

Part 6

Members Allowances Scheme

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Members' Allowances Scheme Commencing 1 April 2021

Members Allowances

1 Basic Allowance

The Basic Allowance will be £4943.69 payable in 12 monthly instalments on the twentieth day of each month (Scheme to be adjusted annually in line with pay awards to Council Officers, until 31 March 2025, unless the Scheme is reviewed at an earlier date.)

2 Special Responsibility Allowances

A Special Responsibility Allowance as set out below is payable, in addition to the Basic Allowance, for the following positions in 12 equal instalments on the twentieth of each month:-

Member Description	Allowances 2021/2022
Leader of the Council	£11535.26
Deputy Leader (inclusive of Cabinet Member's Allowance)	£8239.47
Cabinet Members	£6261.99
Opposition Leader*	£4394.39
Chairman of Scrutiny Committee	£3515.50
Audit and Accounts Committee Chairman	£2526.77
Planning Committee Chairman	£4614.11
Licensing Committee Chairman	£1757.76
Standards Committee Chairman	£1069.09
Public Appeals Chairman	£1757.76

* Defined as Leader of the largest political group not represented in the Cabinet . If there are two or more of such groups of equal size the person jointly appointed by those groups as Leader of the Opposition shall be entitled to the allowance but in the absence of such appointment no allowance shall be paid.

A special responsibility allowance as set out below is payable quarterly in arrears on the twentieth day of June, September, December and March only if the Member has chaired a meeting of the relevant committee in the preceding quarter:-

Planning Committee Vice Chairman £988.73

Employee Appeals Committee Chairman £1043.66

If a member holds more than one position for which a special responsibility allowance is payable only one allowance will be payable. Unless the member chooses otherwise the highest of the allowances for which they are eligible will be paid.

3 Dependents' Carers' Allowance

The cost incurred up to a maximum of £8.91 per hour (or the Living Wage, whichever be the higher) payable in respect of arranging for the care of children or other dependents necessarily incurred in attending meetings or performing duties which qualify for travel and subsistence allowances.

4 Co-optees Allowance

Co-optees will be reimbursed any expenses necessarily incurred.

Travel And Subsistence

1 Introduction

1.1 Elected Members necessarily incurring additional expense in the course of their duties (as set out below) in respect of travel, meals or overnight accommodation will be reimbursed expenses in accordance with the following scheme, subject to appropriate evidence of expenditure being produced.

1.2 Duties attracting travel and subsistence allowances:-

Attending a meeting of the Council, the Cabinet and any committee, sub-committee or joint committee of the Council as a member or as a visiting member under rule 5.8 of the Council Procedure Rules.

Attending a meeting at the request of the Council, the Executive, a committee or sub-committee of the Council or an officer of the Council.

Attending briefings in any capacity for which a special responsibility allowance is paid.

Attendance at conferences as approved by the Council.

Attendance at meetings of other bodies as the Council's appointed representative.

2 Overnight Accommodation and Subsistence

- 2.1 The Head of Law and Governance will, except in exceptional circumstances, book and pay the hotel directly for members attending conferences, meetings or training that requires an overnight stay. The cost of the accommodation is subject to the following limits:-

	Outside London	London or Conference
Overnight rates	£100.00	£120.00

- 2.2 In exceptional circumstances (eg where the Member is limited to a designated conference location), the Head of Law and Governance has the discretion to authorise payment in excess of the above limits (but see 2.8).
- 2.3 The Authority will only pay the actual cost incurred for each meal and one drink. The maximum should only be claimed when the meal has cost that amount or more. If an attempt is made to make an unreasonable claim for additional items the entire claim will become invalid and reimbursement will not be made.
- 2.4 Meal allowances cannot be claimed if meals are included either as part of a conference/training course or if they are included in the cost of the accommodation i.e. the member is booked in the hotel on a bed and breakfast or dinner, bed and breakfast basis.
- 2.5 Gratuities for service are paid at the discretion of the member and, except where specifically included on a bill as a service charge, are not reclaimable from the authority.
- 2.6 Entertainment expenses will not be met by the Authority. These are to be met in full by the member.
- 2.7 All claims for expenditure shall be certified and approved by the Head Law and Governance.
- 2.8 Excess reimbursement will not be made to members who incur expenditure above the maximum rate of reimbursement unless in the view of the Head of Law and Governance the additional expenditure was unavoidable.
- 2.9 Any claim for reimbursement that is submitted without a valid receipt will not be paid.
- 2.10 Any member making false, fraudulent or unnecessary claims may be in breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.

3 Day Subsistence

- 3.1 Day Subsistence expenses will be payable to a member who is prevented by official duties from taking a meal at home or the place where they normally take their meals and thereby incur additional expenditure. Subsistence reimbursement is subject to the following limits:-

Allowance	Valid Claim Period	Maximum Amount
Breakfast	When departing from home before 7 00 am and not returning before 11.00 am	£7.50
Lunch	When leaving home or place of work before 11 am and arriving back at their home or place of work after 3.00 pm	£10.00
Dinner	When leaving home before 5.00 pm and not returning until after 8.00 pm	£17.50

- 3.2 Meal allowances will only be paid when it is necessary for the member to be absent from home during the specified periods due to Council business and where it would not be possible to take the meal at home.
- 3.3 The Authority will only pay the actual cost incurred for each meal. The maximum should only be claimed when the meal has cost that amount or more. If an attempt is made to make an unreasonable claim for additional items the entire claim will become invalid and reimbursement will not be made.
- 3.4 Expenses will not be paid where a suitable meal is provided during the course of the official duties or where the member could have arranged their day to avoid incurring the expenses.
- 3.5 Gratuities for service are paid at the discretion of the member and except where specifically included on a bill as a service charge are not reclaimable from the authority.
- 3.6 Any claim for reimbursement that is submitted without a valid receipt will not be paid.
- 3.7 All claims for expenditure shall be certified and approved by the Head of Law and Governance.
- 3.8 Any member making false, fraudulent or unnecessary claims may be in breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.

4 Travelling expenses

- 4.1 As a general principle, members should use standard class public transport services to travel unless it is impractical to do so or other means of transport are more economic. Advantage should be taken of any discounted fares or special offers. Members travelling by rail should obtain tickets through the Head of Law and Governance.
- 4.2 In circumstances where a member uses their private car in preference to more economic public transport, the authority will reimburse the lowest available standard class public transport fare.
- 4.3 Where travel by public transport would, in total be more expensive than travel by car with reimbursement being made at the appropriate rate, then the journey may be made by car. An example of this might be where two or more persons travel together. Members are encouraged to car share and in such circumstances the driver may claim any necessary additional mileage incurred.
- 4.4 Actual bus or underground fares incurred will be reimbursed.
- 4.5 Where it is necessary to travel by taxi due to lack of other available transport or the journey is urgent (i.e. taking public transport would mean being late or the journey time is excessive), the actual expenditure will be reimbursed. (Members who will need to use taxis on a frequent regular basis should request the Head of Law and Governance to set up an account with a taxi firm to achieve economy.)
- 4.6 Car parking fees at the destination will be paid for the duration of the official duties at a rate not exceeding the current daily parking rate at Stafford Railway Station.
- 4.7 Members who travel by public transport but need to use their cars to travel to the public transport departure point (e.g. because no public transport is available for that part of the journey), will be reimbursed the actual car parking charges incurred and the mileage incurred to and from their home and the point where they join public transport.
- 4.8 Tickets and receipts must be obtained, retained and submitted in all circumstances or reimbursement will not be made.
- 4.9 Where a Member uses their private transport the following rates will be paid:-

Amount Per Mile

Vehicle	52.2p
Bicycle	20p*

*maximum payable under HM Revenues and Customs

5 Time Limits on Claims

- 5.1 Claims for travel and subsistence and dependents' carers' allowances must be made within 2 months of the date of the event giving rise to the claim and a VAT receipt(s) must be attached to mileage claims which cover(s) the cost of petrol used for the mileage claimed. Discretion to approve claims submitted after the 2 month deadline is delegated to the Head of Law and Governance.

6 Suspension of Allowances

- 6.1 Where a member is suspended from the Council under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 any allowances due in respect of the period of suspension will be withheld by the Council. Where a member is partially suspended from the Council that part of any allowances which is specifically related to the duties and responsibilities from which the member is suspended will be withheld.

7 Forgoing Allowances

- 7.1 Any member may by notice in writing to the Head of Law and Governance elect to forgo entitlement to all or any part of their allowances.