It is only if the reduction in Executive size is premised on a significant reduction in the overall level of responsibility (for instance by the devolution of the responsibility for a range of decisions

to officers) that existing Special Responsibility Allowances should be maintained for the remaining Executive members.

5. Childcare and Dependant's Carers' Allowance

5.1. Members may claim for the reimbursement of costs of care for their children or dependants as are necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties as a councillor, up to a maximum of £6,500 per annum. Claims must be supported by receipts for costs incurred.

6. Travel and Subsistence Allowances

6.1. Travel

6.1.1. Members may claim travel allowances as set out in the Schedule for the following approved duties:-

- A meeting of the Council or its committees, sub-committees, working groups, boards, panels or forums (whether a member, an observer or a speaker)
- A meeting of a joint committee, working group, board, panel or forum of two or more local authorities
- A meeting of an outside body to which the member has been appointed by the Council
- An approved duty as a member appointed to an outside body
- Official and courtesy visits on behalf of the authority
- Meetings of other local authorities or bodies as the Council's representative
- Travel expenses incurred by members in their representational role (eg site meetings)
- Members' training events
- Approved conferences and seminars

6.1.2. Members cannot claim travel and subsistence allowances in respect of the following:-

- Meetings that have been convened wholly or partly for political purposes, for example, group meetings
- Any journey that is undertaken on behalf of another local authority

6.1.3. Members must record start and end odometer readings when claiming travel allowances for approved duties and these must be inserted on the travel claim form.

6.2. Mode of Transport

6.2.1. Consideration must be given to the most environmentally-friendly method of undertaking the journey. Wherever practicable, journeys should be undertaken with other members and/or officers of the Council

using the same vehicle. Where journeys involve travel outside Northamptonshire, the use of public transport should be considered as a first choice. In considering the mode of transport councillors must take into the account the following:

- Accessibility of public transport
- Closeness of the destination to a convenient public transport interchange
- Whether two or more members or officers are travelling to the same destination
- Time of both the outward travel and the return journey
- Safety of using public transport (e.g if travelling back alone late at night)

6.3. Public Transport Fares

6.3.1. Public transport fares will be reimbursed on the basis of standard class fares unless otherwise authorised by the Council's Director of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer. Claims must be supported by receipts. The cost of parking at a railway station will not be reimbursed (unless disabled) if a suitable free car park is available within half a mile from the railway station.

7. Subsistence Expenses

7.1. Maximum subsistence allowances are as set out in the Schedule. Receipts for expenditure in relation to subsistence expenses must be produced in support of claims.

8. Membership of Other Local Authorities

8.1. Where a member of the Council is also a member of another local authority, that member may not receive travel and/or subsistence allowances from more than one authority in respect of the same meeting, event or duties.

9. Renunciation of Allowances

9.1. Members may, by notice in writing to the Director of Legal and Democratic /Monitoring Officer, elect to forego any part of their entitlement to an allowance under this scheme. A Member who has elected to forego any part of their entitlement to an allowance under this scheme may at any time revoke that election by giving notice in writing to the Director of Legal and Democratic & Monitoring Officer. The revocation shall take effect and the allowances foregone shall become payable from the date of its receipt.

10. Pro-rata Payments

10.1. Where a Member becomes a Councillor, or ceases to be a Councillor, part-way through the financial year, or the scheme is amended, the level of basic and special responsibility allowance shall be payable pro-rata for the period of the year served. Where a Member assumes or relinquishes an office attracting a Special Responsibility Allowance part-way through a year, that payment shall also be pro-rata to the period of service.

11. Withholding of Allowances

11.1. If a Member is suspended from duty during an investigation in accordance with the Arrangements for Dealing with Standards Investigations (see the approved Constitution of North Northamptonshire Council), allowances will not be paid to the councillor concerned during the period of investigation. In accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000, where payment of any allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which a councillor is:-

- suspended or partially suspended
- ceases to be a member of the authority
- is in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period

the Council may require that such part of the allowance as relates to that period be repaid to the authority.

12. Claims and Payments

12.1. Claim forms will be available to all Councillors on becoming a member of the authority. Claims for travel and subsistence allowances should be claimed monthly and supported by receipts.

13. Annual Increase

13.1. The amounts paid under the scheme shall be increased on 1st April each year. The criterion used for the annual updating of members allowances should be the NJC pay award to officers.

14. Publicity

14.1. The Council is required to publish recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, its Scheme of Allowances and actual allowances paid to members each year.

Appendix 1**Members' Allowances Scheme Schedule***(with effect from 1st April 2021)***Amounts of Allowances (2021-2022) – Table**

| | |
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| Basic Allowance (per annum) | £12,500 |
| Special Responsibility Allowances (per annum) | |
| Leaders' allowances: | |
| Leader of the Council | £27,000 |
| Deputy Leader of the Council | £18,000 |
| Leader of the largest opposition party | £10,000 |
| Deputy Leader of the largest opposition party (<i>group size of 15 or over</i>) | £4,000 |
| Leader of a party with 10 or more members | £7,000 |
| Leader of a party with 4-9 members | £4,000 |
| Executive (Cabinet) Members excluding the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council (<i>see note (i) below</i>) | £13,500 |
| Chair of Scrutiny Committee (<i>see note (ii) below</i>) | £13,500 |
| Chair of Strategic Planning Committee | £7,500 |
| Chair of an Area Planning Committee | £3,750 |
| Chair of Licensing and Appeals Committee (<i>see note (iii) below</i>) | £7,500 |
| Chair of Audit and Governance Committee (<i>see note (iv) below</i>) | £7,500 |
| Chair of Democracy and Standards Committee | £7,500 |
| Chairs of Employment Committee, the Police and Crime Panel and the Health and Well-being Board | £4,000 |
| Co-opted Members and Independent Persons | £400 per meeting |
| Childcare and Dependant's Carers' Allowance | Reimbursement of cost up to a maximum of £6,500 per municipal year |
| Mileage allowance and subsistence payments | HMRC specified mileage allowances LGA recommended travel and subsistence payments |

Civic Allowances

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|----------------------|---------|
| Chair of the Council | £10,000 |
| Deputy Chair | £5,000 |

Note (i) - If the size of the Executive is reduced, then the total allocation to the Executive members should be redistributed within the same financial envelope, unless the change involves a substantial delegation of executive responsibilities to officers.

Note (ii) - A total allowance of £40,000 should be allocated to the Scrutiny function to be distributed as determined by the Council.

Note (iii) - A total allowance of £10,000 should be set aside and allocated amongst members chairing Licensing Panels of major significance during the course of a municipal year.

Note (iv) - the council may set a different figure for an independent chair, reflecting a negotiated outcome

Note (v) – the personal Civic Allowances will be supplemented by a hospitality and events budget held by the Council (see Shadow Executive Committee resolution 26th November 2020).

Note (vi) – At the time the IRP considered the issue of Area Planning Committees, two committees were being proposed. As a result of consultation with Members the proposal is now for four committees. The Schedule has been amended to reflect this change with the agreement of the IRP Chair.

End of Scheme of Members' Allowances

March 2021