

RANGITĪKEI DISTRICT COUNCIL

ELECTED MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES AND RECOVERY OF EXPENSES POLICY

Policy on elected members' allowances and recovery of expenses

APPLICABLE FROM 16 OCTOBER 2025

INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out rules on the claiming of expenses by elected members and the resources that will be available to them during their term of office.

Contact person for queries:

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This Policy forms part of the Governance Documents for Elected Members. It contains provisions around sensitive expenditure and conflicts of interest and is updated when changes are advised by the Remuneration Authority and/or the Local Government Determinations are issued. The amounts payable as an allowance in this policy shall be adjusted automatically if changes are made by the Remuneration Authority.

AUTHENTICATION OF EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES

From time to time elected members incur expenses on the Council's behalf, which need to be reimbursed. This reimbursement and the use of Council supplied resources apply only to elected members personally, and only while they are acting in their official capacity as elected members.

Costs for expenses must have a justifiable business purpose, be moderate and conservative having regard to the circumstances, and be appropriate in all respects.

The process for reimbursement of claims includes the following principles:

- Any expenses to be reimbursed must be on an actual and reasonable basis and in line with Council policy.
- Expense claims are approved by the Chief Executive or the Group Manager – Strategy, Community & Democracy, and full original receipts are required.
- Cost reimbursements will be made via the payroll system.

In the case of one-off expenditure such as travel to conferences, the process and prior approvals required are detailed in this policy.

In the case of vehicle mileage, travel time and communications, all limits set in this document do not exceed the Remuneration Authority's Determination.

To satisfy the requirements of the Council's auditors, there will be periodic sampling of expense claims and allowances paid to elected members.

No allowances are paid without deduction of withholding tax.

All expenditure that falls under this policy is approved on the condition that it can be met within relevant budget provisions.

Elected Members should also follow relevant Council policies related to sensitive expenditure. It is noted that travel for partners is unable to be booked through Council (regardless of subsequent reimbursement).

DEFINITIONS

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

Elected Member means a member of the Council elected under the Local Electoral Act 2001.

Reasonable means that it is within the amount specified by this policy or as deemed reasonable by the Mayor and/or Chief Executive.

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

Remuneration Authority is an independent body established by the Remuneration Authority Act 1977, with responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2002 to determine remuneration and expense/allowance rules for local authority members.

Attendance at conferences, courses, seminars and training (Elected Members)

Elected member	Expense/Allowance	Description
Councillors	Conferences, courses, seminars and training	<p>The conference, course, seminar or training event must contribute to the Councillor’s ability to carry out council business.</p> <p>Attendance at these events when held in New Zealand must be approved by the Mayor (or the Deputy Mayor).</p> <p>Attendance at these events when held overseas must be approved by the Council.</p>
Community Board members	Conferences, courses, seminars and training	<p>Attendance at conferences, courses, seminars and training programmes requires the prior approval of the relevant Community Board and Mayor.</p> <p>Exceptions to approval of the Community Board being required are when a Board member is to be the Council’s representative at a conference or event; in such cases the approval of the Council is required.</p>

Expenses on Council Business (Elected Members)

Expense/Allowance	Description
Travel and attendance at conferences / seminars /training programmes	<p>All elected members are entitled to payment of actual and reasonable registration, travel, accommodation, meal and related incidental expenses (including travel insurance) incurred in attendance at these events, held both within New Zealand and overseas, subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) related expenditure being accommodated within existing budgets, and, b) the appropriate approvals as outlined in this policy <p>and excluding reimbursement for purchases from hotel mini-bars and charges for in-room video or cable movies.</p> <p>All travel and accommodation arrangements for elected members are to be made by the Executive Officer with the 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.</p>
Taxis / ride share	<p>Taxis / ride share may be used for Council business, instead of private vehicles or public transport, for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) safety/security reasons, and b) when travelling outside the Rangitikei if a taxi is the most appropriate form of transport. <p>Taxis / ride share may not be used if significant travel distances mean that use of a taxi is not the most cost effective option. Rental cars booked by the Executive Officer should be considered as an option in such circumstances.</p> <p>Costs paid for directly by the individual for unanticipated travel within New Zealand or for international travel will be reimbursed on presentation of actual receipts.</p>
Rental Cars	<p>Rental cars may be used when attending meetings or conferences in other centres, where this is the most cost-effective travel option.</p>
Domestic air travel	<p>All elected members are entitled to utilise domestic air travel for Council related travel, generally where travel by air is the most cost effective travel option.</p>
International air travel	<p>As a general policy all elected member international air travel is by way of economy class, where all or part of the costs of the fares are to be met by the Council. The approval by the Mayor (or Chief Executive for the Mayor) is required for exceptions, e.g. where Premium Economy or the equivalent air travel is desirable for health or other compelling reasons.</p>
Private accommodation provided by friends/ relatives	<p>Payment of \$75 per night when staying in private accommodation, to cover accommodation, breakfast and dinner.</p> <p>It is intended that at least a portion of this allowance is paid to the accommodation provider.</p>
Exceptional circumstances for Council related meetings	<p>The Executive Officer may arrange overnight accommodation for elected members when travel or business requirements do not allow for the return on the same day, e.g. if it is unreasonable for an elected member to travel to their home after a late meeting.</p>
Entertainment and hospitality	<p>Reimbursement of costs incurred while hosting official visitors to the Council, or while travelling on Council business. These costs can cover a range of items including, but not limited to, tea/coffee, and catering including alcohol with meals.</p>

Communication Allowances (Elected Members)

Elected Member	Expense / Allowance	Description																					
Mayor, Councillors	Communications Allowance	<p>Council will provide elected members with a tablet device for Council business.</p> <p>In addition, members will be eligible for the maximum of the eligible allowances annually:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Particular</th> <th>Allowance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Printer</td> <td>\$50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mobile phone (use of mobile)</td> <td>\$200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mobile phone (plan)</td> <td>\$500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ICT consumables</td> <td>\$200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Internet service</td> <td>\$800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>\$1,750</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Note: communications expenses will be pro-rated if the member is not a member for the whole of the determination term.</i></p>	Particular	Allowance	Printer	\$50	Mobile phone (use of mobile)	\$200	Mobile phone (plan)	\$500	ICT consumables	\$200	Internet service	\$800	Total	\$1,750							
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Community Board members	Communications Allowance	<p>Members will be provided with a laptop and Council email address to use for Council business.</p> <p>The Chair will be eligible for 50% of the maximum allowances annually and Board Members 25% of the maximum allowances annually:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Particular</th> <th>Allowance (Board Chair)</th> <th>Allowance (Board Members)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Printer</td> <td>\$25</td> <td>\$12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mobile phone (use of mobile)</td> <td>\$100</td> <td>\$50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mobile phone (plan)</td> <td>\$250</td> <td>\$125</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ICT consumables</td> <td>\$100</td> <td>\$50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Internet service</td> <td>\$400</td> <td>\$200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>\$875</td> <td>\$437.50</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Note: communications expenses will be pro-rated if the member is not a member for the whole of the determination term.</i></p>	Particular	Allowance (Board Chair)	Allowance (Board Members)	Printer	\$25	\$12.50	Mobile phone (use of mobile)	\$100	\$50	Mobile phone (plan)	\$250	\$125	ICT consumables	\$100	\$50	Internet service	\$400	\$200	Total	\$875	\$437.50
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Miscellaneous Expenses and Allowances (Elected Members)

Expense / Allowance	Description
General community related expenses	<p>From time to time elected members may have unforeseen costs arise for items relating to community events, e.g. payment of koha, or purchasing a wreath for attendance at a commemorative event. Reimbursement of such expenditure should be previously approved by the Executive Officer or Mayor. The items should be appropriate to the occasion and expenditure should be moderate and conservative.</p>
Vehicle mileage	<p>Vehicle mileage will be paid for all travel on Council business.</p> <p>Mileage will be paid to eligible members on receipt of a completed and signed mileage claim, and approved by the Governance Advisor.</p> <p>A member's travel is eligible for the allowance if:</p> <p>The member is travelling:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. in their own private vehicle; and ii. on local authority business; and iii. by the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances. <p>However, if a member of a local authority travels from a place where the member permanently or temporarily resides that is outside the local authority area to the local authority area on local authority business, the member is only eligible for a vehicle-kilometre allowance for eligible travel after the member crosses the boundary of the local authority area.</p> <p>Note: the restriction above does not apply to the payment of a vehicle-kilometre allowance by a local authority to a member who permanently or temporarily resides outside the local authority area if the member's primary place of residence was outside the local authority area at the time of the local election, or an exceptional circumstance beyond the member's control requires them to move outside the local authority area.</p> <p>Mileage will be paid at the maximum rate per kilometre as set out in the current Remuneration Authority Determination.</p> <p>For clarity, where multiple elected members are carpooling, only the vehicle owner is entitled to claim mileage.</p>
Childcare allowance	<p>Payment of a contribution towards expenses incurred by an elected member for childcare provided while the member is engaged on local authority business if;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the member is a parent/guardian of the child or the 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 less than 14 years old, and c) the childcare is provided by a person who is not a family member of the member and does not ordinarily reside with the member, and d) the member provides evidence satisfactory to the local authority of the amount paid for childcare, and e) the payment to the member does not exceed \$7,500 per child during the determination term (year).

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Home security system allowance	<p>Based on a security threat and risk assessment authorised by the local authority, a local authority may reimburse the expenses of having a security system installed and monitored at a member's primary place of residence within the local authority area once per triennium up to a maximum of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) \$4,500 for purchasing and installing the system; and b) \$1,000 in any year for monitoring, call-outs, and repairs. <p>A member may also be reimbursed for additional expenses for the provision of supplementary security measures at their primary place of residence within the local authority area if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the security threat and risk assessment recommends that those supplementary security measures be provided to the member; and b) the Remuneration Authority, on application from the local authority, approves reimbursement of the additional expenses arising from the provision of those supplementary security measures.

Additional Expenses and Allowances for the Mayor

Expense/Allowance	Description
Vehicle	The Mayor may be provided with a vehicle in accordance with the current Determination of the Remuneration Authority. A deduction will be made from their salary as determined by the Remuneration Authority. The Mayor will not be able to claim for vehicle mileage if provided with a vehicle.
Vehicle mileage	When a vehicle is not provided, the Mayor is entitled to the maximum vehicle mileage permitted in the current Remuneration Authority's Determination.
Travel and conferences, courses and seminars	<p>The approval of the Chief Executive is required for costs associated with travel within New Zealand for council business, attendance at conferences/courses/training events/seminars, other purposes associated with the position of Mayor.</p> <p>The prior approval of the Council is required for all international travel, where costs or partial costs are paid for by Council funds.</p> <p>Where the Mayor or the Mayor's authorised representative is accompanied by his/her partner on international travel, the Council may meet the cost of their travel, accommodation and incidental costs. The Council will only authorise such expenditure where the partner's involvement directly contributes to a clear business purpose.</p>
Car parking	Use of an assigned carpark at the Council's Marton Office at 46 High Street.
Credit Card	<p>The Mayor may hold a purchasing card to pay directly for any entertainment or hospitality expenses incurred while carrying out Council business.</p> <p>If such a card is issued, full receipts and details of the names of parties entertained and reasons for the entertainment are to be provided.</p> <p>All expenditure on this card is authorised by the Deputy Chief Executive in conjunction with the Group Manager – Corporate Services.</p>