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Part 6 - Members allowances scheme

Last Modified March 25, 2026



Effective from 12 March 2024

Approved by council on 26 June 2019

Updated by council on 20 July 2020

Updated on 10 September 2020

Updated on 29 September 2021

Updated 28 March 2022

Updated 1 February 2023

Updated 28 June 2023

Updated 12 March 2024

Updated 29 January 2025

Updated 1 July 2025

Updated 1 August 2025

Updated 25 March 2026

1. Definitions

1.1 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

"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 (with the exception of mileage allowances which will be uprated at the same time as staff mileage allowances). 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

3.1 All councillors are entitled to a basic allowance of £11,971.16 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:

Role	£ per annum
Leader *	35,913.40
Deputy Leader *	21,547.42
Cabinet Member *	16,160.05
Cabinet Assistant *	5,985.06
Chair of Scrutiny Leadership Board ¹	4,436
Chair of scrutiny committee *	11,971.16
Vice-Chair of scrutiny committee *	5,985.06
Chair: Planning, Licensing, Appeals, Audit *	9,576.30
Vice-Chair: Planning, Licensing, Appeals, Audit *	4,787.63
Leader of Principal Opposition ^{2*}	16,160.05
Deputy Leader of Principal Opposition ^{2*}	8,079.51
Mayor *	14,963.67
Deputy Mayor *	3,740.41
Chair of Board: Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Airport Companies ³	5,546
Chair of Audit Committee: Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Airport Companies ³	4,250
Non-Executive Directors: Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Airport Companies ³	3,000
Chair of Shareholder Committee ³	4,436
Members of Shareholder Committee ³	3,000

Standards Independent Persons ³	1,000
Independent member of Audit Committee *	844.16
Scrutiny Co-opted member*	587.12
Fostering Panel representative (rate per meeting attended) ⁴	160

¹ Figure to be reviewed each time a new appointment is made to the position

² Minimum requirement of 25% of seats on Council

³ Do not receive the annual agreed uprate, due to joint agreements across Council companies and with Fylde Council

⁴ This allowance to be uprated in line with the rate paid to independent representatives of the Fostering Panel

4.2 In relation to Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Appeals Committee, Audit Committee, Planning Committee, Public Protection Sub-Committee and the Lead Scrutiny Member / Chair of Scrutiny Leadership Board, the special responsibility allowance (SRA) for these positions can be paid in addition to one other SRA from within the Political management structure as set out in the constitution.

4.3 Councillors serving as Non-Executive Directors on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Airport Companies, those serving on the Shareholder Committee, the Deputy Mayor and members of Fostering Panel are entitled to receive these allowances in addition to others

4.4 Scrutiny Co-Opted Members and Independent Audit Members to receive the % uplift to allowances in-line with the other SRAs*

5. Part-year entitlements

5.1 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).

5.2 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.

6. Renunciation

6.1 A councillor may give written notice to the Monitoring Officer to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

7. Taxation

7.1 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.

8. National insurance contributions

8.1 Members' allowances are subject to national insurance contributions where the amount of allowances received exceeds the national insurance threshold amount.

9. Payment of allowances

9.1 Payment of basic and special responsibility allowances will be made on the 15th day of each month.

9.2 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 Governance on the 15th day of the previous month.

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

10. Records of allowances

10.1 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.

11. Carer's allowance

11.1 Councillors may be reimbursed for actual expenditure up to a maximum of the equivalent of the Real Living Wage, for the care of named dependent relatives when undertaking certain approved Council duties (as detailed in Appendix 1 to this Scheme).

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.

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

11.3 Claims should be made using the form available from Democratic Governance.

11.4 Receipts must be attached to all claims.

12. Bus/tram passes

12.1 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).

12.2 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, Standards Independent Persons or Independent Remuneration Panel members).

13. Car parking

13.1 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.

14. Travel and subsistence allowances

14.1 Councillors, co-opted members, Standards Independent Persons and Independent Remuneration Panel members may receive travel and subsistence allowance for the approved duties detailed in Appendix 1.

14.2 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.

15. Mileage allowance

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

15.2 Mileage allowance can only be paid for the approved duties detailed in Appendix 1 for journeys (see also paragraph 12.2 regarding journeys for councillors within the borough).

The mileage allowance is based on the following rates:

Type	Size	Amount
Motor vehicles:	451-999cc:	46.9p per mile
	1000cc and above:	52.2p per mile

Motor cycles:	Up to 50cc:	12.4p per mile
	50cc to 125cc:	18.8p per mile
	126cc to 250cc:	27p per mile
	251cc to 500cc:	35.5p per mile
	Over 500cc:	39.2p per mile
Passenger allowance - For each passenger but not more than four:		5p per mile

16. Public and other transport

16.1 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).

16.2 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.

16.3 Travel by air should be the ordinary fare or any available cheap fare for travel by regular air service.

16.4 Taxi claims will only be paid in exceptional circumstances. Receipts must be provided with all claims.

16.5 Expenditure on tolls, ferries, garaging or parking fees can be claimed. Receipts must be provided with all claims.

17. Subsistence allowance - day rates

17.1 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.

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

Type	Amount
Breakfast allowance (departure from normal place of residence/work before 7.00 am)	£6.59
Lunch allowance (absent from normal place of residence/work during 11.30 am and 2.15 pm)	£9.07
Evening meal allowance (not returning to normal place of residence/work before 7.00 pm)	£11.21

17.3 Where meals are taken on trains or aeroplanes, the reasonable cost incurred may be reimbursed in full.

17.4 Reimbursement for the purchase of alcohol cannot be claimed.

18. Overnight subsistence

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

Standard rate	£54.42
London rate	£81.62

(the above sums are for all subsistence received over a 24-hour period).

19. Accommodation claims

19.1 Overnight accommodation must normally be organised in advance with Democratic Governance. The Monitoring Officer (or in their absence the Deputy Monitoring Officer) to approve any requests for an overnight stay within reasonable costs.

Appendix 1 - Schedule of approved duties

For councillors:

- 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
- Attendance at meetings and events in connection with their appointed position held outside Blackpool by a councillor in connection with the role for which a special responsibility allowance is paid
- Meetings of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member
- 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 Standards Independent Persons):

- Meetings of a committee, sub-committee or 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.

Appendix 2 - Parental leave policy for members

1. Introduction

1.1 This Policy sets out members' entitlement to allowances in cases of maternity, paternity and adoption leave.

1.2 While members are public office holders, the objective of the policy is that insofar as possible the position of members is comparable with employees of the Council and that members are able to take leave following the birth or adoption of a child.

1.3 Improved provision for new parents will contribute towards increasing the diversity of experience, age and background of councillors. It will also assist with retaining experienced councillors – particularly women – and making public office more accessible to individuals who might otherwise feel excluded from it.

2. General requirements

2.1 Any arrangements under this scheme cannot override the legal duty under the Local Government Act 1972 for a member to attend a meeting of the Council within a six-month period unless the Council meeting agrees a dispensation to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six-month period.

2.2 Any member taking leave in line with this policy should ensure they respond to reasonable requests for information as promptly as

possible and that they keep officers and colleagues informed and updated in relation to intended dates of absence and return.

3. Leave periods

Maternity Leave

3.1 Members giving birth are entitled to up to six months maternity leave from the due date, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required. Agreement would normally be given by the relevant group leader (or if a group leader or is not a member of a political group, the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Monitoring Officer).

3.2 Where a birth is premature, the member is also entitled to take leave during the period between the date of the birth and the due date in addition to the six months' period. In such cases any leave taken to cover prematurity of 28 days or less shall be deducted from any extension beyond the initial six months.

3.3 In exceptional circumstances and only in cases of prematurity of 29 days or more or exceptional medical circumstances (supported by medical note), additional leave may be taken by agreement, and such exceptional leave shall not be deducted from the total 52 week entitlement.

Paternity Leave

3.4 Members are entitled to take two weeks' paternity leave if they are the biological father of the child or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following birth or adoption.

Adoption Leave

3.5 A member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency is entitled to up to six months leave from the date of placement, with the option to extend to up to 52 weeks by agreement (in line with the agreement arrangements in paragraph 3.1) if required.

Shared parental leave

3.6 A member who has made shared parental leave arrangements through their employment is requested to advise the Council of these at the earliest possible opportunity. Every effort will be made to replicate the arrangements in terms of leave from Council.

3.7 Where both parents are members, leave may be shared up to a maximum of 24 weeks for the first six months and 26 weeks for any leave agreed thereafter, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Special and exceptional arrangements may be made in cases of prematurity and exceptional medical circumstances in line with paragraph 3.3.

4. Basic allowance

4.1 All members shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full while on maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

5. Special Responsibility allowance (SRA)

5.1 All members shall continue to receive their Special Responsibility Allowance in full while on maternity, paternity or adoption leave. For the avoidance of doubt this also includes all councillor or non-executive director positions on the Council's wholly owned companies, either paid direct by the company or through the Members Allowances' Scheme and also includes where more than one SRA is being paid.

5.2 Where a replacement member is appointed to cover the leave period, that person shall receive an SRA on a pro-rata basis for the period of the temporary appointment.

5.3 Should the replacement member already hold a remunerated position, this would be reviewed by the Independent Remuneration Panel as to whether two SRAs should be paid and the Panel would make a recommendation to the Monitoring Officer who would make the decision, taking into account the wishes of the Panel.

5.4 Unless the member taking leave is removed from their post while on leave or unless the party to which they belong loses control of the Council during their leave period, they shall return at the end of their leave period to the same post and receive the appropriate SRA unless:

- that member is up for election before the end of leave, or
- the member attends a committee or Council meeting convened under the Local Government Act 1972 (this would signify a return to the SRA role).

6. Notification arrangements

6.1 A member intending to take parental leave (whether maternity, paternity or adoption leave) must in the first instance inform the Leader of their group (if applicable) and the Monitoring Officer in writing.

6.2 The member should provide notice to the Monitoring Officer (or Deputy) in writing of their intention to take parental leave in line with the timescales below, where practicable:

Leave type	Notice period	Details to be included in notice
Pregnant members	No later than the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.	<p>Details to be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the week the baby is due (ii) the period of leave the member intends to take (or details of any shared arrangements) (iii) when they want their leave of absence to start (iv) a copy of the matb1 form
Member taking paternity leave	No later than the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.	<p>Details to be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the week the baby is due (ii) the period of leave the member intends to take (or details of any shared arrangements) (iii) when they want their leave of absence to start
Member who is a primary adopter	Within seven days of being matched with a child	<p>Details to be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) how much leave of absence they want (or details of any shared arrangements) (ii) when they want the leave of absence to start (iii) the 'date of placement' – the date the child is being placed with the Member.

6.3 The Monitoring Officer will acknowledge in writing (normally within two weeks) that the information has been received, confirming the intended period of leave and arrangements in terms of basic and SRA payments.

6.4 If a member wishes to return from parental leave earlier than originally planned they should write to the Monitoring Officer or Deputy who will provide confirmation that the information has been received and from what date they will resume the responsibilities of any remunerated post.

7. Resigning from office and elections

7.1 If a member decides not to return to office following during their maternity, paternity or adoption leave the Monitoring Officer or Deputy must be notified. Allowances will cease from the effective resignation date.

7.2 If an election is held during the Member's maternity, paternity or adoption leave of absence and they are not re-elected, or decide not to stand for re-election, their basic allowance and SRA if appropriate will cease from the Monday after the election date when they would technically leave office.

8. Practical arrangements

8.1 A member may wish to arrange a 'Keeping in Touch' (KIT) day before resuming their Council duties (these would normally cover occasional events such as attending training) and advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer beforehand. KIT days should not include attendance at Council or committee meetings as this would signify a return to the role.

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