

Policy on Elected Members' Allowances and Expenses

For the period beginning on 1 July 2025 and ending on 30 June 2026

1. Introduction

In addition to determining the remuneration of elected members, the Remuneration Authority outlines allowances and expenses payable to elected members. Council, however, has the discretion whether or not to adopt these benefits with key factors being fairness to elected members and ratepayers, and administrative efficiency.

Should Council wish to make any changes to, or exceed maximum limits, they would require the Remuneration Authority's approval to do so. The policy should also be read in conjunction with Council's Sensitive Expenditure Policy.

2. Allowances and expenses

2.1. Travel

An Elected Member's travel is eligible for allowances if the member:

- is not provided with a motor vehicle by the local authority,
- is travelling in a private vehicle,
- is on local authority business, and
- is taking the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances.

2.1.1 Parking

Elected members who incur parking charges when on Council business at other locations are entitled to reimbursement of the actual cost. Evidence of the cost incurred shall be provided.

2.1.2 Use of public transport

Elected members who travel by public transport in relation to Council business are entitled to reimbursement of the actual cost. Evidence of the cost incurred shall be provided.

2.1.3 Vehicle kilometre allowance

Subject to the interpretation and exceptions listed below, elected members are entitled to a per kilometre allowance in accordance with the Inland Revenue guidelines when using a private vehicle for Council business. The below rates are outlined in the Remuneration Authority's Amendment effective from 1 September 2025.

- Where an elected member travels in a petrol vehicle, the rate payable is \$1.17 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of Council travel in a financial year, and \$0.37 cents thereafter.

- Where an elected member travels in a diesel vehicle, the rate payable is \$1.26 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of Council travel in a financial year, and \$0.35 cents thereafter.
- Where an elected member travels in a petrol hybrid vehicle, the rate payable is \$0.86 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of Council travel in a financial year, and \$0.21 cents thereafter.
- Where an elected member travels in an electric vehicle, the rate payable is \$1.08 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of Council travel in a financial year, and \$0.19 cents thereafter.

2.2 Childcare allowance

Elected members are eligible for a childcare allowance, being a contribution towards expenses incurred by the member for childcare provided while the member is engaged on Council business.

A member is eligible to be paid a childcare allowance in respect of childcare provided for a child only if:

- The 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 parent of the child or a spouse, civil union partner, or de facto partner of the member; and
 - Does not ordinarily reside with the member; and
- The member provides evidence satisfactory to the Council of the amount paid for childcare.

Total childcare allowances paid to an elected member will not exceed \$7,500 per annum, per child.

2.3 Information or Communication Technology (ICT)

It is expected that elected members will have their own computer with internet connection, a mobile or landline phone, and that these items are available for use for their Council-related business.

Elected members having such items available for Council business are eligible to receive an annual communications allowance of:

- \$400 for the use of a personal computer, tablet, or laptop, including any related docking station
- \$50 for the use of a printer
- \$200 for the use of a mobile phone

- Up to \$200 for the use of information or computer technology (ICT) consumables
- \$800 for using own internet service for the Determination term
- \$500 for council-related phone charges for the determination term (or reimbursement of the actual costs of telephone calls made on local authority business on production of the relevant telephone records and receipts).

The Council will normally provide a mobile phone for the Mayor and cover all expenses associated with the use of that phone on Council business. The phone remains the property of the Council, and the communication allowance payable to the Mayor will be reduced to reflect the provision of the phone.

If the elected member is not an elected member for the whole of the Determination term, the communications allowance will be pro-rated for the number of days that the member held office in the determination term.

2.4 Conferences, courses, seminars

Elected members who have been authorised to attend a conference, course, seminar etc. will have attendance fees, travel, accommodation, and meals paid for.

Approval for Councillor attendance at these events must be approved by the Mayor; approval for attendance by the Mayor is by the Council or Deputy Mayor.

2.5 Travel time allowance

Elected members may claim an allowance for travel time allowance with the exclusion of the Mayor who is deemed to hold a full-time position.

The allowance is available each day for any business on behalf of the council, or for travel between the member's residence (within the Carterton District) and an office of the council.

A claim can be made if the journey is 1 – 9 hours within a 24-hour period, however the first hour of the journey is not covered. The allowance is also not available for overseas travel.

The current rate is \$41.30 per hour for eligible travel that meets the criteria.

2.6 Security system allowance

Elected members may claim a security system allowance to cover the purchase, installation and monitoring of a security system at an elected member's primary place of residence within the council's area.

The payment of this reimbursement allowance, following the completion of an authorised threat and risk assessment, is up to:

- Purchase and installation up to \$4,500
- Monitoring up to \$1,000 per year including call-outs and repairs.

Council must have the Authority's approval before making any reimbursements above the specified maximum amounts, and should it wish to reimburse elected members for any supplementary security measures recommended by the threat and risk assessment.

3 Payment

Claims for kilometres travelled or reimbursement of other expenses must be made on the forms provided and submitted monthly, no later than three months after the date concerned, and include all relevant receipts as appropriate.

Communications allowances will be paid annually, at the end of each financial year to which they relate. They should be claimed on the form provided. Members may claim for part-years where they are elected within a financial year or are not successfully re-elected.

Childcare allowances will be paid on submission of a childcare allowance claim from the member, on the form provided. The claim must set out the actual costs incurred and paid by the member and must include a receipted invoice or other appropriate record of payment for the childcare services provided.

Payment will be made by direct credit at the next Council payment run.

4 Fees related to attending external hearings

An elected member who acts as the chairperson of a hearing external to Carterton District Council is entitled to be paid a fee of up to \$130 per hour of hearing time related to the hearing.

An elected member who is not the chairperson of a hearing external to Carterton District Council is entitled to be paid a fee of up to \$104 per hour of hearing time related to the hearing.

5 Taxation

Taxation on allowances shall be deducted at the prevailing taxation rates set by the Department of Inland Revenue.

6 Interpretation

With respect to childcare allowances, kilometre allowances and to reimbursement of public transport and parking costs, the term 'Council business' includes attendance at the following:

- official meetings of the Council and any committee and sub-committee of Council
- Council workshops
- meetings and workshops of advisory groups established by Council
- meetings and workshops of external bodies to which the elected member has been appointed by Council
- statutory hearings

- an external event or meeting where there has been:
 - a resolution of Council or a committee
 - an authorisation by the Mayor, or
 - with respect to the member of a committee, an authorisation by the Chairperson of that committee
- visits to, and tours of, facilities or sites or works for which the Council is responsible, or has involvement, or which will be the subject of business to come before the Council or any committee
- seminars and training courses where the elected member's attendance has been authorised.

Kilometres may include travel to and from the member's residence, if the member:

- is not provided with a Council vehicle
- is travelling in a private vehicle, on Council business (defined above), and by the most direct route that is reasonable.

7 Exceptions

- 'Council business' does not include events where the primary focus is on social activity.
- If the Council is providing transport, and an elected member chooses for personal reasons to travel separately, they will not be entitled to a vehicle allowance.
- If an elected member travels from a place where the member permanently or temporarily resides that is outside the local authority area, the member is only eligible for a vehicle kilometre allowance for eligible travel after the member crosses the boundary of the local authority area.
- Where an elected member chooses for personal reasons to travel by private vehicle to an approved conference or seminar outside of the Wellington region, they will be entitled to no more than the cheapest equivalent air fares available for the day(s) of travel, where such fares are less than the kilometre allowance.

8 Policy review

This Policy was adopted by Council on 13 August 2025, and will be reviewed as amendments are required, or annually in line with Remuneration Authority Determinations.