

# Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Policy

This policy covers elected member entitlements to allowances and contributions towards expenses related to travel, mileage, communication and childcare. This policy follows the Local Government Members Determination<sup>1</sup> as set by the Remuneration Authority and guidance set out in the Auditor-General's Controlling sensitive expenditure: Guide for public organisations: [Controlling sensitive expenditure: Guide for public organisations \(oag.parliament.nz\)](https://oag.parliament.nz).

1. This policy covers the entitlement of elected members to allowances and contributions towards expenses related to travel, mileage, communication, and childcare. These entitlements are updated annually following the release of the Local Government Members Determination.
2. The Remuneration Authority is responsible for setting the allowance and contribution of expense entitlements. The payment of any or all allowances is at the discretion of the Council.
3. This policy does not cover professional development, training and conference attendances and associated costs.

## Definition of Council Business

4. Council business means any activity or business conducted as part of the role of an Elected Member, and can include:
  - 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
5. Council business does not include:
  - 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 business.

## Implementation

6. All allowance and 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 person approving the claim.
7. All claims are to be returned within the financial year to which the claim relates.
8. Expense claims by the Mayor are approved by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. In the absence of the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee these claims may be

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<sup>1</sup> [Local Government Members \(2024/25\) Determination 2024 \(SL 2024/124\) \(as at 19 September 2024\) Contents – New Zealand Legislation](#)

approved by any two members of the Committee, one of whom must be an independent member.

9. Claims by the Deputy Mayor and Councillors are approved by the Mayor. In the absence of the Mayor, claims by the Deputy Mayor are approved by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and claims by the Councillors are approved by the Deputy Mayor in their capacity as Acting Mayor.
10. Expense claims by Community Board Members are approved by the relevant Community Governance Manager.
11. All claims will be published on the Council website on an at least six-monthly basis and reviewed by the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

## Communications and technology

12. The Deputy Mayor, Councillors and Community Board Members are currently provided with a device (equivalent to a personal computer, tablet, laptop) to use for Council business. Where the Council does not provide a device, they may be entitled to receive an annual communications allowance for use of the following equipment and services:

• Device (equivalent to a personal computer, tablet, laptop)	\$400.00
• Printer (with or without a scanner)	\$ 50.00
• Mobile phone	\$200.00
• ICT consumables (such as paper and ink)	\$200.00
• Internet Connection	\$800.00
• Mobile phone services	\$500.00

13. 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.

## Travel entitlements and allowances

14. 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

15. Vehicles are not provided for Elected Members' private use.

## Vehicle mileage

16. An Elected Member may be eligible for the vehicle mileage allowance if they are travelling:
  - In their own vehicle;
  - To attend local authority business; and
  - By the most direct route reasonable in the circumstances.
17. Any mileage allowance claimed should meet the reasonable additional costs the Elected Member incurs by using their own vehicle for travel required on Council business. This

includes travel from home to the place of work or other venues required for Council business.

18. The current vehicle mileage allowance rate is \$1.04 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres in the financial year. All distance travelled over that amount is subject to a variable rate as follows:

Vehicle type	travel over 14,000km
Petrol or Diesel vehicles	\$0.35 per km
Petrol Hybrid vehicles	\$0.21 per km
Electric vehicles	\$0.12 per km

## Travel time allowance

19. When travel exceeds one hour on a single day, all Elected Members (excluding the Mayor) may be entitled to claim \$40.00 per hour of travel time up to a maximum of 8 hours in a 24-hour period.
20. This entitlement only applies if the Elected Member is travelling:
- To attend Council 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.
21. 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

22. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillors are each provided with a carpark for use at Te Hononga Civic Offices when on local authority business.
23. If the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, or Councillors elect not to take up a carpark, there is no recompense to that individual and the Council will reallocate that space to another user.
24. 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

25. All Elected Members may be entitled to reimbursement of costs accrued using public transport when the travel relates to attending local authority business.
26. All Elected Members may be entitled to the reimbursement of taxi fares, or other approved commercial ride share fares, when attending council business, instead of utilising a private vehicle or public transport when:
- There are reasonable safety or security reasons, such as returning home from late Council 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

27. All Elected Members may occasionally be provided with rental cars when attending council business in other centres, where this is the most cost-effective travel option.
28. Rental cars are not provided for travel to and from Christchurch.

## Air travel

29. Elected Members may use domestic air services for local authority business, where travel by air is the most cost effective option.
30. 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. All international travel requires Council approval.

## Childcare allowance

31. From the day of the official result of a general or by-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.
32. 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: and
  - 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 Policy Owner of the amount paid for childcare.
33. A family member of a Community Board Member is:
  - 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.

## Entertainment and hospitality

34. No hospitality or entertainment allowances are payable and expenses are not reimbursed.
35. 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.

## Clubs and associations

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

## Procedure for approving sensitive expenditure

37. Reimbursement of expenses may constitute sensitive expenses when it could be giving private benefit to the Elected Member additional to the benefit to the Council. Sensitive expenditure<sup>2</sup> should be approved only when:
- the person approving the expenditure is satisfied that it is for a justifiable business purpose that is consistent with the public organisation's objectives, and all of the principles (as set out by the Auditor General) have been adequately met;
  - approval is given before the expenditure is incurred, unless it is for small amounts (for example, taxi fares) and allowed in the organisation's policies;
  - the expenditure will be within budget and where delegated authority exists;
  - approval is given by a person who is senior to the person who will benefit (or might be perceived to benefit) from the sensitive expenditure. Where that is not possible, this should be recorded, and any such expenditure should be subject to some form of monitoring.

## Breach of allowance and expense rules

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

## Policy owner

39. This policy is owned by the General Counsel / Head of Legal & Democratic Services.
40. The General Counsel / Head of Legal & Democratic Services is authorised to make such administrative updates to this policy to ensure compliance with the current Local Government Members Determination as set by the Remuneration Authority.
41. For the Mayor and Councillors, this policy is administered by the Councillor Support Officer, Team Leader Business Support/EA to the Mayor and the Executive Assistant to the Deputy Mayor.
42. For Community Boards this policy is to be administered by the Community Governance Manager for each Community Board.

## Policy review

43. This policy will be reviewed each triennium and the Council may direct a review of this policy at any time.

Policy adopted by the Council on 16 October 2024

Note: In addition to the above, the Council resolved on 19 June 2024 to provide EAP (workplace support services) support to all Elected Members.

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<sup>2</sup> Office of the Auditor General Controlling sensitive expenditure: Guide for public organisation: [Controlling sensitive expenditure: Guide for public organisations \(oag.parliament.nz\)](https://oag.parliament.nz/Controlling-sensitive-expenditure-Guide-for-public-organisations)