

PART 6

Members Allowances Scheme¹

¹ Approved by Council on 22 February 2021

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1. Councils are required by the Allowances Regulations² to make a scheme of allowances payable to Councillors for the next financial year (i.e. 1 April to 31 March) on or before 31 March each year. The scheme may be amended at any time but may only be revoked with effect from the beginning of a year.
- 6.1.2. Under the Allowances Regulations councils are required to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel to provide them with advice on the allowances scheme and the amounts to be paid. Councils must have regard to this advice.
- 6.1.3. In this scheme, “councillor” means an individual elected to Harborough District Council. “Co-optee” means a person who is not elected to the council but who is a member of a committee or sub-committee of the Council.

6.2 Allowances Payable

- 6.2.1. Councillors elected to Harborough District Council are entitled to the following allowances:

Basic Allowance:

- 6.2.2. Each year a Basic Allowance is payable to each councillor of Harborough District Council. Where the term of office of a councillor begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a financial year, the amount of Basic Allowance due is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of days in Office}}{\text{Number of days in the year}} \times \text{Annual Basic Allowance}$$

- 6.2.3. Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment of all councillors, including activities such as membership of regulatory panels, partnership boards, outside bodies and organisations, forums and attendance at seminars. It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as the use of their homes. The allowance is also intended to cover the cost of meals and other incidental expenses incurred within the region.
- 6.2.4. The amount of allowance per Councillor as at 1 April 2021 as set out in Appendix A. All councillors are legally entitled to payment of the Basic Allowance as long as they remain councillors.

² Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (“the Allowances Regulations”)

Special Responsibility Allowance

- 6.2.5. Councillors who undertake specified special responsibilities in accordance with the Allowances Regulations are entitled to be paid a Special Responsibility Allowance. Where a councillor takes up or relinquishes any special responsibility otherwise than at the beginning or end of the financial year the amount of special responsibility allowance payable is calculated as follows.

$$\frac{\text{Number of days performing the special responsibility}}{\text{Number of days in the year}} \times \text{Annual Special Responsibility Allowance}$$

- 6.2.6. No councillor can receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance from the council at a time. Where a councillor is eligible to receive more than one allowance from the council, the higher allowance will be paid.
- 6.2.7. Councillors may accept a special responsibility allowance from the council and other bodies to which they are elected but not in relation to the same duties.
- 6.2.8. The amounts of Special Responsibility Allowances are set out at Appendix A.

Dependent Allowance – Childcare or Carer:

- 6.2.9. A councillor who incurs costs for the care of dependent relatives or children while undertaking approved duties under regulation 7 of the Allowances Regulations can claim a Dependents' Allowance for the period of the approved duties plus reasonable travel time agreed by the Chief Executive provided that:
- 6.2.9.1. Childcare dependent allowance shall only be payable in respect of a child up to and including 13 years of age;
 - 6.2.9.2. Carer dependent allowance shall only be payable upon provision of medical or social care evidence that the care is required.
- 6.2.10. Dependent allowance may be claimed at an hourly rate equivalent to the minimum wage paid to a person 21 years of age for the first dependent, a further 50% be paid in respect of a second dependent and a further 25% be paid in respect of subsequent dependents up to a total maximum payment of twice the level of the minimum wage;
- 6.2.11. The dependents' allowance may not be paid to a member of the councillor's own household and cannot exceed the actual costs incurred.

Co-optees Allowance

- 6.2.12. The Co-optees Allowance is to cover attendance at conferences and meetings and may apply to any co-opted and appointed members of a Council's Committees or sub-Committees. It is an annual allowance which will be paid in proportion to the length of time the co-optee serves on the committee.

- 6.2.13. Where a co-optee is appointed Chair of the committee to which they are co-opted, the Co-optee Allowance will be paid at a rate no less than the equivalent Special Responsibility Allowance available to Chairs of equivalent committees of the Council.
- 6.2.14. The payment of the Co-optee Allowance to individuals co-opted to a Council body shall only be applied if specifically agreed by Council.

Travelling and Subsistence Allowance

- 6.2.15. The Travel Allowance payable to councillors and co-optees shall be the same as the travel allowances paid to staff employed under the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (“NJC”) national conditions of service as follows:
- 6.2.15.1. Mileage rates to be the same as those paid to casual car users;
 - 6.2.15.2. Bicycle Allowance at the same rate as that paid to staff;
- 6.2.16. Train travel shall be reimbursed to the value of the cheapest fare available.
- 6.2.17. The Subsistence Allowance payable to councillors and co-optees shall be as follows:
- 6.2.17.1. Breakfast: £5.00,
 - 6.2.17.2. Lunch: £10,
 - 6.2.17.3. Evening Meal: £15
 - 6.2.17.4. Overnight Stay: as agreed with relevant Officer.
- 6.2.18. Travel and subsistence allowances may be paid for attendance at a meeting of:
- 6.2.18.1. the bodies identified in Parts 2 and 3 of this constitution;
 - 6.2.18.2. a body to which the Council has made an appointment or nomination;
 - 6.2.18.3. a meeting authorised by the Council, Cabinet or their Committees, or a joint committee of the Council;
 - 6.2.18.4. a local authority association of which the Council is a member;
 - 6.2.18.5. any other duty approved by the Authority in connection with discharging the duties of the Authority or its Committees or sub-Committees.
- 6.2.19. Travel and subsistence claim submitted without supporting receipts will not be paid.

IT provision

- 6.2.20. Technology is relied upon by the Council to serve the community, staff and councillors. Councillors are expected to receive information and communicate via email, attend meetings via electronic platforms such as Microsoft Teams, and accessing information electronically on Council systems. Councillors should therefore have appropriate IT equipment. However, given the difficulties some councillors have

previously experienced accessing council systems with their own IT, the Council now offers councillors a choice between:

6.2.20.1. an annual allowance of £250 per municipal year towards their IT equipment needs³, provided:

6.2.20.1.1. the equipment meets a minimum specification set by the IT department;

6.2.20.1.2. receipts are provided;

6.2.20.1.3. consent is given for software to be installed on the equipment which allows the Council to wipe its data from the equipment remotely in the event that the equipment is lost; or

6.2.20.2. standard issue IT built by the IT team specifically to serve the needs of councillors, pre-loaded with council systems anticipated to be needed by councillors to undertake their role.⁴.

6.2.21. Whichever IT provision is chosen, councillors are required to comply with the Council's IT security policies at all times.

6.3 Payments

6.3.1. Payments in respect of basic and special responsibility allowances, will be made in instalments of one-twelfth of the amount specified in this Scheme on the 25 day of each month two weeks in arrears, 2 weeks in advance.

6.3.2. Claims for dependent carers, travel and subsistence allowances should be made on the approved forms, together with supporting receipts, to Democratic Services within 2 months of the date of the event from which the allowance entitlement arose.

³ Councillors may draw down two years of allowance (i.e. £500) to purchase equipment such as laptop, tablets or smart phones however the Councils IT team will not provide those purchasing their own equipment with:

- IT support for any problems arising with devices not issued by the Council;
- replacements for equipment that is not working;
- consumables such as charging cables, screens, keyboard etc,

⁴ Council issued equipment (including headphones, mouse, keyboard, screen etc) will be of a specification higher than that purchasable with the IT allowance alone, fully supported by the IT team in normal office hours, with replacement kit being issued where required.

- 6.3.3. Tax is payable on basic allowances, special responsibility allowance, dependent allowance and co-optees' allowance. Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs ("HMRC") is notified of all new councillors.

Renunciation

- 6.3.4. Councillors can choose to forego any part of their entitlement to an allowance under this scheme by giving notice in writing to the Section 151 Officer.

Annual uprating

- 6.3.5. All Allowances will be adjusted annually to reflect any increases awarded by the national Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Government Services – that is, the national scheme for all staff apart from Chief Officers.

Repayment

- 6.3.6. Where payment of any allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which the councillor concerned is:
- 6.3.6.1. suspended or partially suspended from their responsibilities or duties as a member of the authority in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part;
 - 6.3.6.2. ceases to be a member of the authority; or
- is in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period the authority will require repayment of such part of the allowance as relates to any such period.

Withholding

- 6.3.7. The Council can withhold certain allowances as a result of full or partial suspension of a councillor as follows:
- 6.3.7.1. Basic Allowance - fully or partially withheld;
 - 6.3.7.2. Travel and subsistence allowances or reimbursement of expenses withheld in relation to any duties or responsibilities attracting these allowances.
 - 6.3.7.3. Special Responsibility Allowance – fully or partially withheld;
 - 6.3.7.4. Co-Optee Allowance – fully or partially withheld.]
 - 6.3.7.5. Dependent Allowance may not be withheld from Councillors.

6.4 Reasonable Adjustments

- 6.4.1. The Council is committed to supporting disabled people who are elected to the Council and will assist with any disability-related costs of being a councillor, for

example difficulty using public transport, needing sign language interpreters etc. Democratic Services will work with any councillor trying to overcome barriers caused by disability to ensure full engagement and participation in the work of the Council.

6.5 Miscellaneous

- 6.5.1 The Council must publish details of allowances claimed by all councillors on an annual basis.
- 6.5.2 Councillors must make their own pension provision
- 6.5.3 In addition to the statutory review of allowances undertaken every 4 years, the Council will convene a meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel upon 10 councillors making a written request to that effect to the Chair of the Constitutional Review Committee.

Appendix A

Office	SRA Factor	Basic (2023)	Special Responsibility Allowance (2023)	Total	No.	Total Cost in 2023
		£	£	£	35	£
Cabinet						
Leader of the Council	2.750	5,572.10 (5,998.45)	15,323.28 (16,495.74)	20,895.38 (22,494.19)	1	20,895.38 (22,494.19)
Deputy Leader of the Council	1.375	5,572.10 (5,998.45)	7,661.64 (8,247.87)	13,233.74 (14,246.32)	-	0 (0)
Cabinet Member	1.2	5,572.10 (5,998.45)	6,686.52 (7,198.13)	12,258.62 (13,196.58)	3 5	36,775.86 (65,982.90)
Committee Chairman						
Planning	1.0	5,572.10 (5,998.45)	5,572.10 (5,998.45)	11,144.20 (11,996.90)	1 1	11,144.20 (11,996.90)
Chairman of Licensing & Regulatory Committee	0.25	5,572.10 (5,998.45)	1,393.03 (1,499.62)	6,965.13 (7,498.07)	1 1	6,965.13 (7,498.07)
Chairman of Audit and Standards Committee	1.2	5,572.10 (5,998.45)	4,179.07 (7,198.13)	9,751.17 (13,196.58)	1 1	9,751.17 (13,196.58)
Scrutiny Panels						

Scrutiny Commission	1.2	5,572.10	6,686.52	12,258.62	1	12,258.62
Chair		(5,998.45)	(7,198.13)	(13,196.58)	1	(13,196.58)
Scrutiny Panel Chair	0.75	5,572.10	4,179.08	9,751.18	2	19,502.36
		(5,998.45)	(4,498.84)	(10,497.29)	2	(20,994.58)
Main Opposition Group		5,572.10	5,572.10	11,144.20	1	11,144.20
Leader	1.00	(5,998.45)	(5,998.45)	(11,996.90)	1	(11,996.90)
All other members	0.00	5,572.10		5,572.10	22	122,586.20
		(5,998.45)	(0)	(5,998.45)	21	(125,967.45)
TOTAL						251,023.12
						(293,324.15)
Parish Member on Audit			551.72	551.72		1,655.16
& Standards Committee			(593.94)	(593.94)	3	(1,781.82)
/ Co-optee						
TOTAL					37	(295,105.97)