

# Elected Member Expenses Policy

(from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024)

## 1. Introduction

The Local Government Act 2002 has given the Remuneration Authority the responsibility for setting remuneration, approving expense rules and setting the mileage allowance for elected members.

## 2. Policy context

### 2.1. Policy principles

- 2.1.1. This policy covers the entitlement of elected members to allowances and contributions towards expenses related to travel, mileage, communication, childcare, and travel, conference and training attendance and professional development.
- 2.1.2. Elected members should be reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses they incur in carrying out their official duties.
- 2.1.3. Reimbursement of expenses apply only to elected members personally and only while they are acting in their official capacity as elected members.
- 2.1.4. Elected members' expense expenditure must have a justifiable business purpose, is moderate and conservative having regard to the circumstances, is made transparently and is appropriate in all respects.

### 2.2. Legislative context

Local Government Act 2002 Schedule 7 Clauses 6–13.

Local Government Members (2022/23) (Local Authorities) Determination 2022

## 3. Policy objective

3.1. To establish guidelines on claiming of expenses by elected members.

3.1.1. This policy is based on the principles that all expenditure is:

- Actual and reasonable
- Related to conduct of local authority business
- Represents the best use of ratepayer funds.

3.1.2. All entitlements are considered to be a contribution to expenses elected members may incur in the course of conducting local authority business.

## 4. Implementation

- 4.1. All expense claims must be submitted on the relevant claim form and where appropriate accompanied by full receipts. Eligibility of claims presented without receipts will be determined by the Governance Manager.
- 4.2. All expense claims are to be returned at least quarterly, and preferably monthly.
- 4.3. Expense claims by the Mayor are to be approved by the Chair of Audit & Risk Committee.
- 4.4. Expense claims by Deputy Mayor, Councillors and Community Board members are approved by the Governance Manager.
- 4.5. All mileage claims, including Mayor, are approved by the Governance Manager.
- 4.6. The internal audit work programme will include sampling of expense claims and allowances paid to elected members and staff. An external audit work programme may be undertaken as required.

## 5. Policy Statement

### 5.1. Remuneration, allowances and hearing fees

- 5.1.1. A member of a local authority or a board is entitled to:
  - (a) the applicable remuneration set out in the Schedule (adjusted in accordance with clause 9 if applicable)
  - (b) the applicable allowances payable in accordance with clauses 10 to 13
  - (c) the applicable hearing fees payable in accordance with clause 14.
- 5.1.2. If a member of a territorial authority is also elected or appointed to a board, the member is entitled only to the remuneration that is payable to the member as a member of the territorial authority.

### 5.2. Acting Mayor

- 5.2.1. This clause applies to a member who acts as a mayor during a period when, because of a vacancy or temporary absence, the remuneration or allowances that would usually be paid to the mayor are not being paid.
- 5.2.2. While acting as mayor, the member must be paid the remuneration and allowances usually payable to the mayor, instead of the member's usual remuneration, allowances, and hearing fees.

### 5.3. RMA resource consent hearing costs

- 5.3.1. Where an elected member (Councillor or Community Board member\*) is appointed to an RMA Resource Consent Application Hearing Panel or District Plan Hearing Panel by the Council, remuneration and allowances are payable as outlined in the Local Government Members (2022/23) (Local Authorities) Determination 2022, Section 5, 6 and 7 (or subsequent Determinations).
  - Chairperson of an RMA Resource Consent hearing is entitled to be paid a fee of up to \$116 per hour of RMA hearing, preparation (including site visit) and writing of decision time
  - Panel member whom is not Chairperson of RMA Resource Consent or District Plan hearing is entitled to be paid a fee of up to \$93 per hour of RMA or District Plan hearing and preparation (including site visit) time
  - For any period of hearing time that is less than one hour, the fee must be apportioned accordingly

- RMA Resource Consent or District Plan hearing fees are not payable to mayors or a member who acts as mayor and is paid the mayor's remuneration and allowances under clause 8(2).

5.3.2. Any/all elected members whom Waimakariri District Council appoints to a RMA Resource Management hearing or District Plan hearing must be suitably qualified by holding a current accreditation on behalf of the Ministry for the Environment having successfully completed the "Making Good Decisions" programme.

#### **5.4. District Licensing Committee hearing costs**

5.4.1. Where an elected member (Councillor or Community Board member\*) is appointed to the District Licensing Committee (DLC) remuneration is set under section 183 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act and their fees and expenses are payable as prescribed by the Minister of Justice in accordance with the Cabinet fees framework. This currently being:

- Chairperson of a DLC hearing is entitled to be paid a fee of up to \$116 per hour of DLC hearing time, including preparation, site visit and writing of decision time
- Panel member whom is not Chairperson of DLC hearing is entitled to be paid a fee of up to \$93 per hour of DLC hearing time, including preparation and site visit time
- For any period of hearing time that is less than one hour, the fee must be apportioned accordingly
- DLC hearing fees are not payable to mayors or a member who acts as mayor and is paid the mayor's remuneration and allowances.

#### **5.5. Reimbursement of conference costs**

5.5.1. Where an elected member attends a conference approved by the Council or a Community Board, all actual and reasonable costs associated with the conference or seminar will be met by the Council. This includes meal, accommodation costs and travel costs. The most cost effective means of travel must be used. Claims are to be supported by receipts and submitted to the Governance Manager within one month of conference.

#### **5.6. Accommodation and meals**

5.6.1. Accommodation and meals will be reimbursed based on actual and reasonable costs, as determined by the Governance Manager. In respect of the Mayor, assessment of actual and reasonable costs shall be determined by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee together with the Chief Executive. Where private accommodation is used a claim of \$50 per night can be made. Meals will be reimbursed based on actual and reasonable costs. Claims are to be supported by receipts. Alcohol is considered a private expense and is not reimbursed.

#### **5.7. Mayoral vehicle**

5.7.1. The Waimakariri District Council do not supply a motor vehicle for elected members' private use.

#### **5.8. Vehicle mileage allowance**

5.8.1. Mileage will be paid in accordance with Remuneration Authority Determination (2022/23)

5.8.2. A local authority may pay to a member a vehicle mileage allowance to reimburse that member for costs incurred in respect of eligible travel.

5.8.3. A member's travel is eligible for the allowance if—

- (a) it occurs on a day when the member is not provided with a motor vehicle by the local authority; and

- (b) the member is travelling—
  - (i) in a private vehicle; and
  - (ii) on local authority business; and
  - (iii) by the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances.

5.8.4. The allowance payable to a member for eligible travel is,—

- (a) for a petrol or diesel vehicle,—
  - (i) 95 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel in the determination term; and
  - (ii) 34 cents per kilometre after the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel in the determination term:
- (b) for a petrol hybrid vehicle,—
  - (i) 95 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel in the determination term; and
  - (ii) 20 cents per kilometre after the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel in the determination term:
- (c) for an electric vehicle,—
  - (i) 95 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel in the determination term; and
  - (ii) 11 cents per kilometre after the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel in the determination term.

5.8.5. In the case of an elected member living outside the Waimakariri District, the mileage allowance will be payable only from their point of entry at the Waimakariri District boundary.

5.8.6. Transport costs other than mileage will be paid for on an actual and reasonable basis.

5.8.7. The Governance Manager will be responsible for monitoring mileage claims and agreeing with the elected member the most direct route reasonable in the circumstances.

## **5.9. Travel time allowance**

5.9.1. A local authority may pay a member (other than a mayor or a regional chairperson) an allowance for eligible travel time.

5.9.2. A member's travel time is eligible for the allowance if it is time spent travelling within New Zealand—

- (a) on local authority business; and
- (b) by the quickest form of transport that is reasonable in the circumstances; and
- (c) by the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances.

5.9.3. The travel time allowance is \$40 for each hour of eligible travel time after the first hour of eligible travel time travelled in a day.

5.9.4. However, if a member of a local authority resides outside the local authority area and travels to the local authority area on local authority business, the member is only eligible for a travel time allowance in respect of eligible travel time —

- (a) after the member crosses the boundary of the local authority area; and
- (b) after the first hour of eligible travel within the local authority area.

5.9.5. The maximum total amount of travel time allowance that a member may be paid for eligible travel in a 24-hour period is 8 hours.

## **5.10. Computer, internet and associated consumables expenses (communications allowance)**

5.10.1. It is determined by the local authority that Mayor and Councillors are provided laptops to enable them to perform their functions. The Mayor is provided a mobile phone by the local authority. All Councillors use their own mobile phones. Community Board members are required to use their own equipment. Waimakariri District Council will pay an allowance in accordance with the Remuneration Authority Determination.

### **Equipment**

Mobile telephone	\$200pa (excludes Mayor)
Printer	\$50pa
Personal computer/tablet/laptop	\$400pa (excludes Mayor and Councillors)
Paper consumables	\$200pa

### **Services**

Internet Connection	\$800pa
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### **Equipment**

To reimburse for the costs of their phone/printer/computers and related consumables, as follows:

- The Mayor to receive an allowance of \$9.61 per fortnight.
- The Councillors to receive an allowance of \$17.30 per fortnight.
- Community Board Chairpersons to receive an allowance of \$32.69 per fortnight.
- Community Board members to receive \$32.69 per fortnight.

### **Services**

To reimburse for the costs of an Internet connection to their residential address to provide computer access to the Council, as follows:

- The Mayor and Councillors to receive an allowance of \$30.76 per fortnight
- Community Board Chairpersons to receive an allowance of \$30.76 per fortnight
- Community Board members to receive an allowance of \$30.76 per fortnight.

If a local authority requests a member to use the member's own mobile telephone service for the purpose of the member's work on local authority business, the member is entitled, at the member's option to –

- (a) An allowance for that use of up to \$500 for the determination term; or
- (b) Reimburse of actual costs of telephone calls made on local authority business on production of the relevant telephone records and receipts.

## **5.11. Childcare allowance**

5.11.1. A local authority may pay a childcare allowance, in accordance with subclauses (2) and (3), to an eligible member as a contribution towards expenses incurred by the member for childcare provided while the member is engaged on local authority business.

5.11.2. A member is eligible to be paid a childcare allowance in respect of childcare provided for a child only 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 parent of the child or a spouse, civil union partner, or de facto partner of the member; and

- (ii) does not ordinarily reside with the member; and
- (d) the member provides evidence satisfactory to the local authority of the amount paid for childcare.

5.11.3. A local authority must not pay childcare allowances to a member that total more than \$6,000 per child during the determination term.

## **6. Breaches**

An alleged breach of allowance and expense rules is to be considered under the Code of Conduct.

## **7. Effective date**

4 July 2023

## **8. Review date**

This policy will be reviewed annually following the release of the Remuneration Authorities Local Government Members Determination. The next review is due July 2024.

## **9. Policy owned by**

The Governance Manager

## **10. Approval**

Approved by Waimakariri District Council on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 for receipt by the Remuneration Authority

# Appendix 1

Type of Meeting/Functions	Mileage	
	Paid	Not Paid
Council meetings (ordinary, special, extra-ordinary and emergency)	✓	
Committees and Subcommittees of Council (if appointed a member)	✓	
Community Board meetings (if an appointed member)	✓	
Resource Consent Hearings (if an appointed member of the Hearings Panel)	✓	
WDC Advisory Group meetings (if appointed by the Council as its representative) (e.g. Ohoka Domain Advisory Group)	✓	
Formally representing Council (as a result of resolution of Council) at a formal meeting of another local authority.	✓	
Meetings of other outside organisations as the Council's appointed representative (appointment pursuant to a Council resolution). (Note that meetings of Council Controlled Organisations and Trusts where Councillors and Community board members are otherwise remunerated do not qualify for payment.)	✓	
Full Council workshops or briefings (which have the prior approval of the Mayor and Chief Executive) at which no resolutions or decisions are made. These workshops are to be held solely to discuss major policy or strategic issues of interest to all Councillors.	✓	
Training and development courses, field trips, site visits, where authorised by the Mayor or formal resolution of Council or Community Board, in excess of four hours.	✓	
Public meetings where the Council is officiating.	✓	
Meetings with other statutory bodies to deal with issues which would be the responsibility of a Committee or Subcommittee of Council of which the Councillor attending is a member or which deal with issues directly affecting the Councillors Ward or Portfolio.	✓	
<i>Local Conferences/Seminars (if an appointed WDC representative)</i> <i>Note – Local being generally the Canterbury region. Mileage outside the region at the discretion of the Mayor.</i>	✓	
Working groups or working parties	✓	
Field trips or site visits/inspections (including site visits for resource consent hearings where approved by Mayor or Committee Chairperson)	✓	

Type of Meeting/Functions	Mileage	
	Paid	Not Paid
Briefings and discussions with the Mayor, Chief Executive, Senior Managers and Officers	✓	
Where Councillors, other than the Deputy Mayor, officiate at "official" functions as determined by the Mayor.	✓	
Constituency "meetings" (either with individuals or organisations) unless there is formal approval requiring official attendance		<b>X</b>
Social functions		<b>X</b>
Event attendance in a non-representative capacity		<b>X</b>
Travel not related to the business of the Waimakariri District Council		<b>X</b>
Personal travel interspersed with Council related business		<b>X</b>