



Watford Borough Council Members Allowances Scheme

(Scheme from 1st April 2013)

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Introduction

The Borough Council is required by law to adopt and publish a scheme of allowances following consideration of recommendations made by an independent panel.

Watford Borough Council's Independent Remuneration Panel has been in existence since 2000 and meets on an annual basis. The scheme as set out below is for the year until 31 March 2014 and reflects the amounts agreed at Council. (see Appendix 1.)

1. Basic Allowance

This allowance is paid to all Councillors (except the directly elected Mayor)

The basic allowance is intended to compensate councillors for the time and effort spent attending committee meetings, carrying out ward representation work, costs incurred on telephone calls, postage, stationery, travel within the Borough, caring for dependents and for occasions where they may be required to use annual leave/flexi to take time off from their regular employment.

The basic allowance is reviewed by the Independent Members Remuneration Panel annually who make recommendations to Council.

1.1. Payment dates

1.1.1. For a Councillor elected to office following a Local Government election, payments will be dated from the fourth day after the date of the election or the date of making the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, whichever is later.

1.1.2. For a Councillor elected to office at any other time, payment will be from the date of making the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

1.1.3. Payments of allowances and expenses are made to Councillors on 15th of each month. If the 15th falls on a non working day payment will be made on the nearest working day prior to the 15th. Payment will be made in installments of one-twelfth of the annual amount due.

1.1.4. If a Councillor holds office for less than a full calendar month a pro rata payment will be made.

1.2. Renunciation

1.2.1. A Councillor may, by giving notice in writing to the Managing Director or Monitoring Officer, elect to forego the whole or part of an entitlement to a Basic allowance under this Scheme

Where such a declaration is made, it remains in force until a further notice in writing is given to the Managing Director or Monitoring Officer

to withdraw it.

1.3. Overpayment

- 1.3.1. If a Councillor leaves office before the end of their term and an overpayment has been made, the Councillor will receive a letter from the Monitoring Officer requiring them to pay the money back to the Council.

1.4. Withholding of Allowance

- 1.4.1. In accordance with The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003: "That where a member is suspended or partially suspended from his responsibilities or duties as a member for an authority in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part, the part of the basic allowance payable to him in respect of the period for which he is suspended or partially suspended may be withheld by the authority"

2. Special Responsibility Allowance

Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) is paid to Councillors with significant additional responsibilities. Where an individual holds more than one of the positions listed they will only receive the highest allowance (apart from Group Leader allowance which is paid in addition)

2.1. Offices and roles

Portfolio Holder
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny
Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny
Chair of Budget Panel
Chair of Development Control Committee
Chair of Licensing Committee
Cabinet Member Without Portfolio
Chair of Audit Committee
Chair of Functions (pro rata)
Chair of Chief Officer Pay Panel (pro rata)
Group leaders

2.2. Dates from when the SRA will take effect:

- 2.2.1. Portfolio Holder and Cabinet member without portfolio - from the date the Monitoring Officer is formally notified by the Elected Mayor of the names of Portfolio Holders

- 2.2.2. Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny, Budget Panel and Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny - from when they are appointed Chair/Vice Chair at Annual Council.
- 2.2.3. Chair of Development Control Committee or Licensing Committee – from when they are appointed Chair at Annual Council.
- 2.2.4. Chair of Audit Committee - from when they are appointed at Annual Council.
- 2.2.5. Chair of the Chief Officer Pay Panel - for the month in which the Panel meets and any subsequent months as necessary.
- 2.2.6. Chair of Functions Committee - for the month in which the committee meets and any subsequent months as necessary.
- 2.2.7. Group Leaders - from notification of the Group at Annual Council (up to a maximum of £2000 pa)

2.3. Renunciation of Special Responsibility Allowances

A Councillor may, by giving notice in writing to the Managing Director or Monitoring Officer elect to forego the whole or part of an entitlement to a Special Responsibility Allowance under this Scheme.

Where such a declaration is made, it remains in force until a further notice is given in writing to the Managing Director or Monitoring Officer to withdraw it.

2.4. Payment arrangements

- 2.4.1. Payments of SRAs will be made with basic allowance
- 2.4.2. Payments of SRAs are made in 12 installments, unless it is a pro-rata payment.

2.5. Overpayment

- 2.5.1. If an overpayment is made of the SRA, it will be recovered either through a deduction from the basic allowance payment until the overpayment is recovered in full or in the event that deduction from the basic allowance not being sufficient to recover the overpayment the Councillor will receive a letter from the Monitoring Officer requiring them to pay the money back to the Council.

2.6. Withholding of Allowance

- 2.6.1. In accordance with The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003: "That where a member is suspended or partially suspended from his responsibilities or duties as a member of

an authority in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part, the part of the special responsibility allowance payable to him in respect of the responsibility or duties period from which he is suspended or partially suspended may be withheld by the authority"

3. Elected Mayor's Salary

3.1 The Elected Mayor's salary is currently frozen.

4. Travel and Subsistence

4.1. Basis for Payment

Travel and subsistence is payable for meetings, training and conferences which a Councillor is attending as part of their responsibilities or because they have been nominated/appointed by the Council. Travel allowance is only payable where the event takes place outside the Borough of Watford. Subsistence allowance is only payable where meals are not provided.

4.2. Allowances which may be claimed

4.2.1. Travel

Car mileage, motorcycle and bicycle allowances rates are shown in appendix 1.

4.2.2. The Elected Mayor will receive an annual travel allowance of £1,000. For the avoidance of doubt no mileage may be claimed from home to the Town Hall and back. Records will be maintained of the Elected Mayor's travel during the year in order to ensure the level of allowance is correct and to answer any Freedom of Information Act requests. The Elected Mayor may claim subsistence separately under the conditions set out below.

4.2.3. Second class rail fare may be claimed plus charges for seat reservations on production of receipts. If payment is made directly by the Council on behalf of the councillor no separate allowance is payable

4.2.4. Other public transport services can be claimed on production of receipts.

4.2.5. Taxis should only be used when no other option is available and with accompanying receipts.

4.2.6. Air travel will be considered if it is cheaper or the time saving considerable. It should be booked through the Member Development and Civic Officer .

4.2.7. Subsistence

Councillors can claim daytime or overnight subsistence where it has not already been paid for by the Council or is not provided by the event/meeting organisers. Councillors may claim up to the maximum amounts listed in Appendix 1 on production of receipts for the time periods set out below: For the avoidance of doubt, should the submitted receipt total less than the maximum payment allowed under the scheme, the councillor will only receive reimbursement to the value of the receipt.

4.2.8. Breakfast allowance – payable where the Member is absent from home for more than 4 hours before 11am.

4.2.9. Lunch allowance – payable where the Member is away from home for more than 4 hours including the lunchtime period between 12 noon and 2pm.

4.2.10. Tea allowance – payable where the Member is away from home for more than 4 hours including the period 3-6pm.

4.2.11. Evening meal allowance – payable where the Member is away from home for more than 4 hours ending after 7pm.

4.2.12. Overnight accommodation if necessary and not already paid for by the Council

4.2.13. Meals on trains – where main meals (i.e., breakfast, lunch or dinner) are taken on trains during a period for which there is an entitlement to a day subsistence allowance, the reasonable cost of the meal may be reimbursed in full.

4.3. Submission of claims

4.3.1. Claims for travel and subsistence must be made within **1 month** of the duty being undertaken, if possible by the end of the financial year if the claim period crosses the end of March.

4.3.2. Payment outside that period can only be made if there are exceptional circumstances which prevented the claim being submitted within the required time limit.

4.3.3. Claims must be made on a fully completed claim form which is signed and supported by receipts (where appropriate). **If a valid receipt is not provided payment of the claim will not be met.**

- 4.3.4. Travel and subsistence claims will be paid through payroll. All forms should be returned to the Member Development and Civic Officer to be checked and signed off.
- 4.3.5. A public record is available for all claims and the totals claimed by each Member are published annually on the Council's website.

4.4. Overpayment

- 4.4.1. If an overpayment occurs this will be deducted from the next expenses claim the Councillor makes or from the Councillor's allowance.

5. Pensions

- 5.1. The remuneration of the Elected Mayor is pensionable either under private arrangements of the post holder's choice or under the Local Government Pension Scheme. If the Mayor opts for a private pension the Council should contribute to that arrangement an amount equivalent to that which it would have paid had the Elected Mayor opted for membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme, net of all costs including the National Insurance Contribution rebates.
- 5.2. Allowances for Councillors should not be supplemented by additional contributions to a pension scheme, including the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 5.3. Councillors' attention should be drawn to the fact that they may make their own pension arrangements, either as personal private or stakeholder pensions.

6. Co-optees

6.1. Roles

A Co-optee will be paid an annual allowance (set out in Appendix 1) for serving in the following roles:

- 6.1.1. Independent Member of the Standards Committee
- 6.1.2. Independent Member of the Independent Members Remuneration Panel. The Chair of the Independent Members Remuneration Panel receives a higher annual payment in recognition of additional responsibility to produce the final report on behalf of the Panel.

6.2. Payment date

- 6.2.1. Co-optees on the Standards Committee will be paid at the end of financial year.

6.2.2. Co-optees on the Independent Members Remuneration Panel will be paid on production of the final report.

6.2.3. The allowance will be paid in 1 installment.

6.3. Renunciation

A Co-Optee may, by giving notice in writing to the Managing Director or Monitoring Officer, elect to forego the whole or part of an entitlement to a Co-Optee's Allowance under this Scheme.

Where such a declaration is made, it remains in force until a further notice in writing is given to the Managing Director or Monitoring Officer to withdraw it.

6.4. Withholding of allowance

6.4.1. In accordance with The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003: "That where a member is suspended or partially suspended from his responsibilities or duties as a member of an authority in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part, any co-optees' allowance payable to him in respect of the responsibilities or duties from which he is suspended or partially suspended may be withheld by the authority"

7. Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council

7.1. The allowance for the Chairman and Vice Chairman is paid directly to the Councillor and is intended to be used to purchase clothes (if necessary), stock for the Parlour bar, the purchase of raffle tickets and tickets to events etc. when attending official engagements.

7.2. The allowance is paid annually following the election of Chairman and Vice Chairman at Annual Council.

7.3. As the allowance is taxable, the amount includes an additional element to cover basic tax.

Appendix 1

Members Allowance Rates from 1st April 2013

1. Basic Allowance

£7209 per annum (band 1)

2. Special Responsibility Allowances

Role	Band	Basic	SRA	Total
Portfolio Holder	2.5	£7,209	£10,815	£18,024
Chairs of Scrutiny Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Chairs of Development Control & Licensing	2a	£7,209	£7,930	£15,139
Cabinet Member without portfolio Chair of Audit Committee Chair of Functions (pro rata) Chair of Chief Officer Pay Panel (pro rata)	2	£7,209	£2,884	£10,093
Group leaders				£100 p.a. per group member – maximum payment of £2,000

3. Co-optees' Allowances

£200 per annum

£300 per annum for Chair of Independent Members Remuneration Panel

4. Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council

£2,720 Chairman of the Council plus tax reimbursement at standard rate

£1,330 Vice Chairman of the Council plus tax reimbursement at standard rate

5. Elected Mayor

The Elected Mayor's salary is £65,738, plus an annual travel allowance of £1,000.

6. Travel allowances

With receipts where applicable

Rail	2nd class fare plus charges for seat reservations	Actual Cost
Public services	Normal fare	Actual Cost
Taxis	To be used when no other option is available	Actual Cost
	Per mile	
Motor cycle		24p
Motor vehicle (First 10,000 miles)		40p
Cycle		20p

7. Subsistence rates

Members may claim **up to** the amount specified below for the time period away from home, if no meals or refreshments are provided at the meeting or event which the Member is attending or already included in any accommodation charges paid for by the council. All claims **must** be supported with receipts.

	Up to
Breakfast Allowance Payable where the Member is absent from home for more than 4 hours before 11am	£7.21
Lunch Allowance Payable where the Member is away from home for more than 4 hours, including the lunchtime period between 12 noon and 2pm	£9.95
Tea Allowance Payable where the Member is away from home for more than 4 hours including the period 3pm - 6pm	£3.94
Evening Meal Payable where the Member is away from home for more than 4 hours ending after 7pm	£12.33
Overnight Accommodation To cover overnight accommodation	£105.05
Meals on Trains Where main meals (i.e. breakfast, lunch or dinner) are taken on trains during a period for which there is an entitlement to a day subsistence allowance, the reasonable cost of the meal may be reimbursed in full.	