

Part 6

Members' Allowances Scheme

Members' Allowances Scheme

This scheme is made by Blackpool Council, having received recommendations from an Independent Remuneration Panel. The scheme takes effect from 18 January 2012.

1. Definitions

In this scheme,

"councillor" means an elected member of Blackpool Council

"co-opted member" means a person (other than a councillor), who is appointed to a committee, sub-committee or Panel of the Council

"School Appeal Panel member" means a person who is appointed to the Schools Appeal Panel

"year" means the 12 months ending with 31 March.

2. Annual uprating of the Scheme

2.1 From 2012, the amounts in this scheme will be uprated annually in line with the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Service pay award. This increase will apply for three years after which its application will be reviewed by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

2.2 If in the meantime however, any circumstances come to light that require a review of the scheme, then the scheme will be referred back to the Panel.

3. Basic allowance

All councillors are entitled to a basic allowance, currently £5,998.98 per year.

4. Special responsibility allowance

4.1 In addition to the basic allowance, the following allowances can be paid to those councillors who hold the following special responsibilities:

| | £ per annum |
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| Leader | 19,948.24 |
| Deputy Leader | 11,399.15 |
| Cabinet Member | 5,699.03 |
| Chairman of Scrutiny Committee | 5,699.03 |
| Chairmen: Planning, Licensing, Appeals, Finance and Audit, Health, Public Protection Sub-Committee | 4,275.10 |

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| Vice-Chairman of Scrutiny Committee | 2,850.06 |
| Vice-Chairmen: Planning, Licensing, Appeals, Finance and Audit, Health, Public Protection Sub-Committee | 2,137.55 |
| Lead Scrutiny Members | 1,068.77 |
| Leader of Principal Opposition | 4,986.52 |
| Deputy Leader of Principal Opposition | 2,493.81 |
- 4.2 No more than one special responsibility allowance will be paid to a councillor.
- 4.3 School Appeal Panel members may claim for loss of earnings, currently £28.31 (up to 4 hours) and £56.64 (over 4 hours). Proof is required to support claims made.
- 4.4 Area Panel community representatives will be entitled to receive the following special responsibility allowance:
- Chairman of Area Panel: £514
 - Vice-Chairman of Area Panel: £203
 - Other community representatives: £75
- (Community representatives would not be eligible to claim travel expenses in view of these allowances).
5. **Telephone allowance**
- 5.1 All councillors are entitled to a telephone allowance, currently £254.59 per year.
6. **ICT allowance**
- 6.1 All councillors are entitled to receive an ICT Allowance, currently £599.78 per year, subject to signing an agreement to adhere to the Council's Policy on the ICT Allowance for Elected Members.
7. **Part-year entitlements**
- 7.1 If the scheme is amended, councillors are entitled to the new allowance amount from the day after the amendment takes effect (unless Council approval is given otherwise).
- 7.2 Pro-rata payments will be made where a councillor begins or ends his/her term of office or responsibility other than at the beginning or end of a year.
8. **Renunciation**
- 8.1 A councillor may give written notice to the Head of Democratic Services to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.
9. **Taxation**
- 9.1 Members' allowances are treated for income tax purposes as income received from employment and are subject to income tax. Tax will be deducted by PAYE procedure.
10. **National insurance contributions**
- 10.1 Members' allowances are subject to national insurance contributions where the

amount of allowances received exceeds the national insurance threshold amount.

11. Payment of allowances

11.1 Payment of basic, special responsibility allowances, telephone allowances and ICT allowances will be made on the 15th day of each month.

11.2 Payments for carer's allowance, travel and subsistence allowance will be made on the 15th day of each month, where these have been received by Democratic Services on the 15th day of the previous month.

11.3 All allowances will be paid directly into the member's bank account.

12. Records of allowances

12.1. It is a legal requirement that the Council keeps a record of payments of allowances to councillors. This record is open to public inspection and publicised annually.

13. Withholding allowances

13.1. All allowances (with the exception of carer's allowance) will be withheld where a councillor has been fully suspended. Where a councillor has been partially suspended from a particular duty, the special responsibility allowance for that duty will be withheld.

14. Pensions

14.1. All councillors are eligible to elect to make their basic and/or special responsibility allowance pensionable.

14.2 Where the '85 year rule' is not satisfied this will normally result in an actuarial reduction of a councillor's pension. (The 85 year rule is tested by adding the number of whole years of the pension scheme membership whilst a councillor, to the member's age at retirement. The rule means that if when added together they equal at least 85, there is no reduction. However, if they equal less than 85, then actuarial reductions will be applied to both the pension and lump sum).

14.3 A councillor can apply for the actuarial reduction of pension benefits to be waived on compassionate grounds. Each application will be considered on its own merits and will be determined by the Chief Executive following a recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

15. Carer's allowance

15.1 Councillors and School Appeal Panel members may be reimbursed up to a rate of £7.99 per hour, for the care of named dependent relatives when undertaking certain approved Council duties (as detailed in Appendix 1 to this Scheme). School Appeal Panel members who claim this allowance may not claim loss of earnings allowance in respect of the same hearing.

15.2 Carers are those who are dependent and are defined as:

- Children aged 15 years and under
- Elderly relatives requiring full-time care
- Relatives with disabilities who require full-time care.

15.3 This allowance will not be paid where the carer is a member of the councillor's or School Appeal Panel member's immediate family or household.

- 15.4 Claims should be made using the form available from Democratic Services. Receipts must be attached to all claims.

16. **Bus/tram passes**

- 16.1 The Council provides free passes for councillors to use on bus and tram services operated by Blackpool Transport Services Limited. These may only be used when the councillor is travelling in connection with an approved duty (see Appendix 1 to this Scheme).

- 16.2 In view of the free bus/tram passes, councillors are not entitled to claim travel allowance for journeys within the borough (Note: this provision does not apply to co-opted members, Independent Remuneration Panel members and School Appeal Panel members).

17. **Car parking**

Councillors are permitted, whilst on Council business, to park free of charge on the Council floor of West Street Car Park, or on other floors if the Council floor is full. They can also park free of charge whilst on Council business in any other Council car park other than Hounds Hill and the Sandcastle. However, Council members in receipt of a special responsibility allowance to the equivalent of a Committee Chairman or greater, will contribute 1% of the combined basic and special responsibility allowance towards the cost of car parking should they choose to receive a permit (applicable from 23 May 2011).

18. **Travel and subsistence allowances**

- 18.1 Councillors, co-opted members, Independent Remuneration Panel members and School Appeal Panel members may receive travel and subsistence allowance for the approved duties detailed in Appendix 1. (This provision does not include community representatives on Area Panels – see paragraph 4.4).

- 18.2 The actual cost of any payments will be reimbursed, subject to the maximum rates set out in this scheme. Receipts must be provided with all claims.

19. **Mileage allowance**

- 19.1 Claims are subject to the councillors having the appropriate insurance (business use) for their car.

- 19.2 Mileage allowance can only be paid for the approved duties detailed in Appendix 1 for journeys (see also paragraph 16.3 regarding journeys for councillors within the borough).

- 19.3 The mileage allowance is based on the following rates:

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| Motor cycles: | 12p a mile |
| Motor vehicles: | 40p a mile |
| Passenger allowance - For each passenger but not more than four: | 5p per mile |

20. **Public and other transport**

- 20.1 Travel by rail for councillors and co-opted members will be standard class for approved duties (unless the cost of first class travel presents a cheaper option).

- 20.2 Members will be entitled to be reimbursed for the purchase of a discounted rail card. Reimbursement will take place following the booking of the first journey when undertaking Council business and the production of the appropriate receipt.
- 20.3 Travel by air should be the ordinary fare or any available cheap fare for travel by regular air service.
- 20.4 Taxi claims will only be paid in exceptional circumstances. Receipts must be provided with all claims.
- 20.5 Expenditure on tolls, ferries, garaging or parking fees can be claimed. Receipts must be provided with all claims.

21. **Subsistence allowance – day rates**

- 21.1 Subsistence allowance can be paid for approved duties set out in Appendix 1, where the absence from normal place of residence/work, including travelling time is more than four hours away from the normal place of residence/work.

- 21.2 Subsistence allowance not involving an absence overnight is based on the actual cost incurred up to the maximum following rates:

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| Breakfast allowance (departure from normal place of residence/work before 7.00 am) | £6.26 |
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| Lunch allowance (absent from normal place of residence/work during 11.30 am and 2.15 pm) | £8.61 |
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| Evening meal allowance (not returning to normal place of residence/work before 7.00 pm) | £10.65 |
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- 21.3 Where meals are taken on trains or aeroplanes, the reasonable cost incurred may be reimbursed in full.
- 21.4 Reimbursement for the purchase of alcohol cannot be claimed.

22. **Overnight subsistence**

- 22.1 Where an overnight stay is required, overnight subsistence may be claimed based on the actual cost up to a maximum of:

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| Standard rate | £51.68 |
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| London rate | £77.52 |
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(the above sums are for all subsistence received over a 24-hour period).

23. **Accommodation claims**

- 23.1 Overnight accommodation must normally be organised in advance with Democratic Services. The Head of Democratic Services (or in his absence the Assistant Head of Democratic Services) to approve any requests for an overnight stay within reasonable costs.

Schedule of approved duties:

| For councillors: |
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| • Full Council meetings |
| • Meetings of the Executive or any of its committees |
| • Council committee, sub-committee or Panel meetings |
| • Meetings of a body to which a councillor has formally been appointed or nominated, and any committees or sub-committees of such a body |
| • Meetings where the holding of which has been authorised by full Council, or a committee, sub-committee or Panel of the Council, or a joint committee of which the authority is a member. This is provided that members of more than one political group have been invited (where the Council is divided into two or more political groups) or two members have been invited (where the authority is not so divided) |
| • Meetings of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member |
| • Opening of tenders where a member is required to be present |
| • Site visits and premises inspection visits required by the authority |
| • Performance of any duty in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at school approved for the purposes of Section 342 (approval of non-maintained special schools) of the Education Act 1996 |
| • Attendance at training events, conferences and seminars where attendance is in relation to Council duties |

| For co-opted members (including members of the Independent Remuneration Panel and School Appeal Panel members): |
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| • Meetings of a committee, sub-committee or School Appeal Panel hearing of which the claimant is the appointed member |
| • Attendance at events relating to the business of a committee or sub-committee including training events, conferences, seminars, site visits and inspections. |