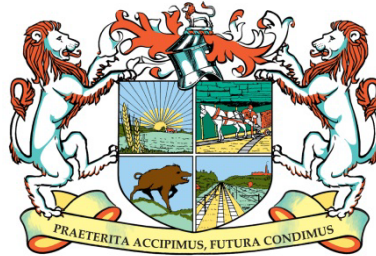


# **FERRYHILL TOWN COUNCIL**



## **POLICY**

### **Members Allowance Scheme**

## **Table of Contents**

1. Introduction
2. Members' Allowance Scheme
3. Mayor's Allowance and Deputy Mayor's Expenses
4. Claims and Payments
5. Approved Duties
6. Attendance Allowance
7. Travelling Costs
8. Travel By Rail
9. Travel by Car as an Alternative to Rail
10. Motor Vehicle Insurance
11. Air Travel
12. Overnight Accommodation and Subsistence
13. Subsistence Allowance for Duties Outside of the Region
14. Members Appointed to Represent the Council on Outside Bodies
15. Members Personal Accident and Assault Insurance Cover
16. Withholding of Allowances

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Ferryhill Town Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Government (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 has made the following Council Members' Allowances Scheme.
- 1.2 All Members of the Council are entitled to claim an Attendance Allowance when attending courses and conferences involving an overnight stay and are also entitled to the reimbursement of travelling costs and subsistence allowances in certain circumstances, in accordance with the provisions of this Scheme.

## **2 Members' Allowance Scheme**

- 2.1 The Scheme will be reviewed periodically as part of the policy review process.

## **3 Mayor's Allowance & Deputy Mayor's Expenses**

- 3.1 The Mayor's Allowance budget shall be used by the Mayor to meet the costs associated with carrying out civic duties expected of the post.
- 3.2 The Deputy Mayor's Expenses budget shall be used by the Deputy Mayor to meet the costs associated with carrying out civic duties expected of the post.
- 3.3 The Mayor's Travel Allowance budget is used by the Mayor & Deputy Mayor when attending functions either by taxi or when claiming mileage allowance. Where possible, in order to reduce the impact and the Mayors budgets, the Mayor should try to make arrangements to share a taxi with representatives from a neighbouring Council.

## **4 Claims and Payments**

- 4.1 Prior to submitting a claim for allowances and expenses, Members will be required to complete the Council's Members Personal Details form which requests personal information and bank details, and also a Starter Checklist Form from HMRC, for tax purposes, which declares employment status and / or any Work or Pension Benefits claimed.
- 4.2 Claim forms should be completed and forwarded to the Finance and Administration Manager, so as to be received no later than the 6<sup>th</sup> day of each month. If claims are not received by this date, payment will be made the following month.
- 4.3 Reimbursement of travelling costs and any overnight subsistence allowance will be paid in arrears on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month, or the Friday preceding this date if it should fall on a weekend, which is concurrent with the payment of Council salaries.
- 4.4 All allowances and expenses claims are paid directly into a bank/building society of your choice. There is no facility for cheque payment in relation to allowances and expenses claims.

## 5 Approved Duties

- 5.1 In accordance with the requirements of this scheme, approved duties for the purpose of travelling and subsistence must relate to duties taking place **outside of the Parish boundaries**, and would include:-
- Attendance at any meeting of the Council, a Committee, Sub Committee, Panel, Forum, Working Party or Group, outside of the Parish boundaries;
  - Attendance by Members of the Council, at meetings outside of the Parish boundaries in connection with matters relating to their Committee or Ward;
  - Attendance at training courses, conferences or seminars provided such conferences or seminars discuss matters that relate to the interests of at least some part of the Parish area or some of its inhabitants;
  - Attendance at official meetings of outside organisations by Members appointed to represent the Council on such outside organisations, being organisations for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the Council;
  - Any duty reasonably performed or to be performed, which relates to the interests of at least some part of the Council area or some of its inhabitants, by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor of the Council;
  - Attendance by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees at meetings in connection with the discharge of the functions of the Council.
- 5.2 It is a condition of the payment of travelling costs and overnight subsistence expenses that the duty for which you are paid has been approved by the Town Council before the duty is undertaken. It is not possible to decide, after the event, that reimbursement should be paid.

## 6 Attendance Allowance

- 6.1 Ferryhill Town Council determined that a full basic Councillors Allowance will not be awarded to its Members, having due regard to the fact that the Members consider their positions to be voluntary ones.
- 6.2 However, Members did feel that those Members who attend approved functions, **which involve overnight stays**, should be entitled to claim an Attendance Allowance and this is subject to Income Tax and, where applicable, National Insurance deductions.
- 6.3 The current rate is as follows:

**For any period in excess of 8 hours, the full daily allowance is payable – currently £40.50**

**For any period in excess of 2 hours, half the daily allowance is payable – currently £20.25**

**Each qualifying period commences when a Member leaves home.**

## **7 Travelling Costs**

- 7.1 Travelling costs are reimbursed for journeys undertaken in the performance of official duties **outside of the Parish boundaries**.
- 7.2 The Council's overall policy for travelling allowances is based on the principle that the most cost effective means of travel is adopted, bearing in mind the number of Members travelling, the health and fitness of those Members, the distance and location of the venue and the availability of public transport.
- 7.3 Members are expected to travel by the cheapest form of public transport to venues **Outside of the Region** ie outside the boundaries of the counties of Durham, Tyne and Wear and Cleveland, where it is cheaper than the car allowance.

## **8 Travel By Rail**

- 8.1 Rail tickets should be requested from the Town Hall Office in advance of travel.
- 8.2 Standard Class rail travel is the approved class of travel, although first class rail can sometimes be the cheaper option dependent upon the time of booking.
- 8.3 Tickets can be booked up to 3 months in advance of date of travel and Members should make their requests as far in advance as possible in order to maximise savings.

## **9 Travel by car as an Alternative to Rail**

- 9.1 As a general rule, journeys outside the locality should be undertaken by rail as this is usually the cheapest mode of travel for someone travelling alone.
- 9.2 The ability to get to a particular destination by rail needs to be taken into account. Where the venue for the meeting is some distance from the railway station, the advantages and disadvantages of alternative methods of travel should be considered.
- 9.3 Members are expected to travel by the cheapest form of transport to venues outside of the region, where it is cheaper than the car allowance, however, if they so choose, Members may receive the quoted total travel cost for the whole journey plus 25% and make their own travel arrangements, providing any other Members attending the training course forfeit their travel allowance and travel in the aforesaid car.
- 9.4 If you choose to use your car for travel the amount payable will be made in line with the Council's approved mileage rates, which are aligned to NJC Car Allowance Rates applicable to employees, as follows:

Car Capacity:	451 - 999cc	1100 - 1199cc	1200ccc and above
Rate per mile: first 8,500 miles	46.9 pence	52.2 pence	65.0 pence

The rate specified above may be increased in respect of the carriage of passengers (other Council Members or employees), not exceeding four, to whom a travelling allowance would otherwise be payable, by 5.0p per mile.

- 9.5 The Government currently allows a standard tax allowance of 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles therefore any additional payments above this rate, as shown above, are subject to tax. National Insurance Contributions may also be due, however this would depend on whether the aggregate amount of any allowances paid in the same month reaches the monthly lower earnings limit as set by HMRC.
- 9.6 Members who are state pension age or over are not liable to pay National Insurance contributions provided confirmation is provided of their age in the form of a birth certificate or passport (originals only), which should be sighted by the Finance & Administration Manager.
- 9.7 The Town Council will make an annual return to HMRC on behalf of Members detailing miles travelled and mileage allowance paid. HMRC will amend individual Members' tax codes accordingly, based upon this information. A certificate, known as a P9D or P11D, will be issued to each Member by 6th July of the following tax year, giving details of the amount of taxable mileage allowance paid for any self assessment tax form he/she may be required to complete.
- 9.8 Any expenditure incurred on tolls, ferries or parking fees, including overnight garaging will also be reimbursed, upon receipt of evidence of the charge.
- 9.9 The rate for travel by taxi-cab or cab shall not exceed:
- (a) in the case of urgency or where no public transport is reasonably available, the amount of the actual fare and any reasonable gratuity paid (receipts must be obtained)
  - (b) in any other case, the amount of the fare for travel by appropriate public transport.
- 9.10 The rate of travel by a hired motor vehicle other than a taxi, shall not exceed the rate which would have been applicable had the vehicle belonged to the Member who hired it.

## **10 Motor Vehicle Insurance**

- 10.1 If you are using a car or other privately owned vehicle for a purpose relating to your activities as a Member of the Council, including travelling from home to the Council's offices, you must ensure that your insurance covers business use as well as for the usual social, domestic and pleasure categories.

## 11 Air Travel

- 11.1 The cost of travel by air shall not exceed the cost applicable to travel by appropriate alternative means of transport. Unless in circumstances where the saving in time is so substantial as to justify payment of the fare for travel by air.
- 11.2 However, with the prior approval of the Council, where it is considered that the saving in time is so substantial as to justify payment of the fare for travel by air, there may be paid an amount not exceeding:
- (a) the ordinary fare or any available cheap fare for travel by regular air service, or
  - (b) where no such service is available, or in case of urgency, the fare actually paid by the Member.

## 12 Overnight Accommodation and Subsistence

- 12.1 Where it is considered that an overnight stay is required, then accommodation should be organised in advance by the Town Hall Office.
- 12.2 Accommodation along with Breakfast and Evening meal, if required and not provided at the conference/event, will be booked and paid for in advance. Members should make their requests as far in advance as possible in order to achieve best prices and should you have any special requirements in relation to your booking you should advise the Office at the time of the request.
- 12.3 Reimbursement for any additional meals purchased up to the maximum amounts detailed below i.e. breakfast, lunch, tea or evening meal can be claimed retrospectively (less any meals provided) **on the production of receipts.**

Rates are set out below:

<b>Allowance</b>	<b>Minimum absence from home</b>	<b>Rate £</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	2 hours which must be before 11.00am	6.75
<b>Lunch</b>	2 hours which must be between 12 noon and 2.00pm	9.27
<b>Tea</b>	3 hours which must include 3.00pm to 6.00pm	3.65
<b>Evening Meal</b>	3 hours which must be after 7.00pm	11.48

**NB.** No reimbursement for alcohol purchased will be made – should this be included on your receipt it will be deducted from the amount claimed.

- 12.4 Whilst it is appreciated that most travel is planned and can be organised in

advance there may be exceptional circumstances where Members may need to organise themselves. In such circumstances, retrospective claims for travel or accommodation will be paid when submitted on monthly claim forms and on the production of receipts.

- 12.5 The current rates are laid out below and are intended to cover the costs of accommodation and associated subsistence during a 24 hour period. Receipts must be provided, however any meals provided by the conference/event cannot be claimed.

<b>Overnight Allowance</b>		<b>Rate £</b>
<b>London</b>	Up to a maximum claim on production of receipts	124.76
<b>Outside London</b>	Up to a maximum claim on production of receipts	109.39

### **13 Subsistence Allowance for Duties Outside of the Region**

- 13.1 Subsistence allowance is not payable for duties performed within the boundaries of County Durham (including Darlington).
- 13.2 When carrying out approved duties “Outside of the Region”, for an absence **not involving an absence overnight** from the usual place of residence, Members may claim up to the approved rates as follows, **on production of receipts**:

<b>Allowance</b>	<b>Minimum absence from home</b>	<b>Rate £</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	2 hours which must be before 11.00am	6.75
<b>Lunch</b>	2 hours which must be between 12 noon and 2.00pm	9.27
<b>Tea</b>	3 hours which must include 3.00pm to 6.00pm	3.65
<b>Evening Meal</b>	3 hours which must be after 7.00pm	11.48

**NB.** No reimbursement for alcohol purchased will be made – should this be included on your receipt it will be deducted from the amount claimed.

### **14 Members Appointed to Represent the Council on Outside Bodies**

- 14.1 Members attending meetings of outside organisations, where attendance has been confirmed by Council, i.e. at the Annual Meeting or a later Council Meeting, and the meeting is held outside of the Parish boundary, are entitled to claim travelling expenses from the Council.



- 14.2 However, if the Member is appointed to represent the Council on an outside body where they are entitled to claim Attendance Allowance from those bodies, expenses should be claimed from that body.

## **15 Members Personal Accident and Assault Insurance Cover**

- 15.1 The Council has in place a personal accident and assault insurance policy for its Members, which covers death or bodily injury sustained whilst engaged in the business of the Council.
- 15.2 Cover includes compensation for disablement and loss of, or damage to personal effects such as money, clothing, footwear and other property worn or carried by the Member when they are injured.
- 15.3 Full details of the cover provided by this policy, including the benefits, exclusions, special conditions, etc, may be obtained from the Finance Manager.
- 15.4 If a Member wishes to make a claim they should contact the Finance Manager in order that arrangements can be made for the necessary claim form to be completed.

## **16 Withholding of Allowances**

Where a Member is suspended or partially suspended from his responsibilities or duties as a member of the Town Council in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) or regulations made under that Part, this allowance scheme can be withdrawn from them by resolution of the Council.