

ELECTED MEMBER ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES POLICY 2019

1. Introduction

- 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.
- 1.2. Each year the Remuneration Authority sets the remuneration and allowances for all Elected Members' through the Local Government Members Determination¹.
- 1.3. The payment of any or all allowances is at the discretion of the Christchurch City Council.
- 1.4. This policy takes effect from 1 July 2019, unless specified otherwise.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This policy sets out Elected Members' entitlements to allowances and expenses.
- 2.2. The allowances and expense entitlements in this policy are updated annually following the release of the Local Government Members Determination.
- 2.3. This policy outlines the Christchurch City Council processes for Elected Members to use and apply for allowances and entitlements, including those set by the Christchurch City Council that are not included in the Local Government Members Determination.
- 2.4. This policy covers:
 - Communications allowance.
 - Vehicle mileage allowance and travel time allowance.
 - Conference, course and training attendance, professional development and travel.
 - Childcare allowance.
 - Any other allowances the Council resolves to be relevant.

3. Principles

- 3.1. 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.
- 3.2. This policy applies to all Elected Members of the Christchurch City Council, including the Mayor, Councillors and Community Board Members.
- 3.3. All entitlements are considered to be a contribution to expenses Elected Members may incur in the course of conducting local authority business.

¹ <https://www.remauthority.govt.nz/clients-remuneration/local-government-elected-officials/>

- 3.4. This policy is aligned with:
- The Remuneration Authority's Local Government Members (2019/20) Determination 2019.
 - The Codes of Conduct for Elected Members.
 - The International Relations Policy Framework.
 - The Climate Change Strategic Priority.

4. Interpretation

Local Authority	means the Christchurch City Council
Local Authority Business	means any activity or business conducted as part of the role of an Elected Member of the Christchurch City Council, and can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled meetings, seminars and workshops as appointed or invited to • Formal representation of Council and/or Community Board • Scheduled meetings for external appointments or • Site visits or attendance at conferences, courses, seminars, or training programmes. <p>Local authority business does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events where the primary focus is social activity • Event attendance in a non-representative capacity • Travel not related to the business of the Christchurch City Council, and • Personal travel interspersed with Council related business.
Elected Members	are those individuals declared to be elected to the Christchurch City Council, including as a member of a Community Board, Councillor, or Mayor
Family member of the Community Board Member	means <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a spouse, civil union partner, or de facto partner. • a relative, that is, another person connected with the Community Board Member within two degrees of a relationship, whether by blood relation or by adoption.
Local Government Members Determination	is the annual determination given by the Remuneration Authority that specifies the remuneration for Elected Members, and their entitlements and allowances.
Remuneration Authority	is the independent body set up by Parliament to handle the remuneration of key office holders such as Judges, Members of Parliament, local government representatives, and some individual office holders and board members of independent statutory bodies.

5. Implementation

- 5.1. 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 Council Secretary.
- 5.2. All expense claims are to be returned at least quarterly.
- 5.3. Expense claims by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, or Councillors are approved by the Council Secretary unless referenced otherwise.
- 5.4. Expense claims by Community Board Members are approved by the relevant Community Governance Team Manager or Council Secretary unless referenced otherwise.
- 5.5. The internal audit work programme will include sampling of expense claims and allowances paid to Elected Members and staff.
- 5.6. An external audit work programme may be undertaken as required.

6. Communications and technology

- 6.1. The Deputy Mayor, Councillors and Community Board Members are currently provided with a device (equivalent to a personal computer, tablet, laptop) to use for local authority business. Where not provided, they may be entitled to receive an annual communications allowance (over the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020) for use of the following equipment and services:

• Device (equivalent to a personal computer, tablet, laptop)	\$200
• Printer (with or without a scanner)	\$40
• Mobile phone	\$150
• Internet Connection	\$400
• Mobile phone services	\$400

- 6.2. The Mayor is currently entitled to be provided with a:
 - Mobile phone, including all monthly internet and call charges
 - Device (equivalent to a personal computer, tablet, laptop)
 - Home telephone line, including all associated toll charges.

7. Travel entitlements and allowances

Climate change impacts

- 7.1. All approvals for travel must consider the impact on Climate Change, including whether there are any mitigations possible to reduce the impact such as the use of remote conferencing technology or a reduction in the number of Elected Member participants.

Vehicle

- 7.2. Vehicles are not provided for Elected Members' private use.

Vehicle mileage

7.3. An Elected Member may be eligible for the vehicle mileage allowance if they are travelling:

- In the Member's own vehicle
- To attend local authority business, and
- By the most direct route reasonable in the circumstances.

7.4. Any mileage allowance claimed should meet the reasonable additional costs the Elected Member incurs by using their own vehicle for travel required on local authority business. This includes travel from home to the place of work or other venues required for local authority business.

7.5. The current vehicle mileage allowance rate for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 is 79 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres in a one year period. All distance travelled over that amount is subject to a variable rate as follows:

Vehicle type	travel up to 14,000km	travel over 14,000km
Petrol or Diesel vehicles	\$0.79 per km	\$0.30 per km
Petrol Hybrid vehicles	\$0.79 per km	\$0.19 per km
Electric vehicles	\$0.79 per km	\$0.09 per km

Travel time allowance

7.6. When travel exceeds one hour on a single day, all Elected Members (excluding the Mayor) may be entitled to claim \$37.50 per hour of travel time.

7.7. This entitlement only applies if the Elected Member is travelling:

- To attend local authority business
- By the quickest form of transport reasonable in the circumstances
- If the travel is undertaken on a single day, and
- If the travel is entirely within the Christchurch City Council area.

7.8. The entitlement does not include the first hour of travel undertaken within the Christchurch City Council area, and only applies to time exceeding that threshold.

Car parking

7.9. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillors are each provided with a carpark for use at Te Hononga Civic Offices when on local authority business.

7.10. Community Board Members may be entitled to payment or reimbursement for parking expenses if attending local authority business at Te Hononga Civic Offices during business hours.

Public transport, taxis and other transport

- 7.11. All Elected Members may be entitled to reimbursement of costs accrued using public transport when the travel relates to attending local authority business.
- 7.12. All Elected Members may be entitled to the reimbursement of taxi fares, or other approved commercial ride share fares, when attending local authority business, instead of utilising a private vehicle or public transport when:
- There are reasonable safety or security reasons, such as returning home from late local authority business
 - Travelling outside the Christchurch City Council area, if a taxi or commercial ride share is the most appropriate form of transport.

Use of rental cars

- 7.13. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillors may occasionally be provided with rental cars when attending local authority business in other centres, where this is the most cost-effective travel option.
- 7.14. Rental cars are not provided for travel to and from Christchurch.

Air travel

- 7.15. Elected Members may use domestic air services for local authority business, where travel by air is the most cost effective option.
- 7.16. Elected Members required to travel on international air services are entitled to economy class when all or part of the fares are being met by Council. Exceptions require the approval of Council where business class air travel is desirable for health or other compelling reasons.

8. Childcare allowance

- 8.1. From the day of the official result of the 2019 election is declared Community Board Members may be entitled to a childcare allowance of up to \$6,000 per annum, per child to contribute towards expenses incurred by the Community Board Member for childcare provided while they are engaged on local authority business.
- 8.2. A Community Board Member may be entitled to be paid a childcare allowance only if:
- The Community Board 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
 - The child is aged under 14 years of age; and
 - The childcare is provided by a person who:
 - is not a family member of the Community Board Member; and
 - does not ordinarily reside with the Community Board Member; and
 - The Community Board Member provides evidence satisfactory to the Chief Executive of the amount paid for childcare.

9. Attendance at conferences, courses, training, professional development and travel

- 9.1. Elected Members are entitled to payment of actual and reasonable registration, travel, accommodation, meal and related incidental expenses (including travel insurance) incurred in attendance at conferences, courses and training programmes held both within New Zealand and overseas, subject to related expenditure being accommodated within existing budgets.
- 9.2. All travel and accommodation arrangements for Elected Members are to be made by Council support staff with Council's preferred travel agents at the most economic cost available (where possible) at the time of booking. This does not apply if all travel related costs are being met privately or by an outside party.

Mayor

- 9.3. The Mayor is entitled to travel and related expenses for attendance at conferences, courses, training and professional development, or other purposes associated with the position of Mayor.
- 9.4. The prior approval of the Chief Executive is required for all travel on local authority business within New Zealand.
- 9.5. The prior approval of Council is required for:
 - Any travel by the Mayor outside New Zealand for the purpose of exploring partnerships, initiatives, facilities or operations which may be of benefit to Christchurch City
 - Any travel as part of a Sister City Delegation, where the cost of such travel is not wholly covered by the host city, or
 - The associated travel, accommodation and incidental costs for the Mayor's spouse or partner to accompany the Mayor on overseas trips.

Councillors

- 9.6. Councillors may be provided with a discretionary allocation of \$4,000 per annum from the relevant travel and conference budgets, to be used for their attendance at conferences, courses and training programmes.
- 9.7. This discretionary budget allocation:
 - Is non-transferable; and
 - is to cover course fees, travel, accommodation and meals; and
 - Is to be used for conferences, courses or training programmes that must contribute to the Councillor's ability to carry out local authority business.
- 9.8. Councillors who are Chairpersons of Council Committees may wish to attend conferences, courses or training programmes that are directly relevant to the business of their Committees. This discretionary budget allocation does not fall within the discretionary funding assigned in their role as a Councillor, and additional costs of up to \$2,000 for such attendance will be met from general travel budgets.

- 9.9. Attendance by Councillors, including in the role of Committee Chair, at conferences, courses and training programmes requires the prior written approval from both the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor) and the Chief Executive.
- 9.10. Unless the costs of travel are being met privately or by another party, the prior approval of Council is required for Councillors to undertake:
- Travel outside Christchurch for the purpose of exploring partnerships, initiatives, facilities, or operations which may be of benefit to Christchurch City, or
 - Any travel as part of a Sister City Delegation, where the cost of such travel is not wholly covered by the host city.

Community Board Members

- 9.11. Community Board Chairpersons or Community Board Members attendance at conferences, courses, seminars and training programmes requires the prior approval of the relevant Community Board, and is required to fall within budget parameters.
- 9.12. Where a Community Board Member is to be the Council's representative at an event, the prior approval of the Council is required instead of the Community Board.

Elected Member representatives on external organisations

- 9.13. Where the Council has formally appointed an Elected Member to an external organisation, the Elected Member may attend conferences or seminars held by the relevant external organisations with prior approval from Council, provided the expenditure involved can be met within the relevant budget provision.
- 9.14. This expenditure does not fall within the Councillors' discretionary allocation of \$4,000.

Airline rewards and club membership

- 9.15. The Mayor is entitled to subscriptions to relevant airline benefit programmes given frequent travel requirements.
- 9.16. Airpoints and Airdollars earned on travel and accommodation paid for by the Christchurch City Council are available for the private use of Elected Members.

Accommodation costs, meals and incidental expenses

- 9.17. Actual and reasonable accommodation costs may be reimbursed.
- 9.18. All accommodation must be booked through the Christchurch City Council support staff.
- 9.19. Actual and reasonable meal costs, excluding alcohol, incurred while travelling may be reimbursed.
- 9.20. There is no reimbursement of meals provided by others.

Private accommodation

- 9.21. Private accommodation is not provided for any Elected Member.
- 9.22. No allowances are payable in respect of accommodation provided by friends or relatives when travelling on local authority business.

10. Entertainment and hospitality

- 10.1. No hospitality or entertainment allowances are payable and expenses are not reimbursed.
- 10.2. The Mayor does not hold a purchasing card to pay any costs directly for any hospitality expenses incurred while carrying out local authority business. Costs for such expenses are provided for in operational or catering budgets.

11. Clubs and associations

- 11.1. No expenses will be reimbursed or allowances paid in respect of subscriptions to clubs or associations.

12. Breach of allowance and expense rules

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

13. Policy review

- 13.1. This policy will be reviewed annually following the release of the Remuneration Authority's Local Government Members Determination.
- 13.2. Allowances and expenses will be updated to reflect any changes to the entitlement rates included in the Determination.
- 13.3. The Council may direct a review of this policy at any time.

14. Policy owner

- 14.1. This policy is owned by the Community Support Governance and Partnership Unit.
- 14.2. This policy is administered by the Council Secretary.

Policy adopted by the Council on 24 September 2019