
ALLOWANCES PAID TO MEMBERS DURING 2023/24

Briefing Note by Clerk to the Council

31 May 2024

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 All Councils must publish information on Councillors' salaries, allowances and expenses paid to Members in respect of the previous financial year in a standard format on their websites by 1 June to meet the publicity requirements of the Local Government (Allowances and Expenses) (Scotland) Regulations 2007. This information also includes any costs for transport or subsistence which have been booked by the Council on behalf of the Councillors. At the same time, information on courses and conferences attended by Councillors is also required to be published.
- 1.2 The Regulations, as amended, specify the levels of salary, allowances and reimbursement of expenses which may be paid to local authority Elected Members. Councillors' salaries were increased by 2.7% from 1 April 2023 in accordance with The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2023 and therefore the annual amount payable to each Councillor increased from £19,571 to £20,099 per annum, unless he or she was entitled to one of the higher amounts payable to the Leader of the Council, the Convener or to Senior Councillors.
- 1.3 The number and designation of Senior Councillors in the Scheme of Remuneration was previously agreed at the meeting of Scottish Borders Council held on 25 May 2017 with subsequent changes agreed at the meetings held on 27 August 2020 and 26 May 2022. Detailed in Appendix 1 to this report is the remuneration and expenses paid to all Councillors from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Detailed in Appendix 2 is Members' attendance at training events, conferences and seminars in 2023/24.
- 1.4 Total remuneration and expenses paid to Members in 2023/24 amounted to £837,875.68, compared with a total of £808,208.56 in 2022/23. Travel expenses totalled £25,345.30 in 2023/24, compared to the 2022/23 figure of £24,960.58. The cost of Telephone and ICT Expenses in 2023/24 amounted to £4,761.47, compared to £4,959.21 in 2022/23. Mobile phone costs are now paid centrally, so it is not possible to identify the cost to individual Councillors. Members can claim a proportion of their home broadband costs rather than the Council providing a business line, and some Members have not made any claim. The overall travel expenses figure is expected to fluctuate year on year as claims are based on actual journeys made; whether claims are up to date; or whether Members have chosen not to claim expenses.
- 1.5 As the format of publication of costs is prescribed, it should be noted that while the end column gives a "Total Salary and Expenses", this is the

amount attributed to each Councillor and not the amount paid directly to each Councillor.

2 TRAINING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

- 2.1 Detailed in Appendix 2 is Members' attendance at training events, conferences and seminars in 2023/24, in the format recommended by the Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee.
- 2.2 Members are also invited to attend a number of online briefing sessions throughout the year. Attendance at these is not included in the training/conference Appendix. Ten sessions were held during 2023/24, with topics that included:

- The Local Development Plan
- National Care Service Update
- Delivering the Council Plan
- Regional Strategic Woodland Creation Project
- Digital Transformation
- Tourism Strategy
- Data & Information Strategy
- Regional Economic Strategies and Plans
- Estates Rationalisation and Decarbonisation
- Regional Land Use Partnership Update

- 2.3 Members also undertake specific/refresher training related to committees e.g. Audit, Planning & Building Standards, etc. on an ongoing basis and this tends to be carried out in-house where there is no direct cost. This is not recorded separately and not therefore included in the appendix. Topics included:

- The Role of External Audit in the Public Sector
- An overview of Statutory Accounts
- An overview of the role of Internal Audit
- Capital Strategy and Treasury Management
- The Council's Procurement Framework

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Background Papers: Members Travel Claims; Invoices

Previous Reference: Briefing Note, 31 May 2023