

MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2020

Introduction

1. Members' and co-optees' allowances are governed by legislation -*The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003*. This can be accessed on the City Council's web site.
2. Local authorities can only adopt Allowance Schemes after considering recommendations made by an independent panel. This current scheme will take effect from 8 November 2020, after consideration of the reports of the Independent Remuneration Panels on 10th September 2019 and 17th March 2020. Copies of all the Panel's reports (and the decisions taken by the Full Council) can be accessed on the Council's website at www.bristol.gov.uk.
3. The previous Scheme was adopted by the Full Council in May 2014.
4. The Allowances Scheme covers:
 - basic allowance (paid to all Councillors);
 - special responsibility allowances (paid to some councillors);
 - travel allowances and travel policy;
 - dependant carers allowances;
 - pensions (for Councillors);
 - co-optees allowances.
5. The principles (as appropriate) of the officers [Expenses, Benefits and Travel Policy](#) apply to councillors and co-optees.
6. In accordance with the regulations, at the end of a financial year, details of all allowances paid and claimed (travel and dependant carers) by Councillors and co-optees, for the preceding year, will be published at www.bristol.gov.uk.

Basic Allowance

7. The Basic Allowance is the allowance that every Councillor in Bristol is entitled to. It is intended to realistically remunerate Councillors for time spent on Council business including attending meetings/briefings and conducting ward work i.e. all duties the public would expect a Councillor to carry out. The Basic Allowance also covers incidental costs (such as the use of their homes) and all subsistence when travelling within the UK.

Co-Optees' and Independent Member's Allowance

8. An allowance is payable to persons appointed to serve as co-optees, including statutory appointments and Independent Members of the Audit Committee (one of whom also chairs the Values and Ethics Sub Committee). The allowance recognises the time

devoted by such persons, for example, in preparing for and attending/chairing meetings they are appointed to.

Special Responsibility Allowances

9. These are discretionary payments intended to recognise the responsibility, accountability, time and effort required from those Members of the Council who perform duties significantly over and above what might reasonably be expected of them through the Basic Allowance.

Payment of Allowances

10. All allowances will be paid automatically on the last working day of each month, apart from payments for attendance at Appeal Committees and Licensing Sub Committee hearings, which will be paid as set out in the schedule at Appendix B.
11. Allowances are treated as income and therefore subject to any tax, National Insurance deductions and/or benefits relative to earnings. Detailed information regarding taxation etc. can be found in the officers [Expenses, Benefits and Travel Policy](#).
12. A Councillor or co-optee may, by notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer, forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance.
13. Co-optees will be paid (pro-rata) following the return of the correct paperwork. Details of payments to Councillors (including those with a Special Responsibility Allowance) can be found in the schedule at Appendix B.
14. Claims for expenses (over and above the basic and special responsibility allowance) must be made by completing the *Councillor Expenses Claim Form*. Copies of the forms can be obtained from Democratic Services or the Members Support Officer.

Travelling Allowances and Travel Policy

15. Travelling allowances are payable for approved duties only (see Appendix D) both within the city and outside of Bristol according to the rates set out in Appendix A. A car parking permit for College Street car park will be issued or alternatively Members can be reimbursed for a bus pass. All other travel arrangements are subject to the [Expenses, Benefits and Travel Policy](#).

Reasonable Adjustments - Use of Taxis within Bristol

16. Councillors / co-optees are entitled to use taxis for the purposes of carrying out their approved duties where this has been agreed as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010. Requests for approval should be made to the Head of Democratic Engagement.

International travel policy

17. The International Travel Policy for Members can be found at Appendix E.

Member Development - Conferences

18. Training courses and conferences can be booked through the Member Development Officer.

Subsistence (Food and Drink)

19. In line with Bristol City Council's policy for officers, no subsistence expenses will be paid for trips within the UK.

Out of pocket expenses

20. In line with Bristol City Council's policy for officers, claims for the cost of reasonable out of pocket expenses can be made when travelling outside of Bristol on Council business and subject to the Monitoring Officer's approval. Examples of expenses that will be reimbursed include public transport, parking fees (but not fines) and taxi fares. For travel within the United Kingdom, Councillors may not claim for food and drink.

Dependant Carers' Allowance

21. Any Councillor or co-optee who is responsible for the care of any dependant person¹ is eligible to be paid an additional allowance per dependant, per hour in respect of the performance of any approved duty (see Appendix D). The Dependant Carer's Allowance is also payable for travel time, not exceeding 1 hour before and 1 hour after, the performance of the approved duty. The payment is not payable to a member of the claimant's household and payment of this allowance will be subject to provision of receipts to evidence payments made. The maximum rates of such allowances are set out in Appendix A and are subject to the Member observing the protocol on the claims procedure, eligibility criteria etc. as set out in Appendix C.

Pensions

22. Councillors must make their own pension provision.

Income Tax

23. Income Tax is payable on all allowances (basic, special responsibility, co-optees, attendance and carers). There is no tax liability on mileage rates as rates are paid in accordance with Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs Limits.

24. Councillors are reminded to keep their own records of expenses claims and reimbursements for income tax purposes.

¹ A dependant could be a spouse, partner, child, grandchild, parent, or someone who depends on you for care.

25. Councillors are advised to seek their own independent tax and financial advice as necessary.

National Insurance

26. National Insurance contributions are payable on all allowances (basic, special responsibility, co-optees, attendance and carers). As with employees, a 12% Contribution is paid on all earnings over £792 per month and 2% for earnings over £4167 per month. Employees over State Pension Age do not pay National Insurance.
27. There is an annual maximum for contribution liability for people with more than one job and, in some instances, Members in this position may be entitled to a refund of contributions; alternatively they may apply to defer payment of contributions in their capacity as a Councillor. See Guidance Notes for the Deferment of National Insurance below.
28. Guidance Notes for the Deferment of National Insurance can be found at the link below:

[CA72A Notes - Guidance notes for form CA72A for 6 April 2019 to 5 April 2020 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/861222/ca72a-notes-guidance-notes-for-form-ca72a-for-6-april-2019-to-5-april-2020.pdf)

Benefits

29. The contributions paid by Members count towards the full range of contributory benefits.

ICT Equipment and Telephony

30. Members will be provided with necessary ICT equipment and telephony to enable them to fulfil their duties. Whilst Members are required to work remotely, this may include the provision of additional devices. A Broadband allowance of £15 per month can be paid to each Member.
31. International calls on Council business can only be made by exception.

Future Changes

The basic councillors, special responsibility and co-optees allowances will be automatically increased in line with any officer pay increases.

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Rates of Pay
- Appendix B: Special responsibility Allowances
- Appendix C: Dependant Carers Allowances Scheme
- Appendix D: Approved Duties
- Appendix E: International Travel Policy for Members

APPENDIX A: Rates of Pay – 2023-2024

The maximum rates that can be reimbursed are currently as follows:

Basic Councillor's Allowance

(£15,758 per annum) £ 1,313 per month

Co-optee's Allowance:

(£678 per annum) £56.50 per month

Travelling Allowances

Outside of Bristol and under 120 miles

Car 45 pence per mile

Bicycle 20 pence per mile

Refer to the [Expenses, Benefits and Travel Policy](#) for travel within Bristol or in excess of 120 miles

Dependant Carers' Allowance

Paid as per the Living Wage Foundation on submitted receipts.

The basic and Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) rates will increase on 1 April in line with officer pay increases where applicable.

Appendix B: Schedule of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) 2023 - 2024

All Councillors are entitled to the basic allowance of **£15,758**

SRAs are paid over and above the basic allowance.

The co-optees' allowance is **£678 per annum** paid pro-rata from the date of their appointment, with the exception of the Independent Members of the Audit Committee who receive **£1,736 per annum** plus travel expenses.

SRA £ (in addition to the basic)	SRA RECIPIENT	No of SRAs
74035	Elected Mayor	1
29378	Deputy Mayors	2
27118	Cabinet Members	7
24837	Lord Mayor	1
14901	Political Group Leaders	4
9039	Group Whips	4
	Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Chair	1
7452	Deputy Lord Mayor	1
	Chairs of Scrutiny Commissions:	5
	Communities	
	Growth and Regeneration	
	People	
	Resources	
	Health Sub Committee of the People Scrutiny Commission	
	Chairs of Regulatory Committees:	3
	Development Control A	
	Development Control B	
	Public Safety and Protection	
	Audit Committee Chair	1
	Human Resources Committee Chair	1
	Total SRAs payable	31

Additional Payments:

- (i) Chairs of Scrutiny Task Groups - £2000 upon submission of the Group's report of recommendations to Cabinet
- (ii) Licensing - £150 for 2 sessions up to £550 for a maximum of 10 sessions
- (iii) Appeals - £150 for 2 sessions up to £550 for a maximum of 10 sessions

Appendix C : Dependant Carers' Allowance Scheme

A claim can be made:

(a) When a carer has been engaged to enable a Councillor to carry out an approved duty;

(i) where charges are levied on an hourly basis, Members may claim actual and necessary costs incurred for the period of the approved duty (including time travelling, time taken by a Member to 'drop-off' or 'pick-up' a dependant, or by a carer engaged by a member to look after a dependant in the member's home – this would normally not exceed 1 hour before and 1 hour after) for each dependant;

or

(ii) where charges are levied by a provider for a fixed period or session, Members may claim the cost of any such fixed period/session or periods/sessions incurred for the period of the approved duty (including time travelling time taken by a Member to 'drop-off' or 'pick-up' a dependant) for each dependant;

(b) A carer will be any responsible adult who does not normally live with the member as part of his/her family;

(c) An allowance will be payable if the dependant being cared for:

(i) is a child under the age of 14; or

(ii) is an elderly person; or

(iii) has a recognised physical or mental disability who normally lives with the Member as part of that Member's family and should not be left unsupervised.

APPENDIX D: Approved Duties

Claims can be made for these allowances in respect of the following (extract from the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003):

- (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 at least one other local authority 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 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 executive 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 connections 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 performance of any duty in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at any school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996 (approval of non- maintained special schools); and
- (h) 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 any of its committees or sub-committees.