

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

The Gloucester City Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003, hereby makes the following Scheme:

1. Citation

- 1.1 This scheme may be cited as the Gloucester City Council Members' Allowances Scheme and shall have effect on and from 1 April 2015 until the scheme is amended or a new scheme is adopted.

2. Interpretation

- 2.1 In this Scheme,

'the Council' means the Gloucester City Council;

'Councillor' means a Member of Gloucester City Council who is a Councillor.

'co-opted member' means a member of a committee or sub-committee of the Council who is not a member of the authority.

'year' means a period beginning 1 April and ending on 31 March.

3. Basic Allowance

- 3.1 Subject to paragraphs 9 and 10, for each year a Basic Allowance of £5,600.00 shall be paid to each Councillor.
- 3.2 All incidental costs incurred by a Councillor in the performance of their duties are to be covered by the Basic Allowance unless they are claimable elsewhere under this Scheme. This includes, but is not limited to, stationery and other office supplies, printer cartridges and any telephone costs incurred from the use of a private telephone.
- 3.3 The printing of business cards and headed paper are excluded from paragraph 3.2 above and will be provided on request.
- 3.4 The Council will offer and provide Councillors with the necessary IT equipment required to perform the role. The details of this provision are the subject of a separate policy.

4. Special Responsibility Allowances

- 4.1 For each year a Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid to those Councillors who hold the special responsibilities in relation to the Council that are specified in Schedule 1 to this Scheme.

4.2 Subject to paragraphs 10 and 15, the amount of each such allowance shall be the amount specified against that special responsibility in that Schedule.

4.3 Where a Councillor holds more than one position of responsibility, only one Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid, such an allowance being the higher or the highest of the relevant allowances.

5. Attendance at meetings

5.1 If a Councillor does not attend at least two-thirds of the total number of scheduled meetings of the Council, or of the Cabinet, or of Committees of which he/she is a Member, the Councillor concerned should be invited to pay back an appropriate percentage of his/her Basic Allowance up to a maximum of 25% of the Basic Allowance.

5.2 If a Member is absent from Council business for more than one continuous month (other than on illness grounds) the Member concerned should be invited to pay back a sum equivalent to the amount of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances paid for any single period of absence which exceeds one month.

5.3 For periods of long term absences due to illness the Council should review its position on a case by case basis.

5.4 Paragraph 5.1 does not apply to the Mayor or Sheriff/Deputy Mayor holding Civic Office during the year in question.

6. Attendance Allowances

6.1 No attendance allowance shall be payable.

7. Pensions

7.1 Councillors are not eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

8. Travel, Subsistence and Dependants' Carers Allowances

8.1 Travel, Subsistence and Dependants' Carers Allowances shall be paid to Councillors in accordance with Schedule 2 to this Scheme.

9. Renunciation

9.1 A Councillor may, by notice in writing given to the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this Scheme.

10. Part Year Entitlements

- 10.1 If the Term of Office or duties undertaken by a Councillor begin or end part way through a financial year, or amendment of the Scheme during the financial year changes the amount to which a Councillor is entitled, then calculation of the allowance payable shall be on a pro-rata basis having regard to the proportion that the Term of Office, period of duty or relevant periods of the Scheme bear to the month in the financial year in which they occur based on the number of days in that month.

11. Withholding of allowances

- 11.1 Where payment of any allowance is due or has already been made in respect of any period during which the member concerned is
- (a) suspended or partially suspended from his/her 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; or
 - (b) ceases to be a member of the authority; or
 - (c) is in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period, the authority may withhold the payment of an allowance for that period or, as the case may be, require that such part of the allowance already paid as relates to any such period be repaid to the authority.

12. Overpayment

- 12.1 If a Councillor is paid any allowance under this scheme with respect to any period and it subsequently becomes apparent that the Councillor was not entitled to that payment for that period for any reason then the Council may recover the overpayment from that Councillor.

13. Annual Adjustment of Allowances

- 13.1 This scheme makes provision for an annual adjustment of allowances indexed to the Local Government staff pay award.

14. Co-optees

- 14.1 Co-opted members will not receive an allowance but will be fully reimbursed for any travel expenses incurred in attending meetings.

15. Membership of more than one authority

- 15.1 Where a Councillor is also a member of another authority that Councillor shall ensure that he/she does not receive allowances from more than one authority in respect of the same duties.

16. Claims and Payments

16.1 Payments shall normally be made by bank transfer:

(a) in respect of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances, subject to paragraph 15.2, in instalments of 1/12th of the amounts specified in this Scheme on the 27th day of each month (or the last working day before that day if it is not a working day) and for which Councillors will not be required to submit a claim.

(b) in respect of Travel, Subsistence and Dependents' Carers allowances, on the 27th day of each month (or the last working day before that day if it is not a working day) where the claim is received by the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager by not later than the 1st day of that month.

16.2 Where a payment of 1/12th of the amount specified in this Scheme in respect of a Basic or Special Responsibility Allowance would result in the Councillor receiving more or less 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 or less is paid than the amount to which he or she is entitled.

16.3 Claims for Travel, Subsistence and Dependents' Carers allowances must be submitted on the appropriate form within six months of the date in respect of which the claim is being made. The payment of any claims not meeting this deadline will be at the discretion of the Head of Paid Service.

SCHEDULE 1

Special Responsibility Allowances

The following are specified as the special responsibilities in respect of which Special Responsibility Allowances are payable, and the amounts of those allowances:

Responsibility	Multiplier of BA	SRA £pa
Leader of the Council	3.5	19,600
Deputy Leader of the Council	2.25	12,600
<i>Cabinet Members</i>		
Communities and Neighbourhoods	1.75	9,800
Culture and Leisure	1.75	9,800
Environment	1.75	9,800
Housing and Planning	1.75	9,800
Performance and Resources	1.75	9,800
Regeneration and Economy	1.75	9,800
<i>Chairs of Committees</i>		
Planning Committee	0.8	4,480
Audit and Governance Committee	0.5	2,800
Licensing and Enforcement Committee	0.5	2,800
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	0.5	2,800
<i>Deputy Chairs of Committees</i>		
Planning Committee	0.2	1,120
<i>Other positions of additional responsibility</i>		
Minority Group Leader	1	5,600
Minority Group Deputy Leader	0.25	1,400
Mayor	0.6	3,360
Sheriff and Deputy Mayor	0.2	1,120

Notes:

1. Where a Councillor holds more than one position of responsibility, only one Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid, such an allowance being the higher or the highest of the relevant allowances.
2. A maximum of two Minority Group Leaders and two Minority Group Deputy Leaders are payable under the Scheme. An amendment to the Scheme may be required in the event of there being more than two Minority Groups.

SCHEDULE 2

Approved Duties

The following are deemed to be approved duties for the purposes of claiming travel, subsistence and dependants' carers allowances. Travel and subsistence expenses will only be paid where the duties necessitate travel beyond the Gloucester City Council boundaries:

- (a) Attendance, by right of membership or express invitation, at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups, Panels and Task and Finish Groups.
- (b) Attendance, by right of membership or express invitation, at meetings of any joint Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups, Panels, Steering Groups to which the Council has appointed.
- (c) Attendance, by right of appointment, at meetings of approved Outside Bodies.
- (d) Attendance at Member training courses facilitated by the Council.
- (e) Attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member;
- (f) Attendance at meetings, Member training courses, conferences or any other events facilitated by external bodies, provided that authorisation has been given in advance and in writing by the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the relevant Political Group Leader, where appropriate.

Payments in respect of the above approved duties shall be paid in accordance with the following rates:

A. Travel and Subsistence Allowance

Claims for travel and subsistence allowances must be submitted to the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager either electronically or in writing on Expenses Claim Form EC5.

(a) Travel Allowances

Mileage allowances

Motor mileage within the City boundaries is deemed to be covered within the Basic Allowance. Motor mileage for attendance at approved duties, as defined above, is payable where the duties necessitate travel beyond the Gloucester City Council boundaries only.

Full addresses must be provided for all starting locations and destinations. Distances will be checked against the quickest route identified by AA Route Planner and any discrepancies will be raised with the Councillor so that details of the actual route taken can be recorded and reimbursed.

Mileage rates will be paid in accordance with the rates paid to staff and will increase or decrease in line with any changes agreed in the staff rates. The current rates are:

Use of private motor vehicle	50p per mile
Use of bicycle	£16 flat rate per month or 15p per mile

Public Transport and Parking

Bus travel	Actual fares reimbursed. Tickets or receipts must be provided.
Rail travel	Train tickets should be arranged in advance through Democratic and Electoral Services in order to achieve value for money and to take advantage of early booking discounts. Where, in exceptional circumstances, a Councillor must purchase their own train ticket, the amount reimbursed will not exceed the amount of an ordinary fare or any available cheap fare; first class travel will not be reimbursed. Councillors purchasing their own train tickets should provide their receipt or ticket when claiming reimbursements.
Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles	Fares will only be reimbursed if travel by taxi is required due to the urgency of the approved business or if public transport is not reasonably available. Receipts must be provided.
Toll fees, ferry, garaging and parking charges	Actual fees or charges reimbursed. Receipts must be provided.

Accommodation

If a Councillor is required to stay overnight for attendance at approved duties, they should contact Democratic and Electoral Services who, following discussion with the Councillor about their requirements, will make the necessary accommodation arrangements in order to ensure that the Council achieves value for money.

(b) Subsistence Allowances

Subsistence within the City boundaries is deemed to be covered within the Basic Allowance. Subsistence for attendance at approved duties, as defined above, is payable for duties outside Gloucester City Council boundaries only. All claims for subsistence must be supported by receipts. Where claims can be made, eligibility is based on the time of day meals are taken and time away from home, as follows:

Breakfast	£6.29 (payable for absence from home of more than 4 hours before 11.00am)
Lunch	£8.72 (payable for absence from home of more than 4 hours which includes the hours of 12 noon-2.00pm)
Evening Meal	£15.10 (payable for absence from home of more than 4 hours ending after 6.00pm)

B. Dependents' Carers Allowance

Councillors may claim reimbursement of care expenses when a Councillor attends any of the approved duties defined in Schedule 2 to this Scheme and incurs costs for the provision of care for children and adult dependants.

When travelling away from home to an approved duty which may involve an overnight stay, care expenses may be claimed in respect of the total duration of the duty, less any period during which a dependent is cared for at no cost to the Councillor.

In order to claim the for reimbursement of care expenses, a Dependants' Care Expenses claim form must be completed and signed by both the claimant and the carer before submission to the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager.

(a) Childcare

Eligible Councillors may claim for the reimbursement of actual amount paid for childcare provision, up a maximum of £7.50 per hour for a single child, or up to a total of £9.00 per hour for two or more children.

Up to a total of one hour travelling time may be added to the claim, where applicable, to enable the Councillor to travel to and from meetings, provided the child/children remain with the carer for the duration.

Childcare costs may be claimed for children aged 15 or under and for or any new claims, evidence of eligibility must be provided e.g. birth certificate. The child must normally live with the claimant as part of the family.

A carer can be any responsible mature person who does not normally live with the claimant as part of the family, but should not be a parent. The claimant bears sole responsibility for making appropriate care arrangements.

(b) Dependant Care

Eligible Councillors may claim for the reimbursement of actual amount paid for care provision, up to a maximum of £9.00.

Up to a total of one hour travelling time may be added to the claim, where applicable, to enable the Councillor to travel to and from meetings, provided the child/children remain with the carer for the duration.

Dependant care costs may be claimed for children with severe disabilities and dependent adult relatives living in the Councillor's home and for whom the Councillor is directly responsible.

A carer can be any responsible mature person who does not normally live with the claimant as part of the family. The claimant bears sole responsibility for making appropriate care arrangements.