

DRAFT ELECTED MEMBERS' EXPENSES AND RESOURCES POLICY



Policy type	City		
Authorised by	Council		
First adopted	20 December 2010	Minute reference	M10/84.2
Revisions/amendments	23 August 2011 30 October 2012 2 September 2013 9 May 2016 11 February 2020	Minute references	M11/62.4 M12/71.3 M13/56.4 M16/25.7 M20/XX
Review date	Every three years following the local election or as required by the Local Government Members Determination.		

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To clarify the expenses and allowances Elected Members may claim in undertaking their role, particularly in those circumstances where the determination enables councils to exercise discretion in the allowances payable.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Elected Members of Tauranga City Council.

3. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Absence without leave	is a period of time when an elected member is not fulfilling their responsibilities as an elected member and is doing so without formal approval from the Mayor.
Actual	means as evidenced by the original receipt attached to the claim form.
Council business	means formal Council, committee meetings, workshops, seminars, statutory hearings, training courses, conferences, site visits, meetings with staff, meetings with community groups, meetings with members of the public and social activities where a member attends as a Council representative.
Determination	refers to the most recent Local Government Members Determination issued by the Remuneration Authority.
Expenses	means personal money spent by Elected Members whilst going about their official duties as Elected Members and includes mileage claims.

Expense rules	means the type of expenses that are able to be claimed because they have been approved by the Remuneration Authority.
Hearings	Has the same meaning as in the most recent Local Government Members Determination issued by the Remuneration Authority.
Leave of absence	is a period of time, approved by the Mayor, for which an elected member is on leave from the duties of being an elected member.
Personal communications	means any communication that does not represent the official view of Council.
Reasonable	means that it is within the amount specified by the policy or as deemed reasonable by the Mayor and Chief Executive
Remuneration Authority	is an independent body established under the Local Government Act 2002, part of whose responsibilities are to determine remuneration and expense rules for local authority members.
Resources	are goods and services normally used by Council to support its business, that are provided to Elected Members for their personal use to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities as Elected Members.
Travel time allowance	means the current definition and rate determined by the Remuneration Authority
Vehicle mileage allowance	means the current definition and rate determined by the Remuneration Authority.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Elected Members should be reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses they incur in carrying out their official duties.
- 4.2 Reasonable resources should be made available to Elected Members to enable them to more efficiently carry out their responsibilities.
- 4.3 Reimbursement of expenses and use of resources apply only to Elected Members personally and only while they are acting in their official capacity as Elected Members.
- 4.4 Elected Members' expense expenditure must have a justifiable business purpose, be moderate and conservative having regard to the circumstances, be made transparently and is appropriate in all respects.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

5.1 What Expenses May be Claimed?

Travel

- 5.1.1 Travel expenditure and travel-related expenditure should be economical and efficient, having regard to purpose, distance, time, urgency, and personal health, security and safety considerations. All travel and related expenditure must have a clear business purpose.

5.1.2 The table below outlines the air travel and accommodation and meal expenses Elected Members may claim while carrying out their official roles and duties.

Expense type	Description
Air Travel	<p>Where practical, air travel should be booked well ahead of the actual travel, so that expenditure is the most cost-effective possible. The lowest practically priced airfare is to be used for all journeys (domestic and other) unless there is at least five hours or more of uninterrupted flight duration, a heavy work schedule on arrival, or personal health, known health conditions, safety, or security reasons, where premium economy may be used.</p> <p>International air travel paid for by Council must be authorised by resolution of Council.</p> <p>Membership of any airline club is restricted to the Mayor.</p>
Accommodation and meals	<p>When it is necessary to stay away from home overnight on Council business, the actual and reasonable costs of accommodation, meals and parking (if not provided free by the accommodation provider) are paid for by Council.</p> <p>If an Elected Member chooses to stay at private accommodation, a maximum allowance of \$100.00 can be paid to the person who provided the accommodation.</p> <p>Accommodation, meals and incidental expenditure must have a clear business purpose, be cost-effective, and take into consideration the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the geographic location of the accommodation relative to where the elected member(s)' business is; • the standard of accommodation; • safety and security considerations; • that additional mileage or taxi expenses are not usually required. <p>When meals do not form part of a "package", they may be claimed on presentation of an actual and itemised receipt (not a credit card statement or photocopy). The following maximum limits for meals apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast - \$25.00 (GST inclusive) per elected member per meal. Any costs over this limit are the responsibility of the individual. • Lunch - \$25.00 (GST inclusive) per elected member per meal. Any costs over this limit are the responsibility of the individual. • Dinner- \$50.00 (GST inclusive) per elected member per meal. Any costs over this limit are the responsibility of the individual. <p>When meals are provided as part of a "package", additional meal expenses cannot be claimed.</p> <p>An Elected Member's ability to claim any daily or overnight accommodation expenses ends at the conclusion of the conference/forum or when the elected member leaves the conference/forum.</p>

Use of Private Vehicle

- 5.1.3 Elected Members may only claim for mileage when using their own vehicle to travel outside of the Tauranga City Council area to undertake Council business. All claims for mileage must also meet the criteria for eligible travel as defined in the determination.
- 5.1.4 Council will not pay for travel by private motor vehicle where travel by other means is more practical and cost-effective.

Use of taxis and ridesharing services

- 5.1.5 Taxis or ridesharing services may be used for Council business, instead of private vehicle or public transport, for the following reasons:
- Work is past a reasonable hour;
 - Safety reasons;
 - When outside Tauranga on Council business if a taxi or ridesharing service is the most appropriate form of transport.
- 5.1.6 Costs must be paid for by the individual and will be reimbursed on presentation of actual receipts.

Other travel allowances

- 5.1.7 Elected Members cannot claim a travel time allowance as travel time is considered to be a component of the remuneration for Elected Members.
- 5.1.8 Private travel before, during or at the end of travel paid for by Council is the responsibility of the individual and at no additional cost to Council. The cost of any stopover paid for by Council must have a clear business purpose and be pre-approved by the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor in the case of the Mayor) and Chief Executive.
- 5.1.9 The Remuneration Authority's rules on the Mayoral car are to apply.

Childcare

- 5.1.10 An Elected Member is entitled to claim a childcare allowance on an annual basis, as per the determination rules, as a contribution towards expenses incurred by the member for childcare provided while the member is on Council business. The claim must set out the actual costs incurred and paid by the member and must include a receipt or other appropriate record of payment of the annual amount paid for the childcare services provided.

Hearings

- 5.1.11 Elected Members who participate in a hearing are entitled to claim a fee of up to \$xx. As per the determination, a fee can be claimed for time taken to prepare for the hearing as well as the hearing itself.

5.2 What Expenses May Not be Claimed?

- 5.2.1 The following expenses are the responsibility of individual Elected Members and cannot be claimed:
- Medical insurance
 - Staff discounts
 - Life insurance
 - Accident insurance
 - Income replacement insurance
 - Travel, meals, and all entertainment incurred by the Elected Member's spouse or partner
 - Alcohol, including as part of meals and entertainment costs, and mini bars
 - Tips
 - Any fines (parking or traffic offences).

5.3 When Expenses May and May Not be Claimed

- 5.3.1 For the purpose of clarity, Elected Members may claim expenses approved by the Remuneration Authority, while carrying out council business, except those that:

- are incurred before they are sworn in as members of Council, or after they officially leave office
- are incurred while not acting in their official capacity
- are incurred on a trip outside of the sub-region without specific approval from the Mayor or a standing committee prior to the travel
- are incurred while on leave of absence
- are incurred while absent without leave
- are incurred while holding office illegally
- are related to activities that are incidental to and not the main reason for a trip or event.

5.4 When Expenses Are Paid

- 5.4.1 Expenses claimed are to be paid monthly, to coincide with a payment of the Elected Member's salary, provided an Elected Members' Expenses Claim Form with receipts attached is received in sufficient time to be included in the normal process.
- 5.4.2 All claims must be made within 60 days of expenditure occurring with the aim to keep expenditure within the year in which it occurs and is budgeted for.
- 5.4.3 All expense claims, receipt of personal gifts, and Mayoral credit card expenses are published on Council's website.

5.5 Use of Resources

- 5.5.1 The equipment requirements for Elected Members are deemed to be:
- A phone (mobile and landline)
 - A laptop
 - A personal internet service
 - A compatible scanner and printer.
- 5.5.2 Elected Members are provided with a laptop and mobile phone for all Council-related work. Elected Members cannot claim an allowance for personal computer or personal mobile phone use.
- 5.5.3 Councillors may choose to be reimbursed for use of personal internet services and printer as per the current determination.
- 5.5.4 Elected Members may use the following internal services to a reasonable level as determined by the Chief Executive:
- Word processing and secretarial services
 - Postage and external courier
 - GIS products
 - Property files
 - Photocopying
 - Information technology advice and assistance
 - Use of a PC in the Councillors' Lounge
- 5.5.5 The above services, equipment or consumables are provided at no cost to Elected Members, to assist them in carrying out their official responsibilities and are available only:
- when holding office
 - when not on leave of absence
 - when not absent without leave.

5.5.6 None of the above is to be used by Elected Members for non-Council business, electioneering purposes, personal communications to or through any communications medium or any communications associated with Council-run referenda.

5.6 Authorisation for Conferences or professional development - New Zealand and Overseas

5.6.1 Attendance by Elected Members at conferences or professional development training in New Zealand or overseas, at Council's cost, is to be approved by the Mayor or Chief Executive. Attendance by the Mayor at conferences or professional development trainings will be approved by the Deputy Mayor or the Chief Executive.

5.6.2 Following attendance at a conference, Elected Members must provide a monitoring report back to the relevant Council committee, including costs and a synopsis of the conference.

5.7 Car Parking

5.7.1 Allocated car parking adjacent to the Council offices at Willow Street is provided free of charge for Elected Members to use while on Council business.

5.7.2 An authorised sticker must be displayed on the front windscreen and the vehicle registration number be provided to Democracy Services.

5.8 Receipt of Gifts

5.8.1 Gifts over the value of \$100.00 which have been presented to an Elected Member in the course of their duties and which are retained by an Elected Member personally must be recorded in the Elected Members' gift register.

5.9 Exceptions

5.9.1 There may be exceptional circumstances, or disputes, regarding Elected Members expenses and resources which need to be dealt with on a case by case basis. Such cases will be dealt with by the Mayor and Chief Executive, and any exceptions be reported back to Council. If the case concerns the Mayor, the case will be dealt with by the Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive.

6. RELEVANT DELEGATIONS

6.1 The Chief Executive has delegated authority to implement this policy and to sub delegate their authority.

6.2 All claims made under this policy are to be made using the appropriate form and authorised by the Mayor and Chief Executive for the Manager: Democracy Services to administer.

6.3 All claims made under this policy by the Mayor are to be made using the appropriate form and authorised by the Deputy Mayor and one other elected member for the Manager: Democracy Services to administer.

7. REFERENCES AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION

7.1 The following are the relevant references and legislation:

- The most current Local Government Elected Members (Certain Local Authorities) Determination.
- Local Government Act 2002, Schedule 7, Section 6

- Controlling Sensitive Expenditure – Guidelines for Public Entities (Controller And Auditor General).

DRAFT