

# MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

wef 1 April 2024

The St Helens Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amended) Regulations 2003, hereby makes the following scheme:

1. This scheme may be cited as the St Helens Council Members' Allowances Scheme and shall, subject to paragraph 15, have effect for the remainder of the year commencing on 30 October 2003 and commencing in subsequent years on 1 April.
2. In this scheme "Councillor" means a Member of the St Helens Council who is a Councillor.
3. "Attendance Allowances" are not provided for in this Scheme.
4. "Co-optees' Allowances" are only provided for in this Scheme in relation to the Independent Member on Audit & Governance Committee in the sum of £500 per year.

## Basic Allowance

5. Subject to paragraph 11, for each year the basic allowance specified in the schedule hereto shall be paid to each Councillor, whose roles and responsibilities are defined in Appendix 1.

## Special Responsibility Allowances

6. (1) For each year a special responsibility allowance shall be paid to those Councillors who hold special responsibilities in relation to the authority, whose additional roles and responsibilities are defined in Appendix 2.
- (2) Subject to paragraph 11, the amount of each such allowance shall be the amount specified against that special responsibility in the schedule hereto.
- (3) Payment of special responsibility allowances is restricted to one amount in cases where Councillors hold more than one position of special responsibility.

## Travelling and Subsistence

7. The basic allowance referred to in paragraph 5 shall be inclusive of all travelling and subsistence (where refreshments are not provided) expenses, whether by public or private transport except in the following circumstances:
  - (i) Official visits and opening ceremonies where these take place outside the Borough;
  - (ii) Conferences, seminars and training provided these are held outside the Borough; and
  - (iii) Outside Bodies (on the approved list as determined from time to time) where meetings are held outside the Borough.

Payment for the use of members' private motor vehicles shall be made at the rate of 45 pence per mile.

Payment for actual subsistence costs incurred shall be made at the rate of:

Breakfast:	£3.34
Lunch:	£4.47
Evening meal:	£8.38

### **Conference Allowance**

8. No allowance shall be paid for attending a Conference. The Travel and Subsistence expenses incurred through attendance at a Conference may be claimed in accordance with paragraph 7 above and in respect of overseas travel, at three times the UK rates as recommended by the ODPM. All authorised hotel accommodation should be booked through and paid for by Members' Services.

### **Telephone Allowance**

9. The Council provides connection to the Council's Telephone System which allows Members to contact all Officers, Members and a range of other contacts, free of charge. An allowance for using a personal telephone is included in the basic allowance, as at paragraph 5 above.

### **Childcare and Dependents' Carers Allowance**

10. An allowance not exceeding £8.72 per hour, or part thereof where above 30 minutes (or such other sum as may be prescribed as the National Minimum and National Living Wage) may be claimed by a Member in respect of actual expenses necessarily incurred in arranging for the care of a child or other **dependent by virtue of a member's attendance at a meeting of the Council, or** any other meeting that is authorised by the Council, or designated as an approved duty under this Scheme, but it may not be claimed if the care is provided by as member of the claimant's household.

### **Renunciation**

11. A Councillor may, by notice in writing given to the Chief Executive, elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

### **Part Year Entitlements**

12. If, in the course of a year, this scheme is amended or a Councillor becomes, or ceases to be a Councillor, or accepts or relinquishes a special responsibility in respect of which a special responsibility allowance is payable, the annual basic or special responsibility allowance shall be adjusted pro-rata to the number of days remaining in that financial year.

### **Claims and Payments**

13. Payments shall be made in respect of basic and special responsibility allowances in instalments of one-twelfth of the amount specified in this scheme on the twenty-first day of each month, with the exception of the Deputy Mayor who will be paid in one instalment the month after coming into office.

### **Uprating**

14. The basic and special responsibility allowances within this Scheme will be uprated on an annual basis as of 1 April unless the Council agree for any year that such uprating shall not take place. The index will be tied to the General

Rate that the majority of Joint National Council for Local Government Services members receive.

## MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

**Annual Allowance  
(2024/2025)  
(wef 1 April 2024)**

£

<b>Basic Allowance</b>	9,108
<b>Special Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Leader of the Council</b>	35,678
<b>Deputy Leader of the Council</b>	19,896
<b>Main Opposition Leader</b> (provided that the largest Opposition Group holds at least 15% (rounded up) of the seats on Council) <b>(NA)</b>	5,217
<b>Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Commission</b>	8,236
<b>Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees</b>	5,217
<b>Main Opposition Deputy Leader</b> (provided that the largest Opposition Group holds at least 15% (rounded up) of the seats on Council) <b>(NA)</b>	1,645
<b>Other Opposition Leaders</b> (provided that a Group has three or more Members)	1,645
<b>Cabinet Members</b>	16,465
<b>Chair of Planning Committee</b>	8,236
<b>Chair of Licensing and Environmental Protection Committee</b>	8,236
<b>Chair of Audit and Governance Committee</b>	8,236
<b>Independent Member of Audit and Governance Committee</b>	500
<b>Independent Person on Standards Committee</b>	500
<b>Mayor</b>	8,236
<b>Deputy Mayor</b>	824
<b>Member of Recycling and Waste Authority</b> (unless also the Chairman of the Authority, when the figure is £6,672)	5,217
<b>LCR Transport Committee</b>	5,675

## **THE ROLE OF A COUNCILLOR**

**Councillors are elected by the public to represent them both inside the Council and outside the Council in the community. They are accountable to their communities. Communities should be able to judge their performance. The following describes the role of a Councillor. It is reasonable to expect that, while a councillor may specialise in certain aspects of the role and, indeed, this is something that should be encouraged, all councillors will perform a broad spectrum of duties. A high performing member would undertake the majority of, if not all, the duties listed below.**

**Political Groups play a crucial role in the selection of candidates and in the organisation of members. Political Groups should monitor the performance of all their members. This would undoubtedly assist in improving the effectiveness of local democratic government in St Helens.**

### **The Role**

As an elected councillor, you will participate constructively in the good governance of the Borough and will specifically:

- (1) Contribute actively to the formulation of the Authority's policies, budget, strategies and service delivery by attending meetings of, and participating in, those decisions and activities reserved to full Council;
- (2) Represent the interests of your ward, deal with constituents' enquiries and representations and hold ward surgeries on a regular basis. You should be visible in and recognisable to your community;
- (3) Act as community advocate and champion causes for constituents, both within and outside the Council, with particular emphasis on those that will improve the quality of life of the community;

Represent the Council on any outside bodies and governing bodies, as appointed, providing two-way communications between the organisation and the Council; and, to this end, develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Authority's policies and practices in relation to that body with regard to the needs and aspirations of the community;

Consider the appropriate use of the Councillor Improvement Fund for the purposes of improving the environment of the ward for the benefit of the community;

- (6) Attend and participate in any Committee, Panel or Board to which you are appointed and for any related responsibilities associated with such. This shall include being available to participate as a member of any committees which are drawn from a pool of members and which can be time-consuming, such as the Personnel Appeals Committee;
- (7) Chair any ad-hoc Committees, Panels or Boards, where appointed;
- (8) Attend and participate in any Planning site visits, Adult Social Care and Health Children and Young People's Services Inspections, Children's Home Visits, tender opening or other statutory or non-statutory visits or tasks, as required;

- (9) Seek out membership or involvement in community based initiatives/groups in your own Ward, and where necessary, provide guidance and leadership;
- (10) Develop and maintain a good working knowledge of the Authority's services, management arrangements, powers/duties and constraints sufficient to be able to answer and deal with queries from within the community;
- (11) Develop and maintain good working relations with relevant officers of the Authority, in accordance with the code of conduct;
- (12) Develop and maintain a working knowledge of the organisations, services, activities and other factors that impact upon the community's well-being and identity; and, to this end, to work with and encourage the community to tackle local problems and exploit local opportunities;
- (13) Attend and participate in any training courses, 'Away Days', workshops and other sessions either internally or externally provided, to enable you to fulfil your role as a Councillor;
- (14) Contribute constructively to open government and democratic renewal through actively encouraging the community to participate in the government of the area; and, to this end, seek to involve the community in decisions that affect them by ensuring they have full information and then by helping them make their views known; and
- (15) Fulfil the statutory and locally determined requirements of an elected member of the Authority, including compliance with all relevant codes of conduct.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**This Appendix sets out the principal roles and responsibilities attaching to those posts which are recommended as warranting the payment of a special responsibility allowance. The lists do not purport to comprise comprehensive formal job descriptions which, if such exist, are a matter for the Council, through the Constitution or otherwise, to adopt. The provisions of this Appendix are subject to appropriate local government and other law and to the Council's Constitution and procedures.**

### **Cabinet Leader**

To exercise principal political authority and responsibility within and on behalf of the Council, to provide leadership within the Council and to act as the Council's principal political spokesperson.

To be personally responsible for the preparation and proposal of the Budget and Policy Framework to the Council and for achieving the objectives set out in the Framework.

To provide leadership to the main political group on the Council.

To represent the Council in the community and in discussions and negotiations with regional, national and international organisations and others, in relation to the pursuit of matters of interest to the Authority and its community.

To lead, and to chair meetings of, the Cabinet and to take responsibility for providing leadership on new policy, strategy, programming, budget, service standards and service delivery.

To select and appoint Cabinet Members in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, and to allocate portfolios of responsibility.

To manage the effectiveness of Cabinet Members, to oversee delivery by them of their respective responsibilities, to appraise and develop them and to provide the support required to achieve their designated duties and responsibilities.

To take any necessary action to ensure that the effectiveness of the Cabinet is maintained.

In the absence of a Cabinet Member, due to sickness, holiday or other circumstances, to undertake their duties and responsibilities, or to allocate these to another Cabinet Member for such period as may be defined.

To undertake the duties and responsibilities of a Cabinet Member as defined below.

### **Cabinet Members**

To be collectively responsible with other Cabinet Members for the discharge of all executive functions, as described in the Council's Constitution.

Together with other Cabinet Members:

- To lead the community planning process and the search for Best Value;

- To support the Cabinet Leader in the preparation of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework;
- To be responsible for in-year decisions on resources and priorities, after appropriate consultation, to deliver and implement the Budget and Policy Framework approved by the Council;
- To provide the focus for forming partnerships with other local public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to address local needs; and
- To represent the Council in and to the community.

To be personally responsible for the discharge of functions and the delivery of services within their designated portfolio, as described in the Council's Constitution, and in accordance with the Council's duties in respect of best value.

To maintain good and effective working relationships with Executive Directors and others, in accordance with the provisions within the Code of Conduct.

To lead on the development of the strategic objectives of the services within their designated portfolio.

To represent the various services within a designated portfolio, both within and outside the Council as necessary.

To take responsibility, as requested by the Cabinet Leader, for the functions within a portfolio of another Cabinet Member, for periods of holiday, sickness or in other circumstances.

#### **Leader of the Main Opposition**

To provide political leadership to the main Opposition Group which holds 15% (rounded up) of the seats on the Council.

To maintain a level of understanding and interest in all functions of the Council sufficient to provide effective political opposition across all the work of the Council.

To take the lead in representing the views of his/her political party on the Council and to ensure full involvement of the Group in the affairs of the Council.

#### **Leader of the Other Opposition Groups**

To provide political leadership to the other opposition Groups on the Council.

To maintain a level of understanding and interest in all functions of the Council sufficient to provide effective political opposition across all the work of the Council.

To take the lead in representing the views of his/her political party on the Council and to ensure full involvement of the Group in the affairs of the Council.

#### **Main Opposition Deputy Leader**

To deputise for the Main Opposition Leader as required.

#### **Chair of Audit & Governance Committee**

To chair the Audit & Governance Committee, ensuring that the Committee operates effectively in accordance with its Terms of Reference and work programme.



To reinforce the political neutrality and independence of the Committee.

To attend agenda briefings as required and to liaise closely with relevant officers to ensure effective chairmanship.

To promote self-assessment, training and development for members of the Committee.

### **Chairs of Regulatory Committees**

To chair the Licensing and Environmental Protection Committee and/or the Planning Committee, ensuring that the Committee operates within the approved policy, procedures and legislation appertaining to meetings.

To attend agenda briefings as required and to liaise closely with relevant officers to ensure effective chairmanship.

To take political responsibility for decisions of the Committee as required.

### **Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission**

To ensure that decisions made by the Committee are implemented in accordance with the Committee's wishes.

To chair the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, ensuring that a work programme is set and adhered to.

To liaise with the Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees and ensure that the work programmes for each are submitted to, and approved by, the Commission.

To consult with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services so as to ensure consistency of approach by the various Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

To monitor the use of the 'Call-In' facility and ensure that any items 'called-in' are referred to the appropriate Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

To attend, as requested or as required by the Constitution, any meetings of the Cabinet, to represent the views of the Commission.

To liaise with the Cabinet Leader, as required, when items arise which are not on the Public Notice of Key Decisions, but which the Cabinet need to consider.

### **Mayor**

To uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary.

To preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community.

To seek to ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which members who are not on the Cabinet are able to hold the Cabinet to account.

To promote public involvement in the Council's activities.

To attend civic and ceremonial functions representing the Borough.

To represent the Council at a range of functions/events both inside and outside the Borough, with the aim of promoting civic and democratic engagement.

### **Deputy Mayor**

To deputise for the Mayor as required.

### **Member of Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority**

To represent the Council and its community on the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority.

To participate in such member/officer briefings as required, to maintain a level of understanding sufficient to effectively participate in meetings.

To consult the Cabinet Leader or appropriate Cabinet Member when the functions or interests of the Council may be significantly affected by a decision of the Authority and to obtain approval from the Council before committing the Council to any binding decisions of the Authority.

To provide feedback to the Council on the work of the Authority, in conjunction with appropriate officers.

### **Member of the Transport Committee of the Combined Authority**

To represent the Council and its community on the Transport Committee of the Combined Authority.

To participate in such Member/Officer briefings as required, to maintain a level of understanding sufficient to effectively participate in meetings.

To consult the Cabinet Leader or appropriate Cabinet Member when the functions or interests of the Council may be significantly affected by a decision of the Transport Committee.

To provide feedback to the Council on the work of the Transport Committee, in conjunction with appropriate Officers.