

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Scheme of Allowances Payable to Councillors

This Scheme is made under Part 3 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 and will take effect from 1st April 2024.

1. Definitions:

In this scheme 'approved duty' and committee member are as defined in the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019.

2. Commencement Date:

This scheme of allowances shall be operational from 1 April 2024.

3. Basic Allowance:

An annual basic allowance of £17,030 shall be paid to each Councillor. Where applicable this will be paid pro-rata.

4. Special Responsibility Allowance:

4.1 A special responsibility allowance shall be paid to those Councillors who hold the special responsibilities specified in Schedule 1.

4.2 The amount of allowance shall be the amount specified against that special responsibility in the Schedule. The allowance is only payable whilst the Councillor is carrying out that duty.

4.3 At any time, only one special responsibility allowance will be paid to a Councillor.

4.4 Where applicable any special responsibility allowances will be paid pro-rata.

5. Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson Allowance:

5.1 An allowance of £22,246.00 will be payable to the Chairperson of the Council. Where applicable this allowance will be paid pro-rata.

5.2 An allowance of £6,924.00 will be payable to the Deputy Chairperson of the Council. Where applicable this allowance will be paid pro-rata.

Scheme approved by
Audit Committee 04/05/2023.
Council 05/06/2023.

- 5.3** The Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson may incur and be reimbursed in respect of expenses, which are wholly and exclusively incurred in the conduct of Chair/Deputy Chair duties. The expenses which may be reimbursed include:
- Reasonable (receipted) donations to individuals or organisations, charitable or otherwise, providing the proposed done would not be deemed by the Council to be incompatible with the Council's role in society and the purpose of the donation is compatible with the Council's core values;
 - Reasonable (receipted) hospitality expenses (relative to the numbers entertained) where any expenditure relating to alcohol at any one function is generally limited to either the higher of £100 or 20% of the total bill for food and alcohol;
 - Reasonable (receipted) gifts (excluding alcohol and tobacco) subject to full disclosure of done, gift (description and cost) and occasion in an appropriate gifts and hospitality register;
 - Reasonable (receipted) travel and subsistence costs of the Chair/Deputy Chair subject to the requirement that no other reimbursement has/will be made by the Council or any other individual, organisation or authority;
- 5.4** The Council will:
- a) Make payments towards expenditure reasonably incurred by the Chair/Deputy Chair in making official or courtesy visits, on behalf of the Council; and
 - b) Defray any expenses reasonably incurred in the reception and entertainment by way of official courtesy of distinguished persons residing in or visiting the Council district or persons representative of or connected with local government or other public services.
- 5.5** The amounts payable by the Council in respect of the making of official or courtesy visits will be made on the same basis and subject to the same limits, etc. as equivalent amounts payable to Councillors under this Scheme, e.g. travel and subsistence.

6. Dependents' Carers' Allowance:

- 6.1** Councillors are entitled to claim a dependents' carers' allowance (DCA) towards reimbursement of actual reasonable costs necessarily incurred in providing care for an eligible dependant, while carrying out an approved duty.
- 6.2** A dependants' carers' allowance shall be payable based upon actual receipted costs or at the appropriate hourly rate, whichever is the lower; up to the monthly maximum.
- 6.3** The hourly rate of dependants' carers' allowance for standard care shall be from 1st April 2024 £11.44 and for specialised care £22.88. The monthly maximum for standard care payable is £595 and the monthly maximum for specialised care is £1,190. Councillors may claim only one DCA in respect of each occurrence of approved duty. Only one DCA rate is payable even if there are 2 or more children/dependants being cared for (claim form attached).

7. Travel and Subsistence Allowances:

- 7.1** A Councillor or committee member shall be entitled to claim travel and subsistence allowances where expenditure on travelling or subsistence has been necessarily incurred, (refer to schedule 2 for further information). The amount claimed should not exceed expense incurred. The amount claimed for subsistence should be inclusive of VAT and should not include any alcohol.
- 7.2** The rates of travel allowance for travel by private vehicle shall be as shown in the table below:

Type of Vehicle	Rate per Mile
A pedal cycle	20.0p
A motor cycle (all engine capacities)	24.0p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 450cc but not exceeding 999cc	46.9p *13.7p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 999cc but not exceeding 1,199cc	52.2p *14.4p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 1,199cc	65.0p *16.4p
An electric car	45.0p **25.0p
Passenger rate (per passenger)	5.0p

* For mileage above 8,500 miles

** For mileage above 10,000 miles

7.3 The rates of subsistence shall be as shown in the table below.

PERIOD/MEAL	RATES	
	British Isles	London
Accommodation allowance - An absence involving an overnight stay, away from the normal place of residence. This rate does not include any meal allowance.	100.70	122.45
Breakfast allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period before 11 am)	11.50	
Lunch allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 12 noon and 2pm)	13.50	
Tea allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 3pm and 6pm)	4.70	
Evening meal allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period ending after 7pm)	20.95	

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Council to approve.

8. Councillors' Support Services:

- 8.1** Newry, Mourne & Down District Council have provided a mobile device and printer to all 41 Councillors in order to carry out their Council duties. Members can claim up to £35 per month towards their actual home broadband costs on production of broadband receipts. Amounts claimed for broadband expenses should not exceed the expense incurred.
- 8.2** Council also provide general secretarial services, business cards and headed paper to Councillors. As IT readable devices have been provided, Council will not provide hard copies of electronic documents to Members.

9. Claims and Payment:

- 9.1** Payments regarding basic allowance and special responsibility allowance shall be made monthly.
- 9.2** Claims for dependants' carers' allowance, travelling allowance or subsistence allowance should be made in writing within three months, and should be accompanied by receipts, where appropriate

10. General:

- 10.1** This scheme may be revoked or amended at any time.
- 10.2** The amounts stated in paragraphs 3-5 will be subject to any indexing increase during the year.
- 10.3** The amounts stated in paragraph 6 will be subject to any increase to the national living wage for age 25+.
- 10.4** Where a Councillor is suspended from carrying out the duties of a Councillor, in accordance with Section 59 (5) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, the part of basic allowance, special responsibility allowance, or Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson allowance payable to the Councillor in respect of the period for which the Councillor is suspended, must be withheld.
- 10.5** Councillors may, if they wish, renounce their entitlement to basic, chairperson, vice-chairperson or special responsibility allowances. They can do this by writing to the Chief Executive. A Councillor can subsequently withdraw the renunciation. They can also amend a renunciation (for example, to limit it to one kind of allowance only). The withdrawal or amendment cannot have retrospective effect.

Schedule 1 to the Scheme of Allowances
Special Responsibility Allowances

The following table provides details of the duties which attract a special responsibility allowance and the associated allowance amount.

Special Responsibility	Special Responsibility Allowance Rate (per annum)	Per Month (£)
Chairperson of Council	£22,246.00	
Deputy Chairperson of Council	£6,942.00	

Special Responsibility	Special Responsibility Allowance Rate (per annum)	Per Month (£)
Chairperson (Economy, Regeneration and Tourism)	£4197.20	£349.76
Chairperson (Active and Healthy Communities Committee)	£4197.20	£349.76
Chairperson (Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee)	£4197.20	£349.76
Chairperson (Sustainability & Environment Committee)	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 1	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 2	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 3	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 4	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 5	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 6	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 7	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 8	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 9	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 10	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 11	£4197.20	£349.76
Planning Committee Member 12	£4197.20	£349.76
Party Representative (Sinn Féin)	£4197.20	£349.76
Party Representative (SDLP)	£4197.20	£349.76
Party Representative (DUP)	£4197.20	£349.76
Party Representative (Alliance)	£4197.20	£349.76
Total Special Responsibility Allowance	£83,944.00	

Scheme approved by
Council to approve.

Schedule 2 to the Scheme of Allowances - travel and subsistence

Duties for which payment may be claimed:

1. Council meetings.
2. Committee meetings and meetings of working groups/forums of which the Councillor is a member.
3. Committee meetings and meetings of working groups/forums of which the Councillor is not a member, if they are attending at the specific invitation of the Council.
4. Attendance at approved conferences, study visits or seminars as a representative of the Council.
5. Attendance at briefings/training courses approved by the Council.
6. Attendance by appointed Councillors at meetings of PCSP and Policing Committee.
7. Attendance by appointed Councillors at meetings of outside bodies. Expenses cannot be claimed where remuneration is made to the Councillor from the outside body.

Duties for which payment may not be claimed:

1. Committee Meetings of which the Councillor is not a member (with exception of point 3 above).
2. Events/ launches to which an official invitation has not been issued by Council (with exception of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson or Member deputizing).
3. Any constituency business.
4. Party political meetings.

This list provides information but is not intended to be exhaustive.