

PART 5

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

**Coventry City Council
Members' Allowances Scheme**

Coventry City Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations), hereby makes the following scheme:-

1. This scheme may be cited as the Coventry City Council Members' Allowances Scheme and shall have effect from 1 April 2024.
2. In this scheme,
"Council" means the Council of the City of Coventry
"Member" means an elected member of the Council

Basic Allowance

3. Subject to paragraph 10, a basic allowance of £15,935 will be paid to each Member.

Special Responsibility Allowances

4. (1) Special responsibility allowances will be paid to those Members who are appointed to the positions that are listed in the schedule to this scheme, or who are otherwise authorised by the Council to perform the duties which attach to those positions.
(2) Subject to paragraph 10, the amount of each such allowance will be the amount specified against that special responsibility in that schedule.
(3) No Member may receive more than one special responsibility allowance.

Travel and Subsistence

5. *Approved duties for which travel and subsistence expenses may be claimed*
 - (1) Members (including Co-opted Members) shall be entitled to receive travel and subsistence payments for duties carried out which are considered standard activities relating to the role of a councillor:
 - (a) All meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels;
 - (b) Meetings of a Joint Committee or body of which the authority is a member;
 - (c) Meetings of a local authority association of which the authority is a member;
 - (d) Meetings of some other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations;
 - (e) Authorised conferences, seminars or training and development events;

- (f) Any other duties approved by the authority in connection with discharging the functions of the authority; and
 - (g) Briefings and agenda meetings with officers.
- (2) The following duties will NOT be regarded as “approved duties” for the payment of travel and subsistence expenses:-
- (a) Political group meetings;
 - (b) Attendance at Ward Surgeries;
 - (c) Constituency work including meetings with community groups;
 - (d) Site visits to meet constituents to carry out a Member’s community leadership role;
 - (e) Attendance at meetings of School Governing Bodies;
 - (f) Attendance at meetings of any body within the Council’s Constitution at which they are not a member or have not been invited to attend; and
 - (g) Attendance at meetings which are not listed as approved duties and in respect of which prior approval has not been given by the Council.

6. *Travel expenses*

- (1) Wherever practicable, public transport should be used, the costs of which shall be paid directly by the authority or reimbursed to members.
- (2) Standard rail fares shall apply.
- (3) A Councillor may be given an annual Coventry Bus Pass. If this is taken up, no other travel expenses within the City will be paid.
- (4) Where the use of public transport is not practicable, the cost of travel will be reimbursed at 45p per mile and an additional 5p per passenger mile for carrying fellow councillors and/or officers on journeys which are also qualifying journeys for them.
- (5) Travel by private bicycle will be reimbursed at 20p per mile.
- (6) Travel by private motorcycle will be reimbursed at 24p per mile.
- (7) Costs of taxi fares (including a reasonable gratuity), tube fares, car parking and toll charges will be reimbursed where these were necessary.

7. *Subsistence expenses*

- (1) For meals purchased outside the Coventry City area, the reasonable costs of purchasing a meal and non-alcoholic beverage or appropriate refreshment will be reimbursed, subject to the provision of supporting receipts.
- (2) Accommodation must be booked through the Council. Value for money and the circumstances of each event will be taken into account.
- (3) For overnight stays, the reasonable cost of minor out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

- (4) The costs of accommodation and/or meals arising in relation to approved duties shall be paid directly by the authority where possible or, where this is not possible, reimbursed to members.

Other Allowances

8. (1) A stationery allowance of £150 per year shall be made available to each Member.
- (2) A telephone line rental allowance of £30.15 per quarter shall be available to each Member*.
- (3) A maximum telephone allowance of £488.80 per year shall be available to each Member*.
- (4) A Dependent Carers' Allowance may be claimed in accordance with the terms of the Dependent Carers' Allowance Scheme appended to this Scheme.
- (5) A co-opted member's allowance of £578 per annum shall be paid to each co-opted and independent member appointed by the City Council.

* This element of the scheme is open only to councillors who have claimed since April 2020.

Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental and Adoption Leave

9. Leave Periods

- (1) Councillors who give birth or adopt a child can take up to six months of leave, with the option to extend to up to 52 weeks.
- (2) Where a birth is premature, the Councillor is entitled to take leave during the period between the date of the birth and the due date in addition to the 6 months' period.
- (3) Councillors who are biological fathers or nominated carers can take at least two weeks of paternity leave.
- (4) The Council will endeavour to replicate Shared Parental Leave arrangements agreed with any Councillor's external employers.
- (5) Councillors who share parental leave arrangements can split the leave up to 50 weeks.
- (6) Councillors must comply with the notice requirements of the Council and keep the Council informed of their intended return dates and requests for extensions.

10. Allowances during parental leave (Basic Allowance and SRAs)

- (1) Councillors will receive their basic allowance in full during their leave.
- (2) Councillors who have a special responsibility allowance (SRA) will also receive it in full, and their replacements will receive an SRA on a pro rata basis for the period a role is covered.
- (3) The payment of SRAs will continue for six months or until the next annual Council meeting or election of said Councillor, whichever is sooner – leading to a review and possible further 6-month extension.
- (4) If the Councillor covering a role for which an SRA is payable and is already in receipt of another, they will only receive one payment in line with the allowances scheme.
- (5) Unless they are removed from their post at an annual meeting or their party loses control of the Council during their leave period. Councillors on leave should return to the same post where possible.

11. Resigning from Office and Elections

- (1) Councillors who decide not to return after their leave must notify the Council immediately (allowances will cease from the effective resignation date).
- (2) Councillors who are not re-elected or who do not stand for re-election will stop receiving all their allowances on the retirement date, usually four days after the election.

Renunciation

12. A Member may by notice in writing given to the City Solicitor elect to forgo any part of his entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

Part-year Entitlements

13. Where the term of office of a Member or the entitlement to a special responsibility allowance begins or ends at a time other than at the beginning or end of the Municipal Year, the entitlement to basic or special responsibility allowance will be based on the proportion of time which the service or special responsibility bears to the full year.

Payments

14. (1) Payments shall be made in respect of basic and special responsibility allowances, subject to sub-paragraph (2), in monthly or half-yearly instalments according to each Member's preference as expressed to the City Solicitor
- (2) Where a payment under this scheme in respect of a basic allowance or a special responsibility allowance would result in the Member receiving more than the amount to which, by virtue of paragraph 10, he or she is entitled, the payment shall be restricted to such amount as will ensure that no more is paid than the amount to which he or she is entitled.
- (3) Payments made under this scheme for basic and special responsibility allowances will be increased in line with the nationally agreed annual pay

award for local government employees (linked to spinal point 43 of the NJC Scheme) in April of each year.

- (4) Nominated officers shall be authorised to approve expenditure outside the normal travel and subsistence rates, and generally adjudicate on claims, where required.
- (5) Travel and subsistence claims must be:
 - (a) for actual expenditure;
 - (b) submitted in a form determined by the authority; and
 - (c) accompanied by evidence of expenditure with receipts
- (6) Claims must be made within three months of the date of the expenditure or else forfeited unless exceptional circumstances can be justified as to why this timescale could not be achieved.

Schedule of Special Responsibility Allowances

15. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 10 of this Scheme, special responsibility allowances shall be paid to those Councillors who are appointed to the positions listed below or are otherwise authorised by the Council to perform the duties which attach to any of those positions, and the amounts of those allowances shall be the amounts specified against each position:-

	£
Leader of the Council	28,680
Deputy Leader of the Council	20,710
Leader of the Largest Opposition Group	5,879
Deputy Leader of the Largest Opposition Group	2,940
Other Cabinet Members	12,749
Deputy Cabinet Members	4,333
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Chair	12,749
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Deputy Chair	3,190
Scrutiny Board Chairs	7,971
Audit and Procurement Committee Chair	7,971
Audit and Procurement Committee Deputy Chair	3,190
Planning Committee Chair	7,971
Planning Committee Deputy Chair	3,190
Licensing and Regulatory Committee Chair	7,971
Licensing and Regulatory Committee Deputy Chair	3,190
Ethics Committee Chair	1,237
Member on Fostering Panel	3,190
Member on Adoption Panel	3,190
Co-opted and Independent Member	578

Dependant Carers' Allowance Scheme

16. Councillors may claim a dependant carer's allowance where they incur expenditure on the care of children or other dependants when undertaking the following approved duties:
- (1) All formal meetings of the Council where the attendance of the Councillor is required;
 - (2) Any Working Groups/Review Groups/Consultation meetings arranged by the Council which the Councillor is required to attend;
 - (3) Attendance at training sessions, seminars, briefing meetings organised by the Council;
 - (4) Attendance at conferences organised or approved by the Council and/or Cabinet;
 - (5) Attendance at meetings of other bodies, including School Governors meetings, where the Councillor has been appointed by the Council as a representative of the Council;

- (6) Briefing/Consultation meetings with officers by Cabinet Members or members with special responsibility holding appointed positions; and
 - (7) The carrying out of any other duty approved by the Council or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with the discharge of the functions of the Council.
17. The allowance that can be claimed will be:
- (a) For the dependant care of a child (under the age of 14) the actual costs that are incurred, but not exceeding the hourly rate for the national living wage;
 - (b) For the professional care of a dependant relative, the maximum hourly rate will be the Council's Direct Payment rates.
18. A written declaration will be lodged with the Ethics Committee by a Councillor intending to claim the allowance.
19. The care can only be provided for a person who normally lives with the Councillor as part of their family.
20. The carer cannot be a member of the Councillor's immediate family or a person normally resident at the Councillor's home address.
21. Receipts must be provided with all claims and the claim must be made within two months from the date for which the allowance is claimed.
- (NOTE: In order to amend the Members' Allowances Scheme an Independent Remuneration Panel will be required to make recommendations to, and be accepted by, the Council.)

