



**POLICY**

**ON**

**ELECTED MEMBERS'  
ALLOWANCES AND  
RECOVERY OF EXPENSES**

31 May 2016



## POLICY ON ELECTED MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES AND RECOVERY OF EXPENSES

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>POLICY STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>REMUNERATION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>AUTHENTICATION OF EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES BY GROUP OF MEMBERS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>ALL ELECTED MEMBERS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>(MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS)</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Taxis .....	2
Rental Cars.....	2
Travel and attendance at Conferences/ Seminars / Training Programmes .....	2
Domestic Air Travel.....	2
International Air Travel .....	2
Air Points.....	3
Accommodation.....	3
Exceptional Circumstances for Council related meetings.....	3
Private Accommodation provided by friends and/or relatives.....	3
Car Parking .....	3
Communications Allowance .....	3
Stationery and Consumables .....	3
Mileage Allowance .....	3
<b>MAYOR</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Car.....	4
Travel and Conferences, Courses and Seminars .....	4
Airline Club.....	4
Entertainment and Hospitality.....	4
<b>COUNCILLORS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Conferences, Courses, Seminars and Training .....	5
Entertainment and Hospitality.....	5
General Community Related Expenses .....	5

## 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: Michelle Higgie (Executive Assistant)  
Email: michelleh@waitomo.govt.nz  
Phone: 07 878 0800

## POLICY STATEMENTS

This policy covers the Mayor and Elected Members of the Council and for the purpose of reimbursement of expenses and mileage, any Council appointed representative acting on behalf of the Council.

Expenses relating to electioneering purposes will **not** be reimbursed.

## REMUNERATION

The Mayor and Elected Members shall receive remuneration as determined 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 for Councillors are approved by the Mayor and Executive Assistant, and full original receipts are required
- expense claims for the Mayor are approved by the Chief Executive and Executive Assistant, and full original receipts are required
- cost reimbursements will be made via the Council 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 shall not exceed the Remuneration Authority's Determination.

The Council's internal audit work programme includes sampling expense claims and allowances paid to elected members and staff.

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.

## DEFINITIONS

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

**"Council"** shall mean the seven elected members that form the governing body (Council) of the Waitomo District Council.

**"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.

**"Expenses"** means actual and reasonable expenses including but not limited to; accommodation, rental car, air travel, taxis, meals and refreshments, entertainment (hospitality), parking, sundry vehicle costs, alternative travel options and other such costs directly related to the business of WDC.

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

**"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.

**"Waitomo District Council" (WDC)** shall mean the organisation established to administer Council affairs, conduct operations and bring effect to Council policy and strategies.

<b>ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES BY GROUP OF MEMBERS</b>
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Position	Expense/Allowance	Description
<b>All Elected Members</b>  (Mayor and Councillors)	Taxis	<p>Taxis may be used for council business in circumstances where an individual is away from the Waitomo District and where it is deemed to be the most appropriate form of transport. i.e. transport to and from an airport, transport between venues at out of District appointments.</p> <p>Taxis may not be used if significant travel distances mean that use of a taxi is not the most cost effective option.</p> <p>Taxi costs paid for directly by the individual for travel within New Zealand or internationally will be reimbursed upon presentation of a signed Claim Form and actual receipts.</p>
	Rental Cars	<p>Rental cars may be utilised when attending meetings or conferences in other centres, where this is the most cost-effective travel option.</p> <p>Rental car costs paid for directly by the individual for travel within New Zealand or internationally will be reimbursed upon presentation of a signed Claim Form and actual receipts.</p>
	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"> <li>a) related expenditure being accommodated within existing budgets, and</li> <li>b) the appropriate approvals as outlined in this policy</li> </ul> <p>and excluding reimbursement for purchases from hotel mini-bars and charges for in-room video or cable movies.</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.</p> <p>The approval of the Council is required for exceptions, e.g. where Premium Economy or the equivalent air travel is desirable for health or other compelling reasons.</p>

Position	Expense/Allowance	Description
<b>All Elected Members</b> (Mayor and Councillors)	Air Points	No Air Points accumulated while on Council business can be utilised for personal use.
	Accommodation	All travel and accommodation arrangements for Elected Members are to be made by WDC staff, 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.
	Exceptional Circumstances for Council related meetings	Staff 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.
	Private Accommodation provided by friends and/or relatives	Payment of \$50 per night shall be claimable when staying in private accommodation to cover accommodation, breakfast and dinner. It is intended that at least a portion of this allowance is paid to the accommodation provider.
	Car Parking	Reimbursement of car parking costs incurred whilst on council business will be made upon presentation of a signed Claim Form and actual receipts.
	Communications Allowance	<p>The Mayor and Councillors will be provided with a tablet for the purpose of receiving electronic information from WDC, including Council Agendas.</p> <p>Elected members will be paid an annual Communications Allowance at the maximum amount allowable in the current Remuneration Authority Determination. (paid monthly via the Payroll System)</p> <p>This Allowance includes provision for use of personal computer, printer, mobile phone, council-related toll and mobile phone charges and internet connectivity/use.</p> <p>This Allowance <u>does not</u> provide for the use of a tablet where WDC has provided such.</p>
	Stationery and Consumables	Supply of reasonable amounts of paper and printer consumables for council business.
	Mileage Allowance	<p><u>Threshold Distance</u></p> <p>Vehicle mileage will be paid for all travel on Council business that exceeds, in any one day, the threshold distance as provided in the current Remuneration Authority Determination. The threshold distance will be personal to each elected member.</p> <p><u>Mileage Rate</u></p> <p>Mileage will be paid up to the maximum rate per kilometre as provided in the current Remuneration Authority Determination and will be payable upon presentation of a signed Claim Form.</p>
Travel Time Allowance	A travel time allowance will be paid to eligible elected members at the maximum amount as provided in the current Remuneration Authority Determination upon presentation of a signed Claim Form.	

Position	Expense/Allowance	Description
<b>Mayor</b>	Car	In the event the Mayor is provided with a WDC vehicle, that vehicle will also be available for his/her full private use. A deduction will be made from his/her salary as determined by the Remuneration Authority. The Mayor will not be able to claim for vehicle mileage.
	Travel and Conferences, Courses and Seminars	<p>The prior approval of the Chief Executive is required for 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 will meet the cost of their travel, accommodation and incidental costs.</p> <p>The Council will only authorise such expenditure where the partner's involvement directly contributes to a clear business purpose.</p>
	Airline Club	Given frequent travel requirements for the role, payment of an Air New Zealand Koru Club subscription.
	Entertainment and Hospitality	<p>The Mayor holds a WDC Credit Card to pay directly for any entertainment or hospitality expenses incurred while carrying out Council business.</p> <p>All expenditure made on this Credit Card must conform with WDC's Credit Card Policy which includes the requirement to provide full receipts and details of the names of parties entertained and reasons for the entertainment.</p>

Position	Expense/Allowance	Description
<b>Councillors</b>	Conferences, Courses, Seminars and Training	<p>Conference, course, seminar or training events 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 both the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor) and the Chief Executive.</p> <p>Attendance at these events when held overseas must be approved by the full Council.</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> <p>Such costs will be reimbursed upon presentation of a signed Claim Form and actual receipts.</p>
	General Community Related Expenses	<p>From time to time councillors 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.</p> <p>Reimbursement of such expenditure should be previously approved by the Mayor.</p> <p>The items should be appropriate to the occasion and expenditure should be moderate and conservative.</p> <p>Such costs will be reimbursed upon presentation of a signed Claim Form and actual receipts.</p>