

Reimbursement of Expenses and/or Payment of Allowances to Elected Members

Te Utuka Whakahokika, te Utuka Moni Pūkoro rānei ki kā Mema e Kōwhiri ana

1 REIMBURSEMENTS TO ELECTED MEMBERS

This policy outlines the expenses and allowances entitled to elected members, ensuring compliance with the Local Government Act 2002 and the Remuneration Authority's determinations, and promoting transparency and accountability in the use of public funds. It applies to all elected members, including Councillors and Community Board members.

From time to time, elected members incur expenses on Council behalf which need to be reimbursed. Any expenses to be reimbursed must be on an actual and reasonable basis and in line with Council policy. Expenses that could be perceived as personal or unrelated to Council responsibilities should be avoided.

The rules which apply to the supply or cost reimbursement of elected members' communication and associated equipment are attached as Appendix 1 and 2.

Cost reimbursements will be made via the payroll system.

In implementing this policy, it is understood that all efforts will be made by management and elected members to minimise expense claims. For management, this will mean that meetings will be scheduled with a view to minimizing travel requirements, and for elected members it will mean that there is an expectation that vehicles will be shared wherever possible, and the use of Council vehicles or public transport is encouraged.

All expense claims require approval of the Democracy Services Team Leader prior to being processed by Council accounting staff.

Note: all figures quoted in this policy are inclusive of GST.

2 MILEAGE ALLOWANCE

The Council will reimburse elected members for all qualifying mileage incurred whilst on Council business when the elected member is not provided with a motor vehicle by the Council. **Council business** for mileage allowance purposes is defined as attendance at:

- > Formal meetings, informal briefings, working parties called by the Council, Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board, Mayor, Chief Executive or Chair of a standing committee.
- > Conferences or seminar if attendance approved by the Council or Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board.
- > Official meetings of other bodies by the official Council appointee(s) to such bodies (includes appointments made by Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board) such as representation at a Community or Residents' Association meeting.
- > Events where the Mayor (or official delegate) is specifically invited to officiate in a formal capacity.

The policy requires all mileage undertaken by elected members on Council business to be recorded in the appropriate mileage claim form. This will need to be signed off and submitted for payment. Travel will need to be recorded in enough detail to allow the claim to be audited, and as a minimum will require details of the following:

- > Date of travel,
- > Purpose of the travel, e.g. Community Association meeting,
- > Distance travelled,
- > Who approved the travel (if attending a conference, seminar or training).

Reimbursement will be based on the mileage rates and thresholds as approved from time to time by the Remuneration Authority (see *Appendix 1: Remuneration Authority Vehicle Mileage Allowance*).

3 TRAVEL TIME

The Council will reimburse elected members (other than the Mayor) for eligible travel time. Travel time is eligible for reimbursement if the travel is for approved Council business*, undertaken by the quickest form of transport and most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances. The allowance is not available for overseas travel.

- > The travel time allowance as of 3 June 2021 is \$40.00 for each eligible hour of travel time after the first hour of eligible travel time travelled in a day,
- > Up to a maximum of eight (8) hours in a 24-hour period.

If an elected member lives outside of the Council area or ward in which they are elected, travel time will only be eligible:

- > once the elected member has crossed the area or ward boundary, and
- > after the first hour of eligible travel within the Council area.

*For definition of **Council business**, please refer to the description outlined in section 2 of this policy: Mileage Allowance.

4 CHILDCARE ALLOWANCE

The Council will reimburse elected members for all eligible childcare expenses incurred while the member is engaged in Council business* up to a **total of \$6,000 per annum per child**. For childcare expenses to be considered eligible they must meet the following criteria:

- > The elected member is a parent or guardian of the child in care, or is a person who usually has responsibility of the day-to-day care of the child (other than on a temporary basis); and
- > The child is aged under 14 years of age; and
- > The childcare is provided by a person who:
 - > Is not a family member of the elected member; and
 - > Does not ordinarily reside with the elected member; and
- > The elected member provides a copy of the tax invoice as proof of amount paid for the childcare.

For the purpose of this policy, a **family member of the elected member** is defined as:

- > A spouse, civil union partner, or de facto partner;
- > A relative, that is, another person connected with the member within 2 degrees of a relationship, whether by blood or by adoption.

*For definition of **Council business**, please refer to the description outlined in section 2 of this policy: Mileage Allowance.

5 OTHER EXPENSE CLAIMS

Meal costs of up to \$85 per day are permitted for all actual and reasonable meal expenses occurring during overnight travel required for Council business. Alcohol expenses are not reimbursed.

Reasonable expenses may be claimed by the office of the Mayor (or the Deputy Mayor where acting in the absence of the Mayor) for business meetings such as working breakfast or lunch where the Mayor is hosting official guests or dignitaries.

QLDC does not reimburse for membership of loyalty schemes related to travel or accommodation such as Air New Zealand Koru Club or hotel chain rewards schemes.

6 PROCEDURE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

- a) An expense claim form is to be completed by the claimant. These are available from the Payroll Officer. The claim form is to set out the reason for the expenditure and the amount.
- b) Where GST is to be claimed the expense claim form must be supported by tax invoices.
- c) The claim form must be supported by invoices or evidence of the amount, details of the goods or services, etc. Should the expense be for something which no invoice can be obtained, a note explaining this can be attached in lieu of an invoice.
- d) All amounts claimed are to be in Aotearoa New Zealand currency. Where foreign currency is involved, each invoice must have written on it the NZD amount which is being claimed, together with the exchange rate used. Note that the exchange rate to be used is that which applied to the actual transaction.
- e) The expense claim form is to be submitted to the Democracy Services Team Leader for approval copying the Payroll Officer preferably via email at payroll@qldc.govt.nz, or via the QLDC internal postal system for the attention of Democracy Services and Payroll.
- f) Payment will be made in the next fortnightly pay run, if received by Monday 10.00am.

6 REFERENCES

Item	Document
1	<u>Local Government Members (2024/25) Determination 2024</u>

APPENDIX 1: REMUNERATION AUTHORITY VEHICLE MILEAGE ALLOWANCE

Vehicle Type	Tier One (for the first 14,000km of eligible travel in the determination term)	Tier Two (after the first 14,000km of the eligible travel in the determination term)
Petrol or Diesel	\$1.04 per kilometre	35 cents per kilometre
Petrol Hybrid	\$1.04 per kilometre	21 cents per kilometre after
Electric	\$1.04 per kilometre	12 cents per kilometre after

The above rates are taken from the *Local Government Members (2024/25) Determination 2024*

Determination term references the period of the *Local Government Members (2024/25) Determination 2024* being the period between 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

APPENDIX 2: QLDC RULES FOR SUPPLY OR COST REIMBURSEMENT OF ELECTED MEMBERS' COMMUNICATION AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT (BASED ON REMUNERATION AUTHORITY GUIDELINES)

	Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Committee Chair	District Councillors	Community Board Members
Mobile telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council provides a mobile phone (private outgoing calls to be refunded to Council); or > Pays an allowance for use of a mobile phone of \$200 per annum, and \$500 allowance for mobile phone plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pays an allowance for use of a mobile phone of \$200 per annum, and \$500 allowance for mobile phone plan; or > Reimburse all Council-related toll calls upon production of telephone records and receipts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pays an allowance for use of a mobile phone of \$200 per annum, and \$500 allowance for mobile phone plan; or > Reimburse all Council-related toll calls upon production of telephone records and receipts.
Home Internet or Broadband Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pays an allowance for internet connection costs of \$800 per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pays an allowance for internet connection costs of \$800 per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pays an allowance for internet connection costs of \$800 per annum.
Computer, tablet or a laptop, including any related docking station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council provides electronic tablet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council provides electronic tablet; or > Pays an allowance of \$400 per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council provides electronic tablet; or > Pays an allowance of \$400 per annum.
Multi-functional or other printer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council pays an allowance for use of a fax/printer/scanner or \$50 per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council pays an allowance for use of a fax/printer/scanner or \$50 per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council pays an allowance for use of a fax/printer/scanner or \$50 per annum.
ICT Consumables (e.g. paper, ink cartridges)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council supplies reasonable quantities to meet Council business usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council supplies reasonable quantities to meet Council business usage; or > Reimburses reasonable expenses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Council supplies reasonable quantities to meet Council business usage.

The maximum amount payable for communications allowance is \$1,850 per annum per elected member.

Figures accurate as per the determination term of the [Local Government Members \(2024/25\) Determination 2024](#) being the period between 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Policy review:

This policy will be reviewed at the beginning of each triennium, following the release of the Remuneration Authority's Local Government Members Determination.