

# **The Constitution of South Norfolk Council**

## **PART 6**

### **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES AND APPROVED DUTIES**

## PART 6 - Members' Allowances & Approved Duties

### 1. Basic Allowance

- 1.1 A basic allowance per annum is automatically paid on a monthly basis to all members. For 2011/12 this is £4,333. This is deemed to include incidental expenses such as heating, lighting, telephone, stationery and postage. No form of claim is required from the member. Co-opted members of Standards Committee and Accounts and Audit Committee are entitled to a basic allowance of £565.
- 1.2 At its meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> April 2011, Cabinet decided that all members would receive £12.50 per month or £150.00 per year as a contribution to their broadband provision. From 6 May 2011, this arrangement replaces all current landline and broadband connectivity arrangements. The members of the Independent Remuneration Panel have approved this change.
- 1.3 Members on income related benefits are entitled instead to claim, by way of set off against entitlement to basic allowance, such expenses as are wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred (to be evidenced) in pursuance of their duties as District Councillors with a cut off at that level regardless of excess expenditure nevertheless incurred.

### 2. Special Responsibility Allowance

- 2.1 In addition to the basic allowance a further payment, or Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) is paid to members exercising special responsibilities where each payment reflects the level of responsibility. These are paid monthly. No form of claim is required from the member.
- 2.2 Special Responsibility Allowances will be paid as follows:

<b>Municipal Year 2011/12</b>	<b>£</b>
Chairman of the Council	4625
Vice Chairman of the Council	925
Leader of Council	9250
Cabinet member	4625
Leader of the main opposition group	2313
<b>COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN</b>	
Scrutiny	3700
Vice Chairman of Scrutiny Committee	925
Planning	4625
Vice Chairman of Planning	2313
Licensing, Appeals and Complaints	2313
Standards	1156
Accounts, Audit and Governance	2313
Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committees	1156
Neighbourhood Boards	1156

Local Planning Steering Group	925
Neighbourhood Grants Panel	694

- 2.3 Where any member is entitled to be paid more than one SRA, they should be paid the highest of these SRAs, plus any additional SRAs to which they are entitled, subject to the total sum payable not exceeding 90% of the basic allowance.

### 3. Carers' Costs

- 3.1 The Council will reimburse the costs of care for young children and other dependents if a councillor has inescapable domestic responsibilities. The period covered will be in line with the total absence for approved duties including travelling time each way. A receipt signed by the carer is required. Members are also entitled to claim in respect of up to a maximum of 8 hours per week or 2 meetings per week, whichever is the lesser for council business that relates to their work as a District councillor both in their parishes or on District Council business. This allowance should not be generally payable to members of the Councillor's family, but in exceptional circumstances there may be no alternative, and in such cases, it is delegated to the Monitoring Officer to decide if it is reasonable or not.
- 3.2 The maximum allowance is £5 per hour.

### 4. Travelling Allowance

- 4.1 A member may use a car if such use results in substantial saving of time, is in the interests of the Council, or is otherwise reasonable:

<b>Rates applicable in 2011/12 (from April 6<sup>th</sup> 2011)</b>	
Motor car	45p per mile - plus 5.0p per mile for the first passenger and 2.0p per mile for each of the next 3 passengers.
Motor-cycle	24p per mile
Cycling	20p per mile

- 4.2 **Members are advised that, as a general rule, mileage claims should be made on the basis of a 'nearest available route' between start and finish of each journey for attendance at any approved duty.** Travel should normally be claimed from the members' home address, but if for unavoidable reason this should not be possible, then the claim for mileage should only be for any additional miles incurred by virtue of a different starting place. Claims should be accompanied by relevant VAT receipts for fuel purchased.
- 4.3 For travel by public transport, all members are entitled to travel first class but it is hoped that, in most cases, standard class will be used. In all cases, advantage should be taken of any facilities for reduced fares which may be available. Members are advised to enquire of the differing fares and train times available, especially for meetings in London.

## 5. Subsistence Allowance

### 5.1 Day Subsistence Allowance

These allowances are paid at the same rate as for officers. For 2011/12 the rates are:

<b>BREAKFAST</b> (more than 4 hours away from normal place of residence before 11 am.)	£6.88
<b>LUNCH</b> (more than 4 hours away from normal place of residence including the lunch-time between 12 noon and 2 pm.)	£9.50
<b>TEA</b> (more than 4 hours away from normal place of residence including the period 3 pm. to 6 pm.)	£3.76
<b>EVENING MEAL</b> (more than 4 hours away from normal place of residence ending after 7 pm.)	£11.77

### 5.2 Overnight Subsistence Allowance

Absence overnight	£88.02
For London and the Conference of the LGA	£100.39

#### Notes:

- (a) These sums are maxima and amounts claimed should have actually been spent. The declaration on the claim form emphasises this point.
- (b) Accommodation at conferences etc is often booked by an officer and paid directly by the Council and the above limits are to apply. Officers will consult members before the arrangements are made.
- (c) If you need to book accommodation yourself, the above limits apply and must cover all expenses in any 24 hour period.
- (d) When claiming day and overnight subsistence, members must provide receipts to support the amount claimed.
- (e) In calculating the amount of subsistence the length of all approved duties (including travelling time) will be aggregated together each day and treated as if they were one approved duty.

## **6. Approved Duty for Payment of Travelling and Subsistence Allowances**

6.1 Travelling and subsistence allowances at the levels set out in Sections 4 and 5 from time to time agreed by the authority will, except when a body to which the Council makes appointments or nominations agrees to make its own payment direct to the member, be paid to Councillors undertaking the following appointed duties:

6.1.1 Attending a meeting of

- (a) the Council;
- (b) the Cabinet\*;
- (c) a committee of the Cabinet\*;
- (d) a meeting of a committee or sub-committee, Panel or Working Party or Neighbourhood Forum of the authority\*;

\*For this purpose, "meeting" means a formally constituted public meeting of the body concerned.

- (e) a pre agenda meeting with officers as a Cabinet member, chairman or vice chairman of any committee or Overview sub committee;
- (f) a meeting of some other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations;
- (g) a local authority association of which the authority is a member;
- (h) a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations;
- (i) Cabinet as a representative of a minority group;
- (j) Scrutiny Committee as a Cabinet member for items called in from a Cabinet decision;
- (k) Cabinet, a Committee or sub committee to raise any item on the agenda as a non-member.
- (l) which has both been authorised by the authority, a committee, or sub-committee of the authority or a joint committee of the authority and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited (if the authority is divided into several political groups) or to which two or more councillors have been invited (if the authority is not divided into political groups);

6.1.2 Attending any meeting with and or initiated by:

- (a) The Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Executive;
- (b) A Director;
- (c) The Monitoring Officer or the Section 151 Officer;
- (d) The Solicitor to the Council;
- (e) The Head of Internal Audit;
- (f) The Scrutiny Officer;
- (g) The Development Control Manager; or an Area Planning Officer
- (h) The Economic Development Manager.

### 6.1.3 Undertaking duties:

- (a) on behalf of the authority in pursuance of any standing order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened;
- (b) on behalf of the authority in connection 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;
- (c) approved by a Director in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

6.1.4 Members of the Council who are not on the Cabinet can claim up to two visits a month to South Norfolk House to undertake Council business.

6.1.5 Up to 12 ward-business-related return journeys to meetings to or within their ward each month.

6.1.6 Expenses incurred in participating in official duties undertaken by the Chairman or Vice Chairman and reported to Council shall, unless Council specifically disapproves, be reimbursed at the rates set out in Part 6 of this constitution.

## 6.2 Undertaking Duties for the Local Government Association (LGA)

6.2.1 The application of the sections on attendance allowance, travelling and subsistence for meetings of the LGA means that any member appointed to an executive panel, or task group of the LGA may claim the allowance fixed by the LGA. The claim for allowance should be made to South Norfolk Council; it will then be reclaimed from the LGA on a quarterly basis. Travelling and subsistence allowances can be claimed from South Norfolk in accordance with the Council's scheme. Any member involved in any of these activities should speak to the Monitoring Officer to ensure the correct allowances are claimed;

## 7. Renunciation

7.1 A Councillor may forego all or any part of his/her allowances under this scheme by giving notice to that effect to the Monitoring Officer.

## 8. Part year entitlements

8.1 On basic or special responsibility allowances where entitlements are affected by changes in membership or changes in responsibilities during the year, the entitlement is calculated by taking the proportion of days entitlement to a full year. In attendance and other allowances the sum payable is that in force on the day the duty was undertaken.

## 9. General

9.1 The basic and special responsibility allowances are paid in the current month. Travelling, conference and other expenses are paid in arrears.

9.2 Members are reminded of the requirement to submit their claims by the fifth working day each month so that payment can be made to their bank/building society no later than 25th of the month.

- 9.3 If any member is in doubt about entitlement to any item, the Payroll Manager should be consulted prior to submitting a claim.
- 9.4 Whenever a member appointed to a conference or course is unable to attend, the Customer and Democracy Manager must be notified of the substitute member before he/she attends the conference or course.
- 9.5 Members must take full responsibility for the accuracy of claims made and sign declarations to that effect.
- 10. Withholding allowances**
10. In certain circumstances, the council will use its powers to withhold or recover allowances from members

**If you have any queries or questions or want advice on any particular points or issues, contact the Monitoring Officer.**

