

Part 6 - Members Allowances Scheme

Last Modified December 01, 2021



Effective from 22 May 2019

Approved by Council on 26 June 2019

Updated by Council on 20 July 2020

Updated on 10 September 2020

Updated on 29 September 2021

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 £10,480.50 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	31,441.50
Deputy Leader	18,864.90

Cabinet Member	14,148.68
Cabinet Assistant	5,240.25
Chair of Scrutiny Leadership Board	14,148.68
Chair of scrutiny committee	10,480.50
Vice-Chair of scrutiny committee	5,240.25
Chair: Planning, Licensing, Appeals, Audit	8,384.40
Vice-Chair: Planning, Licensing, Appeals, Audit	4,192.20
Leader of Principal Opposition ¹	14,148.68
Deputy Leader of Principal Opposition ¹	7,074.34
Leader of Other Opposition Group ²	7,074.34
Mayor	12,750
Deputy Mayor	3,188
Chair of Board: Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Airport Companies	5,138
Chair of Audit Committee: Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Airport Companies ³	3,313
Non-Executive Directors: Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Airport Companies	2,563
Chair of Shareholder Committee ⁵	4,000
Members of Shareholder Committee	2,563
Standards Independent Persons ⁴	800
Independent member of Audit Committee	769
Scrutiny Co-opted member	514
Fostering Panel representative (rate per meeting attended) ⁶	90

¹ Minimum requirement of 25% of seats on Council

² Minimum requirement of 10% of seats on Council

³ These allowances are not updated annually in line with the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Service pay award

⁴ Allowance to receive the annual update from 1st December 2021.

⁵ The annual uplift not to apply until 2022/2023 financial year.

⁶ This allowance to be updated in line with the rate paid to independent representatives of the Fostering Panel

4.2 No more than one special responsibility allowance would normally be paid to a councillor (with the exception of non-Executive Director payments to councillors serving on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Airport Companies those serving on the Shareholder Committee, the Deputy Mayor and members of Fostering Panel) who would be entitled to receive these allowances in addition to one other. Any other requests for receipt of two special responsibility allowances would be considered on its own merits by the Independent Remuneration Panel for a recommendation to Council.

The Council agreed on 29 September 2021 that a second Special Responsibility Allowance can be paid for the councillors appointed as the Chair of the Licensing Committee and the Chair of the Adults Social Care Scrutiny Committee as well as the Chair of the Appeals Committee and Chair of the Planning Committee.

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 Head of Democratic Governance 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 Joseph Rowntree 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:

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:

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:	27.0p per mile
251cc to 500cc:	35.5p per mile
Over 500cc:	39.2p per mile
Passenger allowance -	5p per mile
For each passenger but not more than four:	

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 be 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:

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 £81.63

(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 Director of Governance and Partnerships (or in his/her absence the Head of Democratic Governance) 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 - Policy in respect of maternity, paternity and adoption pay

1. Introduction

1.1 This Policy sets out Members' entitlement to allowances in cases of a leave of absence in respect of maternity, paternity and adoption.

1.2 The objective of the policy is that insofar as possible the position of Members is comparable with employees of the Council, noting that councillors are public office holders and not employees and do not benefit from forms of entitled leave which employees do.

2. General provisions

The Basic Allowance

2.1 All Members are legally entitled to a Basic Allowance which must be the same for each member and is payable as long as they remain in office as a Member of the Council. This policy reaffirms the position that all Members shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full in the case of authorised absences for maternity, paternity and adoption.

2.2 However, this policy cannot not 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 by dispensation to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six-month period. If a Member wished to continue on a leave of absence in accordance with this policy then they would have to have a dispensation agreed by Council.

Special Responsibility Allowances

2.3 Members entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) under the Members Allowances scheme shall continue to receive their allowances in full in the case of a leave of absence for maternity, paternity and adoption. For the avoidance of doubt this also includes all councillor 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.

2.4 The Council meeting, the relevant committee, the Leader of the Council (in the case of Cabinet Members) and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group (in respect of the Deputy Leader of the Principal Opposition Group) as appropriate may, depending on the circumstances, appoint a replacement to cover the period of absence. The 'replacement' Member will be entitled to the SRA on a pro rata basis for the period of the temporary appointment.

2.5 However, there shall be no requirement for a 'replacement' Member to be appointed to undertake the duties of that Member during any period of leave.

2.6 The payment of a SRA during a period of maternity, paternity and adoption leave of absence shall continue for a period of six months:

- unless the date of the next Annual Meeting of the Council is prior to the end of that six month period (if the appointment was due for review at that meeting), or
- unless that member is up for election before the end of that six month period, or
- unless the member attends a committee or Council meeting convened under the Local Government Act 1972 (this would signify a return to the SRA role).

Once a member reaches the six-month period of a either a maternity, paternity or adoption leave of absence, they will be subject to a possible extension for a further six-month period.

2.7 Should a Member appointed to replace the member on maternity, paternity or adoption leave of absence already hold a position subject to a SRA, then this would be reviewed by the Independent Remuneration Panel as to whether two SRA's should be paid and the Panel would recommend the Director of Governance and Partnerships who would make the decision taking into account the wishes of the Panel.

3. Notification protocols

Maternity Leave of absence

3.1 All pregnant Members shall be entitled to take up to one year's (52 weeks) maternity leave, - or as much of that period as they wish to take (reviewable at six-months in accordance with paragraph 2.7 and a dispensation granted by Council as set out in

paragraph 2.2).

3.2 The Member must notify the Director of Governance and Partnerships / Head of Democratic Governance in writing no later than the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth and provide:

- (i) the week the baby is due,
- (ii) the period of maternity leave of absence the Member intends to take,
- (iii) when they want their leave of absence to start; and
- (iv) a copy of the matb1 form.

Ordinary Paternity Leave of absence

3.3 Member is entitled to take two weeks ordinary paternity leave of absence if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner following the birth or adoption of their child(ren), and they have the main responsibility for the child's upbringing during the period of leave of absence.

3.4 The Member must notify the Director of Governance and Partnerships / Head of Democratic Governance in writing no later than the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth, unless this is not reasonably practicable. The Member will need to provide:-

- (i) the week the baby is due
- (ii) whether they wish to take one or two weeks' leave of absence; and
- (iii) when they want their leave to start.

Shared Parental Leave of absence

3.5 Any Member who has otherwise made Shared Parental Leave of absence arrangements is requested to confirm these with the Director of Governance and Partnerships / Head of Democratic Governance who will seek to replicate such arrangements and apply this policy accordingly.

Adoption Leave of absence

3.6 A Member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency shall be entitled to take up to one year's (52 weeks) adoption leave of absence, - or as much of that period as they wish to take (reviewable at six-months in accordance with paragraph 2.7 and a dispensation granted by Council as set out in paragraph 2.2).

3.7 The Member must notify the Director of Governance and Partnerships (or in his absence the Head of Democratic Governance) within seven days of being matched with a child and provide:

- (i) how much leave of absence they want
- (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.

General

3.8 Any member taking a leave of absence in accordance with this policy should ensure they respond to reasonable requests for information as promptly as possible and they keep officers and colleagues informed and updated in relation to intended dates of return and requests for extensions of a leave of absence.

Subsequent Actions

3.9 On receipt of the information, the Director of Governance and Partnerships (or in his/her absence the Head of Democratic Governance) will within two weeks acknowledge that the period of absence has been noted and take any action necessary to arrange for the appointment of a 'replacement' member.

3.10 The Director of Governance and Partnerships (or in his/her absence the Head of Democratic Governance) will also write to the Member to confirm the continuation of allowances and until what date they will continue, subject to review.

3.11 If the Member wishes to return from maternity leave earlier than originally planned they should write to the Director of Governance and Partnerships (or in his/her absence the Head of Democratic Governance), who will provide confirmation that the information has been received and from what date they will resume the responsibilities of any remunerated post.

4. Resigning from office and elections

4.1 If a Member decides not to return to office following during their maternity, paternity or adoption leave the Director of Governance and Partnerships (or in his/her absence the Head of Democratic Governance) must be notified. The Payroll Manager must then be informed within two working days of receiving notification. Allowances will cease from the effective resignation date.

4.2 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.

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