

Part 6 Members' Allowances Scheme

The Bracknell Forest Borough Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, and having regard to the recommendations of an independent remuneration panel, hereby makes the following scheme:

1 This scheme may be cited as the Bracknell Forest Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme and shall have effect for the municipal year commencing on 21 May 2003 and subsequent years.

2 **In this scheme.**

"Councillor" means a member of the Bracknell Forest Borough Council who is a Councillor;

"Year" means the 12 months ending on 31 March.

"Co-opted Member" means a non-councillor appointed by the Council to serve as a member of a council committee or overview and scrutiny committee or sub committee.

"Statutory Co-opted Member" means a co-opted member appointed by the Council in pursuance of a legislative or regulatory requirement.

3. **Basic Allowance**

Subject to paragraphs 7, 8 and 14, for each year a basic allowance of £7,500 shall be paid to each Councillor.

4. **Special Responsibility Allowance**

(1) For each year a special responsibility allowance shall be paid to those Councillors who hold the special responsibilities in relation to the Authority that are specified in the schedule to this scheme.

(2) Subject to paragraph 7, 8 and 14, the amount of each such allowance shall be the amount specified against that special responsibility in that schedule.

(3) Any Councillor who, by virtue of holding more than one office, would otherwise become eligible to receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance, shall be entitled to receive the highest Special Responsibility Allowance only.

5. **Co-optees Allowance**

For each year the Co-optees Allowances, as are specified in the schedule to this scheme, shall be paid to Statutory Co-optees appointed by the Council to serve on committees of the Council and its overview and scrutiny committees and sub committees.

6. **Dependant Carers' Allowance**

Dependant carers allowance will be payable to meet the reasonable expenses (limited to a maximum of £50 per member per approved duty) of arranging for the care of children or dependants incurred in respect of approved duties as set out in schedule 2 attached.

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7. **Renunciation**

A Councillor or Statutory Co-optee may by notice in writing given to the Democratic Services Manager elect to forego any part of his or her entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

8. **Part-Year Entitlements**

- (1) The provisions of this paragraph shall have effect to regulate the entitlements of a Councillor to basic and special responsibility allowances where, in the course of a year, this scheme is amended or that Councillor becomes, or ceases to be, a Councillor or accepts or relinquishes a special responsibility in respect of which a special responsibility allowance is payable.
- (2) If an amendment to this scheme changes the amount to which a Councillor is entitled by way of basic allowance or a special responsibility allowance, then in relation to each of the periods:
 - (a) beginning with the year ending with the day before that on which the first amendment in that year takes effect, or
 - (b) beginning with the day on which an amendment takes effect and ending with the day before that in which the next amendment takes effect, or (if none) within the year

the entitlement to such an allowance shall be to the payment of such part of the amount of the allowance under this scheme as it has effect during the relevant period as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days in the period bear to the number of days in the year.

- (3) Where the term of office of a Councillor begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, the entitlement of that Councillor to a basic allowance shall be to the payment to such part of the basic allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which his terms of office subsists bears to the number of days in that year.
- (4) Where this scheme is amended as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) and the term of office of a Councillor does not subsist throughout the period mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) (a), the entitlement of any such Councillor to a basic allowance shall be to the payment of such part of the basic allowance referable to each such period (ascertained in accordance with that sub-paragraph) as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which this term of office as a Councillor subsists bears to the number of days in that period.
- (5) Where a Councillor has during part of, but not throughout, a year such special responsibilities as entitle him or her to a special responsibility allowance, that Councillor's entitlement shall be to payment of such part of that allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which he has such special responsibilities bears to the number of days in that year.
- (6) Where this scheme is amended as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2), and a Councillor has during part, but does not have throughout the whole, of any period mentioned in sub paragraph (2)(a) of that paragraph any such special responsibilities as entitle him or her to a special responsibility

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allowance, that Councillor's entitlement shall be to payment of such part of the allowance referable to each such period (ascertained in accordance with that sub paragraph) as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days in that period during which he or she has such special responsibilities bears to the number of days in that period.

9. **Payments**

- (1) Subject to Sub-paragraph (2), payments in respect of basic and special responsibility allowance shall be made, in instalments of one-twelfth of the amount specified in this scheme on the last working day of each month;
- (2) Where a payment of one-twelfth of the amount specified in this scheme in respect of a basic allowance or a special responsibility allowance would result in the Councillor receiving more than the amount to which, by virtue of paragraph 7, he or she is entitled, the payment shall be restricted to such amount as will ensure that no more is paid than the amount to which he or she is entitled.

10. **Councillors' Pensions**

All Councillors below 70 years of age shall be eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme, applied to both their Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances. The Scheme is a contributory scheme. Any application to join the Scheme and benefits conferred under the Scheme shall be subject to the terms and conditions determined from time to time for Councillor Members of the Berkshire Local Government Pension Scheme. The policy set out in schedule 3 to this Scheme shall apply to Councillor Pensions.

11. **Travel Allowances**

A list of the approved duties for which travel and subsistence allowances can be claimed is attached as Schedule 2 to this scheme.

Travel Allowance – approved duties within the Borough

- (1) Councillors and Co-opted Members shall be eligible to claim travel allowances in respect of approved duties within the Borough. Travel allowances shall be paid at the casual user rate payable to officers, as agreed from time to time by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, including the rates payable where a Member travels by bicycle, motorcycle, or carries passengers.

Travel Allowance – approved duties outside the Borough

- (2) Members or co-opted Members who attend approved duties for out-of-Borough business shall be reimbursed at the same rate that Officers can claim for reimbursement of travel.
- (3) Members travelling out of the Borough on approved duties shall normally travel by the most cost-effective methods that meet the needs of their travel requirements. In particular, Members who have to travel by train to out of Borough meetings shall normally travel standard class unless exceptional circumstances require otherwise. Travel by first class rail shall require the prior approval of the Director of Corporate Services and/or the Borough Finance Officer.

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- (4) If other types of journeys need to be taken by Members on out of Borough business and the rates recommended above are not practical then alternative modes of travel must receive prior approval from the relevant Director and receipts shall be provided for the reimbursement of any claims.

12. **Subsistence Allowances and Accommodation**

- (1) Councillors and Co-opted Members shall not be entitled to claim subsistence allowances in respect of approved duties within the Borough.
- (2) Where Members or Co-opted members attend approved duties outside the Borough:
 - wherever possible the Member shall organise meals and accommodation through the Council, in advance.
 - where this is not practicable, Members shall be reimbursed subsistence and accommodation costs at the same rates that are payable for Officers.
 - for meals that cannot be pre-booked and paid by the Council and are in excess of current rates payable to officers, Members' reasonable costs shall be reimbursed on production of receipts up to a limit of £25 per day.

13. **Suspension**

if a Member is suspended from acting as a Councillor or as a Member of a committee of the Council after being found in breach of the Code of Conduct then the Standards Committee shall be empowered to suspend in whole or part the allowances payable to that Member. This provision shall also apply to travel and subsistence allowances.

14. **Annual Adjustments**

The following arrangements shall apply to the review and upgrading of allowances provided within this scheme for the four years from 1 May 2003, or until the Council requires a further review of the Scheme of Allowances, if earlier.

Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowance and Co-optees Allowance: increased by the annual local government pay percentage increase as agreed each April (linked to spinal column point 49 of the National Joint Councils scheme), to be implemented in that year from the date of the next following Annual Council Meeting, commencing in 2004.

Travel and Subsistence:

- In-Borough travel: Car, motor cycle and cycle rates: indexed to Officer rates
- Out of Borough subsistence: indexed to Officer rates, unless related to actual cost reimbursement
- Out of Borough travel: indexed to Officer rates, unless related to actual cost reimbursement

SCHEDULE 1

The following are specified as the special responsibilities in respect of which **special responsibility allowances** are payable, and the amounts of those allowances, excluding the Basic Allowance paid to all Councillors:

	£
Leader of the Council	25,000
Deputy Leader of the Council	15,000
Leader of Opposition Party	9,700
Deputy Leader of Opposition Party	1,100
Executive Member with Portfolio	13,750
Portfolios effective from 21 May 2003:	
Corporate Services	
Education	
Planning and Transportation	
Public and Environmental Services	
Leisure Services	
Social Services & Housing	
Policy Implementation	
Emergency Services and Community Safety	
Chairman – Public Scrutiny Commission	6,250
Chairman - Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Panel	5,000
Chairman – Environment Scrutiny Panel	5,000
Chairman – Health, Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Panel	5,000
Children and Young People's Champion	1,900
Tenant's and Leaseholders' Champion	1,900
Voluntary Sector Champion	1,900
Pensioners' Champion	1,900
Chairman of Licensing & Safety Committee	5,000
Vice Chairman of Licensing & Safety Committee	550
Chairman of Employment Committee	1,900
Chairman of Planning & Highways Committee	9,700
Vice-Chairman of Planning & Highways Committee	1,100

Note: Only the highest Special Responsibility Allowance may be paid to a member holding more than one qualifying office – see paragraph 4 (3) of the Scheme.

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Co-optees Allowances

The following are specified as the positions in respect of which **co-optees allowances** are payable, and the amounts of those allowances:

Independent Chairman of Standards Committee	550
Independent Members of Standards Committee and its sub committees	250
Diocesan representatives (2) on the Public Scrutiny Commission and its sub groups	250
Parent Governor Representatives (2) on the Public Scrutiny Commission and its sub groups	250

These and all other co-optees appointed by the Council shall be eligible to claim travel allowance for in-Borough approved duties and travel and subsistence allowance for out-of-Borough approved duties in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme.

Note: Only the highest Co-optees' Allowance may be paid to a co-optee holding more than one qualifying office – see paragraph 4 (3) of the Scheme.

SCHEDULE 2

Approved Duties for Travel and Subsistence Allowances

For Members in receipt of a special responsibility allowance:-

- all duties carried out in connection with that responsibility

For all Members:-

- (i) Attendance at meetings of the Council
- (ii) Attendance as a member or substitute member at meetings of Committees, sub committees, advisory panels etc.
- (iii) Attendance at a meeting authorised by the Council, a Committee or the Executive
- (iv) Attendance at a site visit authorised in respect of a forthcoming committee meeting
- (v) Attendance as the Council's appointed representative at any meeting of an association of which the Council is a Member (except where such associations pay the member's expenses)
- (vi) Attendance as the Council's appointed representative at meetings of any external organisation, its committees or sub committees (except where such organisations pay members' expenses)
- (vii) Carrying out a statutory inspection of premises on behalf of the Council
- (viii) Attendance at a meeting, briefing or event at the invitation of a Director

The Council **cannot** pay any members' expenses in relation to their attendance at Party Group meetings, single party briefings other than executive briefings with officers, or activities organised by a political party or party group.

The Democratic Services Manager will advise in the event of uncertainty. (Tel 01344 352260)

SCHEDULE 3

Pension Policy Framework for Councillors

The general framework to be adopted in the case of pensions for Councillors will be as follows:

- (i) To make any ill-health retirement under dispute subject to a second independent medical opinion.
- (ii) Not to reduce or waive Councillor contributions for those with forty or more years' membership.
- (iii) Not to agree to Voluntary Early Retirement for those aged between 50 and 59 years and pay them with immediate benefits.
- (iv) To increase pensionable service at retirement for Councillors with less than five years' service only in very exceptional circumstances.
- (v) Not to add to a Councillor's pensionable service on recruitment.
- (vi) Not to institute a shared cost Additional Voluntary Contribution arrangement.
- (vii) Any proposal involving Councillor early retirement benefits to be subject to Council approval.