

# **Hastings District Council**

## **Policy on Elected Members' Allowances and Expenses 2022**

**(As adopted by Council on 8 December 2022)**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In addition to determining the remuneration of elected members, the Remuneration Authority (the Authority) is required to determine the allowances' framework for elected members.

The payment of any or all allowances is at the discretion of each local authority. Hastings District Council provides for elected member allowances through the Policy on Elected Members' Allowances and Expenses adopted by Council.

## 2. COMMENCEMENT

The provisions of this policy take effect from 9 December 2022.

## 3. POLICY ON ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES

### 3.1 Parking

Elected members will be provided with parking spaces at, or close to, the Council's offices for their use when on council business.

Elected members who incur parking charges when on Council business at other locations are entitled to reimbursement of the actual cost. (Note "parking charges" refers to the cost of parking not a parking ticket or fine).

### 1.2 Use of Public Transport

Elected members who travel by public transport in relation to Council business are entitled to reimbursement of the actual cost. Evidence of the cost incurred should be provided.

### 3.3 Mayor's Vehicle

The Mayor of the Council will be eligible to be provided with a vehicle. If the Mayor elects to have the vehicle available for private use, a deduction will be made from their salary as determined by the Authority.

### 3.4 Vehicle Kilometre Allowance

Subject to the interpretation and exceptions listed below, elected members, excluding the Mayor if provided with a vehicle, are entitled to a vehicle kilometre allowance when using their own vehicle for Council business.

Eligibility for kilometre allowance commences from the member's primary place of residence until the conclusion of their Council business travel.

Kilometre allowance will be paid at the maximum rate per kilometre as set out in the current Remuneration Authority determination.

An elected member, when travelling from a place where they permanently or temporarily reside that is outside of their local authority boundary, can claim the vehicle allowance only when travelling on local authority business for travel once they enter the local authority's boundary.

### **Interpretation**

With respect to mileage allowances and reimbursement of public transport costs, the term “Council business” includes attendance at the following:

- Official meetings of the Council and any committee and subcommittee of Council
- Council workshops
- Meetings and workshops of advisory groups established by Council
- Meetings and workshops of external bodies to which the elected member has been appointed by Council
- Statutory hearings
- Meetings of Council-owned companies
- An external event or meeting where there has been:
  - A resolution of Council or a committee, or
  - An authorisation by the Council’s Mayor, or
  - With respect to the member of a committee, an authorisation by the Chairperson of that committee
- Visits to, and tours of, facilities, or sites, or works, for which the Council is responsible for, or has involvement in, or which will be the subject of business to come before the Council or any committee
- Seminars and training courses where the elected members’ attendance has been authorised
- Discussions with committee chairpersons or Council officers
- Consultation with Mayors, territorial authority committee chairpersons, or elected members
- Official briefings

Kilometre allowance may include travel to and from the member’s primary place of residence, if the travel is:

- (a) In the member’s own vehicle; and
- (b) On Council business as outlined above; and
- (c) By the most direct route reasonable in the circumstances

“Council business” does not include events where the primary focus is on social activity.

### **Exceptions**

If Hastings District Council is providing transport, and an elected member chooses, for personal reasons, to travel separately, they will not be entitled to a kilometre allowance.

Where an elected member chooses, for personal reasons, to travel by private motor vehicle to a council authorised conference or seminar outside of the Hastings District, they will be entitled to a kilometre payment no more than the cheapest equivalent air fares available for the day(s) of travel, where such fares are less than the kilometre allowance at ordinary rates.

### **3.5 Communications Allowance**

It is expected that elected members have their own communications and computer equipment and that these items are available for elected members to use for their Council related business.

Elected members having such items available for Council business are eligible to receive a communication allowance. The rate payable will be the maximum rate determined by the Authority. The rate will be divided into annual allowances for each eligible item made available by the member for Council business purposes:

- Personal computer, tablet, or laptop, including and related docking station
- Printer
- Mobile phone
- Mobile calls
- Internet connection
- ICT consumables

An elected member may be issued with a standard specification Hastings District Council mobile tablet device for use on Council business. The use of loaned equipment by an elected member is subject to the following conditions:

- The loaned equipment is provided for Council business purposes
- The loaned equipment remains Hastings District Council's property at all times and must be returned when requested

Hastings District Council will provide a mobile phone for the Mayor and cover all expenses associated with the use of that phone on Council business. The phone remains the property of the Council, and the communication allowance payable to the Mayor will be reduced as outlined above to reflect the provision of the phone.

### **3.6 Travel Time Allowance**

Elected members are entitled to a travel time allowance in relation to travel undertaken in relation to Council business. The rate payable will be the maximum rate determined by the Authority.

### **3.7 Childcare Allowance**

An elected member who is responsible for one or more children under 14 years of age may claim a childcare allowance for childcare required whilst the elected member is on council business, for each eligible child up to the annual maximum limit set by the Authority.

The childcare allowance is only payable if:

- (a) The member is a parent or guardian of the child, or is a person who usually has responsibility for the day-to-day care of the child (other than on a temporary basis); and
- (b) The child is aged under 14 years of age; and
- (c) The childcare is provided by a person who –
  - (i) Is not a family member of the member; and
  - (ii) Does not ordinarily reside with the member; and
- (d) The member provides evidence satisfactory to Hastings District Council of the amount paid for childcare.

Payment of the allowance will be made on submission of a childcare allowance claim from the member. The claim must set out

- the actual costs incurred and paid by the member,
- the date for which the claim is for,
- the nature of the council business the member was undertaking, and
- must include a receipt invoice or other appropriate record of payment for the childcare services provided.

### **3.8 Travel from Additional Place of Residence**

Where an elected member has an additional place of residence (e.g. a holiday home) and they are travelling from that additional place of residence, and that travel involves a distance and/or duration greater than they would travel if they were travelling from their primary place of residence, then they will only be eligible to claim for the mileage and travel time that would have been incurred from their primary place of residence.

### **3.9 Conferences, Courses, Seminars, etc.**

Elected members authorised to attend a conference, course, seminar, etc., will have attendance fees, travel, accommodation, and meals paid for. Unless otherwise agreed by the Chief Executive, all travel and accommodation will be booked through Executive Assistants.

Core training will be organised by Democracy and Governance Services. Elected member attendance at one-off events in New Zealand will be subject to approval by the Mayor; in the case of attendance by the Mayor approval will be by the Chief Executive and Manager: Democracy and Governance Services

Overseas conference attendance is to be approved by the Mayor and Chief Executive.

### **3.10 Clothing**

Elected members may be supplied with clothing bearing the Council's branding. These remain Council property at all times.

### **3.11 Stationery**

Stationery is available on request for use on Council business.

### **3.12 Councillors' Lounge**

Elected members are entitled to use the Councillors' Lounge in the Hastings District Council office for Council business purposes.

### **3.13 Travel Insurance**

Travel insurance will be provided for overseas travel on Council business.

### **3.14 Personal Accident Insurance**

HDC's personal accident insurance includes cover for the death or bodily injury of an elected member. Any payment received as a result of a claim made under this cover in respect of an elected member is payable to the Council, and will be utilised for Council purposes only, e.g. as a contribution to the costs of running an extraordinary election. No payment will be made to the elected member (or their estate) who is the subject of the claim.

### **3.15 Payment**

Where applicable, allowances will be paid fortnightly.

Claims for expenses should be made fortnightly on the forms provided, no later than three months after the date the mileage or expense was incurred, and should include all relevant receipts.

Payment will be made by direct credit.