

To: Corporate, Policy and Resources Committee

Special Responsibility Allowances

Date 19/04/2016

For Decision

1.0 Reporting to Corporate, Policy and Resources Committee

Linkage to Corporate Plan	
Strategic Priority	Governance
Objective	Update of Scheme of Allowances
Lead Officer	David Wright
Cost: (If applicable)	£62,460

1.1 Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has established a scheme of allowances payable to Members for the current period. The scheme provides for the payment of allowances to Councillors on the basis that:

- 1 – The maximum level of basic allowance as determined by the Department of the Environment (DoE) is paid
- 2 – The maximum level of carers allowances as determined by the DoE are paid
- 3 – The maximum level of mileage rates as determined by the DoE are paid
- 4 – Councillors' payments are made on the third last banking day of each month

At the meeting of this committee on 19th January 2016 it was accepted on the recommendation of a sub-committee to re-consider the level and recipients of Special Responsibility Allowance.

1.2 Detail

The proposed amendments to the scheme of allowances are summarised as follows:

- Increase Mayor's allowance to £12,000 p.a.
- Increase Dep. Mayor's allowance to £5,000 p.a.
- Remove committee vice-chairs from the scheme of allowances
- Include members of Planning committee each receiving £1,200 p.a.

Since members can only receive one allocation it was agreed that in the event of a conflict the higher amount would be paid.

In addition to the amendments approved in January 2016 the introduction of the new living wage with effect from 1 April 2016 has necessitated the uplifting of the dependant carer's allowance to £7.20 per hour as set out in the Department of the Environment (DoE) circular LG 10/2016, this change being included in the new scheme of allowance for the year ending 31 March 2017 which is attached as an appendix.

1.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that the scheme of allowances be approved for the 2016/2017 year.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

Scheme of allowances payable to Councillors

This scheme is made under the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012. The scheme has been prepared in accordance with the Department of the Environment's guidance on Councillor' allowances, issued in March 2016.

1. In this scheme:

- approved duties are as listed in Schedule 1, as provided for in the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012;
- Department means the Department of the Environment;
- Guidance means the Department of the Environment's guidance on Councillors' allowances, issued in March 2016; and
- Regulations means the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012.

2. Basic Allowance

- 2.1 Subject to sub-paragraph 2.3 and paragraph 6 below, for the year ending on 31 March 2017, an annual basic allowance of £14,200 shall be paid to each member.
- 2.2 Not more than one basic allowance is payable to any councillor
- 2.3 No payment of basic allowance is made to those councillors who are also MLAs, MPs, members of the House of Lords or MEPs.

3. Mayor's, Deputy Mayor's and Special Responsibility Allowance

- 3.1 For the year ending 31 March 2017, Mayor's, Deputy Mayor's and special responsibility allowances shall be paid to councillors as follows:

Mayor	£12,000
Deputy Mayor	£5,000
Partnership Panel Representative	£1,000
Committee Chair (x4)	£3,000
Audit Committee Chair	£750
Planning Committee	£1,200

- 3.2 Subject to paragraph 3.4 and paragraph 6 below, the amount of each such allowance shall be the amount specified in paragraph 3.1. Regulation 5 of the 2012 Regulations stipulates that a special responsibility allowance must not be paid to more than 50% of the councillors in the Council.

3.3 Not more than one special responsibility allowance is payable to any councillor, in the event of a Councillor qualifying for more than one allocation the higher amount shall be paid.

3.4 No payment of special responsibility allowance is made to those councillors who are also MLAs, MPs, members of the House of Lords or MEPs.

4. Dependants' Carer's Allowance

4.1 Councillors are entitled to claim a dependants' carer's allowance towards reimbursement of actual reasonable costs necessarily incurred in providing care for a dependant while carrying out an approved duty.

4.2 A dependant lives with a claimant and is defined as:

- a child under 16 years old;
- a child 16 years old or more, where there is medical/social work evidence that full-time care is required;
- an adult with a recognised physical/mental disability where there is medical/social work evidence that full-time care is required; or
- an elderly relative requiring full-time care.

4.3 A dependants' carer's allowance shall be payable based upon actual receipted costs. Payments shall be at the rates given in paragraph 4.4, which are subject to the limits determined by the Department.

4.4 For the year ending 31 March 2017, the hourly rate of dependants' carer's allowance for standard care shall be £7.20*, and for specialised care shall be £14.40. The monthly maximum for standard care paid to individual councillors shall be £375, and the monthly maximum for specialised care shall be £749.

* based on national living wage for age 25+

5. Travel and Subsistence Allowances

5.1 A councillor or committee member is entitled to claim travel and subsistence allowances where expenditure on travelling and subsistence has been necessarily incurred in connection with an approved duty as specified in Schedule 1.

5.2 The rates of travel allowance for travel by public transport shall not exceed the actual amount paid. Where reasonably available, the cheapest available form of public transport should be used, except in urgent cases.

5.3 The rates of travel allowance for travel by private vehicle shall be the amounts shown below, which are within the maxima determined by the Department.

Type of Vehicle	Rate
A pedal cycle	20.0p per mile
A solo motor cycle of cylinder capacity not exceeding 149cc	11.4p per mile
A solo motor cycle of cylinder capacity exceeding 149cc but not exceeding 499cc	16.5p per mile
A solo motor cycle of cylinder capacity exceeding 499cc or a motor cycle with a side car	22.0p per mile
A motor car or tri-car of cylinder capacity not exceeding 450cc	22.0p per mile
A motor car or tri-car of cylinder capacity exceeding 450cc but not exceeding 999cc	46.0p per mile 13.7p per mile*
A motor car or tri-car of cylinder capacity exceeding 999cc but not exceeding 1,199cc	52.2p per mile 14.4p per mile*
A motor car or tri-car of cylinder capacity exceeding 1,199cc	65.0p per mile 16.4p per mile*

* National Joint Council for Local Government Services – casual user rates after 8,500 miles.

- 5.4 The rates of subsistence shall be the amounts shown below, which are within the maxima determined by the Department.

Period/Meal	Rates (Ex VAT)	
	British Isles £	London £
An absence involving an overnight stay only , away from the normal place of residence	100.70	122.45
Breakfast Allowance (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period before 11am)	11.50	11.50
Lunch Allowance (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 12 noon and 2pm)	13.50	13.50
Tea Allowance (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 3pm and 6pm)	4.70	4.70
Evening Meal Allowance (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period ending after 7pm)	20.95	20.95
Sub-total for meals	50.65	50.65
Total maximum rate (absence of 24 hours)	151.35	173.10

Note: All claims must be supported by appropriate receipts relating to actual expenses incurred.

6. Part-Year Entitlement

- 6.1 This scheme may be revoked and amended at any time.
- 6.2 If an amendment to this scheme is made which affects the payment of a basic allowance or special responsibility allowance in the year in which the amendment is made, then in relation to each of the periods:
- (a) beginning with the year and ending with the day before that day on which the first amendment in that year takes effect; or
 - (b) beginning with the day on which an amendment takes effect and ending with the day before that day on which the next amendment takes effect, (if none) with the year,
- the entitlement to such allowance shall reflect the proportion of the year when entitlement existed.
- 6.3 Where the term of office of a councillor begins or ends other than at the beginning or end of a year, entitlement to a basic allowance shall reflect the proportion of the year when entitlement existed.
- 6.4 Where a councillor has during a part of, but not throughout, a year such special responsibilities as attract entitlement to a special responsibility allowance, that entitlement shall reflect the proportion of the year when entitlement existed.

7. Claims and Payment

- 7.1 Payments regarding basic allowance and special responsibility allowance shall be made in *instalments of one twelfth of the amount specified in this scheme on the third last banking day of each month.*
- 7.2 Claims for dependants' carer's allowance, travelling allowance or subsistence allowance should be made in writing within three months, and should be accompanied by receipts, where appropriate.

SCHEDULE 1

In accordance with Regulations, only the following are specified as the duties in respect of which basic allowance, dependants' carers' allowances, and travel and subsistence allowances are available.

1. attendance at a meeting of the council;
2. attendance at a meeting of a committee of the council;
3. attendance at a meeting of a sub-committee of the council;
4. attendance at a meeting of a joint committee;
5. attendance at a meeting of a sub-committee of a joint committee;
6. attendance at a meeting of a group committee established under the provisions of the Local Government (Employment of Group Building Control Staff) (Northern Ireland) 1994 or the Local Government (Employment of Group Environmental Health Staff) Order (Northern Ireland) 1994; or
7. the doing of anything approved by a council or anything of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the council, or any of its committees or sub-committees, or as the case may be, of the joint committee or any of its sub-committees.

A site visit is now included in the list of approved duties and a site visit is defined as a visit made by a councillor in connection with an application for planning permission:

- which has been referred to a council for consultation under Article 15(a) of the Planning (General Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 1993; or
- at the request of the applicant for that planning permission, or the agent of an applicant, or at the request of an objector to that application.

Regarding Point 7, specific duties approved by Council include:-

- Conferences, Courses and Seminars
- Civic Functions
- Official & Courtesy Visits
- Special Council Meetings
- Attendance at a meeting of a working group/sub-committee of the Council, or other meeting related to the functions of the Council.
- Meetings of all outside bodies to which councillors are appointed, and meetings at which representation is required by councillors as a result of sitting on various groups/committees. Membership of these bodies has been rolled forward until the end of the Council term. Any member not wishing to be on an outside body can be replaced by a party colleague or if the party does not wish to retain the position, an alternative can be nominated at an appropriate Committee meeting of Council.