

 KAIPARA DISTRICT <small>THE COAST THE HARBOUR</small>	Title of Policy	Elected Member Allowances and Recovery of Expenses Policy		
	Sponsor	General Manager Governance, Strategy and Democracy	Adopted	Council
	Author	Jason Marris	Date adopted	29 August 2019
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1 st Commenced			
1.0	17 March 2016	S Mahoney	Executive Team review
1.1	05 April 2016	S Mahoney	Commissioner Briefing
1.2	19 July 2016	S Mahoney	Revised thresholds
1.3	03 September 2018	J Marris	Review of the policy
1.4	29 August 2019	J Marris	Inclusion of child care allowance
1.5	11 Oct. 2021	G Dawson	Clarification of reasonable expense in relation to Determination maximum amounts

1 Purpose

This Policy identifies Elected Member allowances and entitlements available as a result of undertaking Council business and explains the approval process for reimbursement of expenses.

2 Overarching Principles

The Office of the Controller and Auditor-General good practice guide “Controlling sensitive expenditure: Guidelines for public entities” provides guiding principles. Expenditure should be subject to standards of probity and financial prudence that are to be expected of a public entity and able to withstand public scrutiny, both perceived and actual.

Elected Members may incur expenses while on Council business, for which reimbursement is possible. This reimbursement and the use of Council--supplied resources apply only to Elected Members personally and only while acting in an official capacity as Elected Members.

To be reimbursable, expenses must:

- (a) have a justifiable Council-related business purpose
- (b) be moderate and reasonable having regard to the circumstances and be appropriate in all respects. That is, being prudent use of ratepayers’ money under public scrutiny
- (c) be actual and justified by an original tax receipt (depending on the claim)
- (d) be on the appropriate Kaipara District Council claim form, signed as true and correct
- (e) be approved by the relevant authoriser
- (f) be within relevant budget provisions
- (g) be consistent with the rules of this Policy and/or the relevant Remuneration Authority Local Government Members Determination.

3 Definitions

“Actual” means as evidenced by the original receipt attached to the claim form.

“Reasonable” means that it is within the amount specified by this Policy, as deemed reasonable by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Chief Executive, or as determined by the relevant Remuneration Authority Local Government Members Determination.

“Council business” includes: formal Council meetings, Committee meetings, briefings, workshops, seminars, statutory hearings, training courses, site visits, meetings with staff, meetings with community groups and meetings with members of the public. It does not include events where the primary focus is on social activity.

4 Allowances and Expenses

4.1 Communications Allowance

Equipment

Council provides a laptop (or equivalent) to all Elected Members for Council business. The cost of the devices and support are met by Council. Personal devices are not supported.

Council does not provide mobile phones or printers. All Elected Members are entitled to claim for the use of a personal multi-functional or other printer, and for the personal use of a mobile phone, if used for Council business, in accordance with the limits set out in the Local Government Members Determination.

Council will provide ICT consumables up to the value set out in the Local Government Members Determination.

Services

All Elected Members are entitled to claim for the use of a personal internet service if used for Council business, in accordance with the limits set out in the Local Government Members Determination.

All Elected Members are entitled to claim for the use of a personal mobile phone either:

- (a) An annual allowance covering telephone calls/data in accordance with the limits set out in the Local Government Members Determination; or
- (b) Reimbursement of actual costs of telephone calls/data made on Council business upon production of the relevant telephone records and receipts.

4.2 Travel Expenses

All Elected Members are entitled to payment of actual and reasonable registration, travel, accommodation, meal and related incidental expenses (including travel insurance) incurred when travelling on Council business.

Council will not reimburse purchases from hotel mini-bars, alcohol purchases and charges for in-room video or cable movies.

All travel and accommodation arrangements for Elected Members are to be made by Council staff with Council's preferred travel agents, at the most economic cost available (when possible) at the time of booking, unless all travel costs are being met privately or by an outside party.

4.3 Travel Time

Travel time allowance is payable in accordance with the payment limits set out in the Local Government Members Determination for each hour of eligible travel time after the first hour of eligible travel time travelled in a day.

Travel by a member is eligible for the allowance, if it is time spent travelling:

- (a) on local authority business
- (b) by the quickest form of transport that is reasonable in the circumstances
- (c) by the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances; and
- (d) for travel within the Kaipara District Council boundaries only

This allowance is not payable to the Mayor.

4.4 Childcare Allowance

Childcare allowance is payable in accordance with the payment limits set out in the Local Government Members Determination. It is paid as a contribution towards expenses incurred by the member for childcare provided while the member is engaged on local authority business.

A member is eligible to be paid a childcare allowance in respect of childcare provided for a child only if:

- a) the member is a parent or guardian of the child, or is a person who usually has responsibility for the day-to-day care of the child (other than on a temporary basis); and
- b) the child is aged under 14 years of age; and
- c) the childcare is provided by a person who:
 - i. is not a family member of the member; and
 - ii. does not ordinarily reside with the member; and
- d) the member provides evidence satisfactory to the local authority of the amount paid for childcare.

Family member of the member means:

- a spouse, civil union partner, or de facto partner;
- a relative, that is, another person connected with the member within 2 degrees of a relationship, whether by blood relationship or by adoption.

4.5 Vehicle Mileage

Council will reimburse mileage for an Elected Member in respect of eligible travel in accordance with the limits set out in the Local Government Members Determination.

An Elected Member's travel is eligible for the allowance:

- (a) If it occurs on a day when the Elected Member is not provided with a motor vehicle by the local authority; and
- (b) If the Elected Member is travelling:
 - in a private vehicle; and
 - on local authority business; and
 - by the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances; and
 - for mileage within the Kaipara District Council boundaries only, except for meetings outside of the district which Elected Members have been requested or approved to attend.

4.6 Mayoral Vehicle

Council will provide a vehicle for the use of the Mayor, if he/she chooses the option within four months of the election, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Members Determination, and if provided for within Council budgets.

If a mayoral vehicle is selected, the Mayor may choose between full, partial or restricted private use and mileage cannot be claimed. Salary sacrifice will apply in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Members Determination.

4.7 Hearings Fees

Elected Members who act as a Chair or a Member of a qualifying hearing outlined in this section are entitled to be paid a hearing fee per hour of hearing time, as set out in the Local Government Members Determination.

Qualifying hearings for which Elected Members may be paid are:

- (a) a hearing arising from a resource consent application made under section 88 of the RMA; or
- (b) a meeting for determining a resource consent application without a formal hearing; or
- (c) a hearing arising from a notice of requirement (including one initiated by the local authority); or
- (d) a pre-hearing meeting held under section 99 of the RMA in relation to a hearing referred to in paragraph (a) or (c); or
- (e) a hearing as part of the process of the preparation, change, variation, or review of Council's district plan; or
- (f) a mediation hearing in the Environment Court as part of an appeal from a decision of a local authority; or
- (g) a hearing on an objection against a charge fixed by a local authority under section 36 of the RMA.

Hearing time is defined as:

- (a) conducting a hearing;
- (b) in formal deliberations to decide the outcome of a hearing;
- (c) participating in an official group site inspection related to a hearing;
- (d) determining a resource consent application where a formal hearing does not take place;
- (e) up to a maximum of the aggregate of the time referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b), preparing for a hearing and participating in any inspection of a site for the purposes of a hearing (other than an official group site inspection under paragraph (c))
- (f) writing a decision arising from a hearing or communicating for the purpose of the written decision.

4.8 General Expenses

Occasionally, Elected Members may incur costs for items relating to community events such as payment of koha, or purchasing a wreath for attendance at a commemorative event. Reimbursement of such expenditure should be previously approved by the appropriate approvers listed in this Policy.

5 Approvers of Claims

The authorised approvers of claims are as follows:

Purpose	Elected Member	Approver
General claim	Councillor	Mayor
General claim	Mayor	Deputy Mayor
Domestic travel	Councillor	Pre-approved by Mayor
	Mayor	Pre-approved by Deputy Mayor
International travel	Elected Member	Pre-approved by Council

6 Claiming Expenses

All reimbursements made to Elected Members will be made through the Council payroll system. To ensure currency, Elected Members will present all claims for approval each month, and prior to 30 June for that financial year, so that costs fall in the appropriate financial year.

Transparency and accountability are important principles when managing claims. Council will publish all Elected Member expenses on its website every quarter.