

PART 6

Members' Allowance Scheme

Introduction

Local authorities can pay their Members an allowance and expenses in respect of the duties they undertake in their role as Councillor. When setting or reviewing the allowances the council is required to commission a report from a panel consisting of people who are not Councillors and who are independent of the council. The panel is called an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) and it produces a report containing recommendations as to the level and nature of allowances and expenses. The allowances are reviewed by the IRP on an annual basis to ensure that keep pace with the cost of living and any changes in the roles Councillors undertake.

Cheltenham Borough Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003 and having considered a report of its IRP, hereby makes the following scheme:

This scheme may be cited as the Cheltenham Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme and shall have effect for the year commencing on 01 April 2017 and subsequent years.

In this scheme;

"Cabinet Member"	Means an elected Member who is a member of the Cabinet of Cheltenham Borough Council.
"the Council"	Means Cheltenham Borough Council.
"Councillor"	Means an elected Member of the Cheltenham Borough Council.
"Group Leader"	Means an elected Member appointed as such pursuant to the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.
"Leader of the Council"	Means the elected Member appointed by the Council as its Leader.
"Member"	Means a person elected or co-opted into membership of Cheltenham Borough Council
"Municipal Year"	Means the period between one annual general meeting of the Council and the next.

1. Allowances Paid to Councillors

Each Councillor shall be paid a Basic Allowance of £5,797 per annum.

In addition to the payment of the Basic Allowance, Members undertaking special responsibilities shall be eligible for a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) as follows:

ROLE	ALLOWANCES
Councillor – Basic Allowance	6174
Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)	
Leader	19271
Cabinet Member	15168
Chair of Planning Committee	4047
Vice-Chair of Planning Committee	2038
Chair of Licensing Committee	957
Vice-Chair of Licensing Committee	638
Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee	3194
Vice-Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1596
Chair of Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee	799
Chair of Standards Committee	354
Group Leaders	710
Independent Members of Standards Committee	351
Mayor (Chair of Council)	533
Mayor (Duties of Civic Head)	7712
Deputy Mayor	1552

N.B. Only one SRA may be claimed by any one Member in respect of any period. Where a Member undertakes more than one special responsibility they are eligible for payment of the highest applicable SRA only.

2. Payment

The annual allowance payable to each Member shall be made in twelve equal instalments (as far as possible) paid on the 20th day of each month or thereabouts subject to compliance with the part year payment provisions set out below.

3. Renunciation

A Member may by notice in writing given to the Head of Paid Service elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to allowances payable under this scheme.

4. Part-year Entitlements

If the term of office or duties undertaken by a Member begin or end part way through a Municipal Year, or amendment of the scheme during a Municipal Year changes the amount to which a Member is entitled, then calculation of the allowance payable shall be on a pro-rata basis having regard to the proportion that the term of office, period of duty or relevant periods of the scheme bear to the Municipal Year in which they occur.

5. Suspension and Repayment of allowances

If a Member is suspended from acting as a Member of Cheltenham Borough Council, the Standards Committee may suspend in whole or part the allowances payable to that Member.

Where payment of any allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which a Member is:

- (a) suspended or partially suspended from acting as a Member;
- (b) ceases to be a member of the Council; or
- (c) is in any way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period

the Council shall require the Member to repay the allowance.

6. Travel and Subsistence Payments

Payments covering travel costs shall be made to Councillors in respect of approved duties where those duties necessitate travel beyond the Cheltenham Borough Council boundaries. The full list of approved duties is set out in Schedule 1.

All claims for reimbursement of any travel costs should normally be submitted monthly and by no later than two months after the expenditure has been incurred, otherwise claims may not be paid unless agreed by the Head of Paid Service. Claims should be submitted to the Democratic Services on the Members Travel Claim Form and be supported by appropriate receipts, a VAT receipt where applicable, and/or supporting documentation for the claim in all cases.

Any claims must be authorised by the Democratic Services Team Leader before being submitted for payment. All claim forms must be with Human Resources by the 2nd of every month to enable payment to be made. Payments are made one month in arrears.

- Car rates; - for all engine sizes the rate payable should be the same as the Inland Revenue car mileage rate for all miles travelled on approved duties to destinations outside the boundaries of the Administrative Borough of Cheltenham (5 miles radius from the Town Centre).

For the avoidance of doubt for the purpose of calculating rates;

- All journeys are deemed to start from home and total miles can be claimed from home to the destination and the return journey. Auto-route planners should be used to support mileage claims.
- Motorcycle Rates; - 24 pence a mile subject to the same conditions as for cars; (this will be set at the Inland Revenue rate)
- Claims for car and motorcycle mileage need to be accompanied by a petrol VAT receipt
- Reasonable car parking fees can be reimbursed and receipts must be supplied with the claim.
- Bicycle Rates: 20 pence a mile for approved duties outside of the Borough of Cheltenham; (this will be set at the Inland Revenue Rate)
- Public Transport – members are encouraged to make use of public transport where available. Actual expenditure incurred supported by receipts/tickets for approved duties outside of the Borough of Cheltenham (save that first class travel on trains is not permitted and members are encouraged to order their tickets in advance to get the best deals via the internet or by request to the relevant officer);
- Public transport within the borough can also be claimed when travelling to approved duties outside of the borough subject to the requirement to use the most cost effective form of travel for all journeys.
- If a Member chooses a disproportionately expensive method of travel (when a more cost effective travel alternative is available) the council does reserve the right not to meet the excess expense.
- The use of taxis for business purposes can be an expensive form of travel. Members therefore should wherever possible use alternative less expensive methods of transport unless there is a good justification for using a taxi. Details should be supplied with the claim together with receipts. All of the above is subject to compliance with the council's required audit procedures and Financial Regulations as set out in the Council's Constitution.

Subsistence payments are not available under this scheme.

7. Dependant Carers Allowance

A Councillor may claim and receive a DCA where he/she has incurred expenditure on engaging a carer for a dependant in order to attend designated meetings and/or carry out approved duties subject to the following;

For an allowance to be payable the person being cared for must live with the Councillor as part of the Councillor's family, is unable to be left unsupervised and is either;

- a child under 16 years of age, or
- an elderly person, or
- a person with a physical or mental disability, or
- a person with a learning disability

A carer (i.e. the person being paid to act as carer while the Councillor is carrying out Cheltenham Borough Council duties) shall be defined as someone who does not normally live with the Councillor as part of the Councillor's family and is not part of the Councillor's extended family.

Subject to the above, DCA shall be payable for the actual cost of providing care, with no maximum amount, subject to compliance with audit procedures put in place by the Council.

8. Voluntary Repayment of Allowance due to Absence

In the event that a Councillor attends less than two-thirds of the total number of scheduled meetings of Council or of Cabinet or of Committees of which he/she is a member, the Councillor concerned shall be invited to pay back an appropriate percentage of his/her basic allowance up to a maximum of 25% of the basic allowance.

In the event that a Member is absent from Council business for more than one continuous month (other than on grounds of ill-health) the member concerned should be invited to pay back a sum equivalent to the amount of basic and special responsibility allowances paid for any single period of absence which exceeds one month.

9. Review of Allowances

Once in every four years the IRP will undertake a full review of the scheme which will consider all aspects of provision.

In the intervening years the Democratic Services Manager will consult with the Chair of IRP in September each year, to review the need for the panel to meet.

- If there are no significant issues to review, then the recommendation to Council should be that all allowances should be increased by the same % increase proposed for staff in the following financial year.

- If there are significant issues then the panel be reconvened in September or October, to review the allowances and make any recommendations they feel appropriate.

SCHEDULE 1

LIST OF APPROVED DUTIES FOR CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR PURPOSES OF TRAVEL AND DEPENDENT CARERS' CLAIMS

	<u>Attendance at any of the events listed below which require travel outside the borough:-</u>
1.	Formal meetings of the Council, including Committees and Sub Committees and any other authorised meeting of these bodies or event organised by these bodies (including joint committees), where the Councillor (a) has been appointed by Cheltenham Borough Council as a member, a substitute or representative or (b) is exercising a constitutional right to attend and /or to speak or (c) is attending in an observer capacity only;
2.	formal meetings of the Cabinet, its sub committees and any other authorised meetings thereof where the Councillor has (a) been appointed by the Leader/Council as a member or (b) is exercising a constitutional right to attend and/or to speak or (c) is attending in an observer capacity only;
3.	ad-hoc formally constituted working groups/panels (e.g. scrutiny task and finish groups) where the Councillor is (a) a named member of the body or (b) is formally invited to participate;
4.	meetings of Cheltenham Borough Council committees/sub committees where the Councillor has been appointed by the Council as a member or a representative;
5.	meetings of bodies to which the Council makes appointments except where the body itself pays allowances to the Council's representative (the approval relates to meetings of the body itself; its standing committees/sub committees but not to other activities of the body)
6.	meetings of any local authority association of which the Council is a member where the Councillor is the appointed representative or nominated substitute;
7.	any conference where attendance is authorised by the Council;
8.	any Council premises, or other agreed location, for a meeting agreed with either a member in receipt of an SRA or an Officer for the purpose of discussing matters relating to Council business in which it is reasonable to expect the Councillor to have an interest;
9.	briefing meetings at the invitation of an Officer of the Council provided that the members of at least two political groups have been invited;
10.	an approved agenda setting meeting organised by the council;
11.	meetings of Parish/Town Councils or equivalent community associations where the Councillor attends as the local district Councillor or as a representative of Cheltenham Borough Council and not as a member of the Parish/Town Council/Community Association itself;
12.	any civic or ceremonial event at the specific invitation of, or in support of, the Chair/Mayor of the Council;

13.	site visits by members of the Planning/Development Control Committee;
14.	any site visit or inspection visits undertaken by members approved by or on behalf of the Council;
15.	tender opening meetings where invited by an Officer to attend;
16.	a member development/awareness raising/seminar activity organised or approved by the council;
	<u>Performance of:-</u>
16.	duties carried out by a member holding an office for which a special responsibility allowance applies;
17.	any particular duty for which express authority is given by or on behalf of the Council in case of emergency;
18.	such other duty for which prior approval has been given by the Head of Paid Service or other authorised Officer, in consultation with the Leader.