

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION, TITLE AND INTERPRETATION

- 1.1 Mid Suffolk District Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) (the Regulations) hereby makes the following scheme which may be cited as the Mid Suffolk District Council Members' Allowances Scheme and shall have effect from 22 May 2018 until otherwise varied.
- 1.2 In this Scheme:
'Councillor' means an elected Member of Mid Suffolk District Council
'Member' includes co-opted Members and elected Members
- 1.3 The requirements for the Review of this Scheme shall be operated in accordance with the Regulations.

2. GENERAL

- 2.1 Under the scheme Councillors are entitled to the following allowances in connection with performing their duties:
- (a) Basic Allowance – this is a flat rate allowance payable to every Councillor (£5,240 per annum).
 - (a) Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) – this allowance is for certain Councillors, in recognition of their additional responsibilities arising from their appointment to the offices specified in Paragraph 3 below. With the exception of the SRA for Group Leaders, only 2 SRA (the larger/largest if two or more appointments are made) may be claimed per Councillor.
 - (b) Travel and Subsistence Allowances – the detailed rules in connection with entitlement to these allowances are set out in paragraphs 8 and 9 below.
 - (c) Childcare and Dependants' Carers' Allowances – these can be claimed in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 10 below.
- 2.2 The Allowances referred to in 2.1 (a), (b) and (c) and 2.2 above may be withheld from, or repaid by, Members in respect to any period during which they are suspended or partially suspended from responsibilities or duties as a Member for breaches of the Code of Conduct as provided for in the Regulations.
- 2.3 That the basic allowance and the SRA be index linked to officer pay increases from May 2018 for the next four years or until the Scheme is reviewed if earlier.

3. SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE (SRA)

The current levels of Special Responsibility Allowance are as follows:-

	£ (per annum)
Chairman of the Council	5,240
Vice-Chairman of the Council	2,620
Leader of Council	13,101
Deputy Leader of the Council	6,550
Chair of Development Control Committee	5,240
Vice-Chair of Development Control Committee	1,310
Chair of Scrutiny Committee	5,240
Vice-Chair of Scrutiny Committee	2,620
Chair of Joint Audit and Standards Committee	2,620
Planning Committee Members	524
Political Group Leaders	1,048
Chair of Regulatory Committee	2,620
Vice-Chair of Regulatory Committee	1,310
Cabinet Member with Portfolio	6,550
Cabinet Member without Portfolio	2,620
Lead Member	3,930

4. PAYMENT OF BASIC AND SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

- 4.1 Special Responsibility Allowances and Basic Allowances are paid on a monthly basis, as part of the normal payroll process. The actual payment day is normally the 25th day of the month.

5. NOTICE TO FOREGO ENTITLEMENT TO ALLOWANCE(S)

- 5.1 A Member may give notice in writing to the Corporate Manager for Governance and Civic Office that he/she wishes to forego any part of the entitlement to any allowance.

6. PART – YEAR ADJUSTMENTS

- 6.1 The payment of Basic Allowances, Special Responsibility Allowances and Co-opted Members Allowances shall be adjusted accordingly to reflect any Member's part-year entitlement to such an allowance. Where a Member's term of office commences part-way through the financial year (commencing on 1 April) he/she shall be entitled to the proportion, by reference to the number of days, of the allowance which the period of the term of office bears to the whole of the financial year.

7. ATTENDANCE BY COUNCILLORS AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES TO WHICH THEY HAVE NOT BEEN APPOINTED

- 7.1 Attendance by Councillors at meetings of Committees upon which they have not been appointed to serve shall be eligible for travel and subsistence allowances as follows:-
- (a) To Chairmen of Committees, Sub-Committees, Task Groups and Panels presenting reports to Committees of which they are not Members
 - (b) To Councillors attending any Committee where they are not Members of the Committee to address the Committee.

[NB. See also 8.3 below – SUBSTITUTES]

8. TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

- 8.1 Councillors are able to claim travel allowances for travel from, and return to, home or work to attend duties for which the payment of travel allowances has been approved. Approved duties include those set out in Schedule A.
- 8.2 Travel and Subsistence Allowances are paid to accord with the rates payable to Council employees from time to time with the exception of overnight absences. Details of the current rates payable are set out in Schedule B.

8.3 For the avoidance of doubt, Councillors who attend as substitutes for other Councillors at certain Committee and Sub-Committee meetings shall be eligible for travel and subsistence allowances in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 5.

8.4 Where a Councillor is appointed as the Council's representative at meetings falling within Schedule A, a substitute Councillor may attend such meetings where the appointee is unable to attend and the appointee so requests, and the substitute Councillor will be eligible for travel and subsistence allowances.

[Notes:- (a) Such substitute Councillors are asked to inform the Assistant Director - Law & Governance / Corporate Manager –Governance and Civic Office so that the payment of appropriate allowances can be authorised.

(b) If an appointee finds that it is difficult to attend meetings falling within Schedule A on a regular basis, then he/she should consider his/her continued appointment and contact the Corporate Manager Governance and Civic Office - to discuss the matter.

9. **SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES**

9.1 Where Councillors undertake approved duties involving absences of more than four hours which extend over a period which fully covers a normal evening meal-time, an allowance for a meal may be claimed. The rates and full details are set out in Schedule B.

10. **CHILDCARE AND DEPENDANTS' CARERS' ALLOWANCES**

10.1 Allowances for meeting the costs of Childcare and/or Dependants' Carers can be claimed by Councillors to enable them to undertake approved duties as defined in Schedule A.

10.2 Childcare Allowance up to £13.00 per hour, and Dependants Relative Care/Specialist Nursing Care Allowance up to £30 per hour are payable on the production of satisfactory receipts. Claims should be made as referred to in Paragraph 11.1 below.

10.3 Childcare and Dependants' Carers' Allowances –

- (a) are not payable in respect of care undertaken by a family member, friend or neighbour but should be for professional care and
- (b) are payable for the duration of the approved duty undertaken by the Councillor, including travelling time.

11. CLAIMS FOR ALLOWANCES

- 11.1 Councillors are required to submit claims electronically through the Employee Self Service (ESS) system. The ESS site can be accessed from any computer/mobile device, provided the link has been stored, so claims can be entered at any time of the day from home, Council offices or elsewhere.
- 11.2 A Councillor who is also a serving Member of another Authority should use the forms of, and claim from, that Authority, in respect of the relevant approved duty undertaken for that body. Similarly, where a Councillor receives an allowance from another body for travel or subsistence, he/she should only claim from that body.
- 11.3 A claim for all relevant travel and subsistence allowances should be made within three months of the expenditure being incurred.
- 11.4 In respect of subsistence it should be noted that the Scheme entitles Councillors to claim the actual cost incurred up to the maximum amount detailed in Schedule B. In other words, if the amount spent is below the maximum then only the amount spent may be claimed.

12. TAXATION

- 12.1 Allowances are liable for Income Tax and National Insurance contributions.
- 12.2 Councillors are advised to seek independent advice on their own taxation position.
- 12.3 Councillors seeing constituents at home will not have income tax deducted from relevant travel expenses if they have completed the Declaration form supplied by the Corporate Manager – Governance and Civic Office.

SCHEDULE A

1. The following approved duties are eligible for the payment of Travel and Subsistence Allowances:-
 - (a) the attendance at a meeting of the authority or of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or of any other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations, or of any committee or sub-committee of such a body;
 - (b) the attendance at any other meeting, the holding of which is authorised by the authority, or a committee or sub-committee of the authority, or a joint committee of the authority and one or more local authority(ies) within the meaning of section 270(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, or a sub-committee of such a joint committee provided that –
 - (i) where the authority is divided into two or more political groups it is a meeting to which members of at least two such groups have been invited, or
 - (ii) if the authority is not so divided, it is a meeting to which at least two members of the authority have been invited;
 - (c) the attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member;
 - (d) the attendance at a meeting of the Cabinet or a meeting of any of its committees, where the authority is operating executive arrangements;
 - (e) the performance of any duty in pursuance of any standing order made under section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened;
 - (f) the performance of any duty in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises;
 - (g) the carrying out of any other duty approved by the authority, or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the authority or of any of its committees or sub-committees.
2. For the avoidance of doubt, attendance at meetings of the bodies listed in (a) below (or as may be amended by the Council from time to time), or in connection with the duties described in (b) (c) and (d) below is included in the categories set out in paragraph 1. above.

Assembly of the East of England LGA

Association for Suffolk Museums

East of England Local Government Association

East Suffolk Drainage Board
East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board
Haven Gateway Partnership
Homestart Mid - Suffolk
Ipswich Strategic Planning Area Board
Joint Waste Management Board
Local Government Association and its Executive, Boards, Panels, Commissions including Partnerships, Forums, Policy Review Groups, Special Interest Groups and Task Groups etc together with the Annual Meeting and Conference, the LGA General Assembly and the East of England Assembly of Leaders
Mid Suffolk Domestic Abuse Forum
Museum of East Anglian Life
Suffolk Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board
Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee
Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Policy Panel
Suffolk Police and Crime Panel
Suffolk Rail Policy Group
Suffolk Violence and Abuse Partnership
Suffolk Waste Partnership (SWP)
Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership

- (b) Attendance at meetings to compile draft lists of Committee, Task Group and Panel Memberships.
- (c) Attendance by the Chairman and/or the Vice Chairman of the Council, a Committee, Sub Committee, Task/Project Group, Working Party, Panel or Advisory Group to discuss with Officers the business of his Committee, Sub Committee, Task Group, Working Party, Panel or Advisory Group (or business of the Council in the case of the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Council) on not more than two occasions per cycle of meetings where it is not practicable for such business to be conducted by the Councillor when he/she visits the Council Offices in connection with another approved duty.
- d) Attendance by a Councillor at a meeting called by an Officer to discuss or carry out the business of the Council where it is not practicable for such business to be conducted by the Councillor when visits to the Council Offices are made in connection with another approved duty.
- e) District Councillors attending Parish Council meetings, as the district ward representative for that area, with the exception of when the District Councillor was also a Parish Councillor for that Parish Council.

SCHEDULE B

TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

(a) **Councillor's own motor vehicle**

The rate for travel by a Councillor's own private motor vehicle shall be 45p per mile. Passenger allowance can be claimed for taking other members and officers to meetings etc, at 5p per mile for one or more passengers.

A passenger's name(s) must be listed with the journey details, and the extra 5p claimed in Section 5 of the claim form.

Claims for longer journeys will be capped at the cost of undertaking the journey by public transport if this is a suitable and reasonable option.

Councillors are encouraged to reduce their reliance on motorised transport when carrying out Council business including IT related/home working solutions.

(b) **Travelling to or from a Railway Station and Centres of Public Transport**

If a Councillor's own motor vehicle is used, the appropriate mileage allowance can be claimed.

(c) **Miscellaneous Expenses connected with the use of Vehicles**

The amounts actually incurred on tolls, ferries and parking (including overnight) will be reimbursed.

(d) **Taxi Fares**

The amount to be claimed by Councillors will be the cost of travel by public transport save when travel by taxi is occasioned by reason of urgency or when no public transport is reasonably available. In these circumstances the actual amount of the fare and any reasonable gratuity paid will be reimbursed.

(e) **Hire of Vehicles**

The rate of travel by a hired motor vehicle other than a taxi cab shall not exceed the rate which would have been applicable had the vehicle belonged to the Councillor who hired it, except that the actual cost of hiring may be reimbursed in cases where it can be shown that the expense could not be avoided.

(f) **Railway and Bus Fares**

Reimbursement of fares actually paid. Bookings for rail tickets should be made via the Governance Team.

(g) **Bicycle Allowance Scheme**

Mileage rates can be claimed at 27.7p per mile. This rate will attract a profit element on which tax and national insurance will be deducted.

Members should provide: -

- (a) Their own bicycle, together with any associated running expenses,
- (b) Wet weather/reflective protective clothing,
- (c) Protective helmet (which must be worn at all times when using a bicycle on Council business)
- (d) Insurance cover relating to damage or theft.

(i) **Subsistence Allowance**

The maximum rates are:

For absences, not involving an absence overnight, from the usual place of residence, actual expenditure will be reimbursed up to the following amounts: -

Evening Meal Allowance	£20
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(j) **Overnight Absences**

Overnight accommodation must be arranged by the Council on behalf of the Councillor, subject to the Assistant Director – Law & Governance being authorised to agree reasonable accommodation rates.

In an emergency a councillor may claim for the actual cost of hotel accommodation and meals with the agreement of the Corporate Manager for Governance and Civic Office and on the production of receipts.

SCHEDULE C

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF DELEGATED POWER BY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - LAW AND GOVERNANCE IN RESPECT OF MEMBERS CONFERENCES/SEMINARS/MEETINGS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Under the Scheme of Delegation, the Assistant Director - Law & Governance has been granted delegated authority to approve attendance by Members (at conferences, seminars or meetings) which has not previously been approved by the Council.
- 1.2 In exercising his/her delegation the Assistant Director - Law & Governance must have regard to these guidelines.

2. GUIDELINES

- 2.1 The Assistant Director - Law & Governance must ensure that there is sufficient budgetary provision taking into account:-
 - (a) The financial provision required for the support and development needs of all Members for the financial year in question.
 - (b) The cost and quality of the course/seminar/conference where applicable.
- 2.2 The Assistant Director - Law & Governance must ensure that:
 - (a) The meeting/conference/seminar is relevant to the Member's role and responsibilities at the Council, (e.g. by virtue of membership of a Committee, Sub-Committee, Task Group, Panel or Outside Body) or, his/her position as Chairman or Vice-Chairman of a Committee, Sub-Committee, Task Group, Panel or Outside Body, or Leader/Portfolio Holder OR
 - (b) Attendance would be beneficial to the Council or non-attendance would be prejudicial to the Council or its standing in the wider community, OR
 - (c) The conference/seminar provides necessary or relevant training or education to the Member(s) in his/her/their capacity as a District Councillor, OR
 - (d) The conference/seminar forms part of an agreed programme of training for Members, AND the conference/seminar does not duplicate attendance by that Member at a previous conference/seminar/meeting.