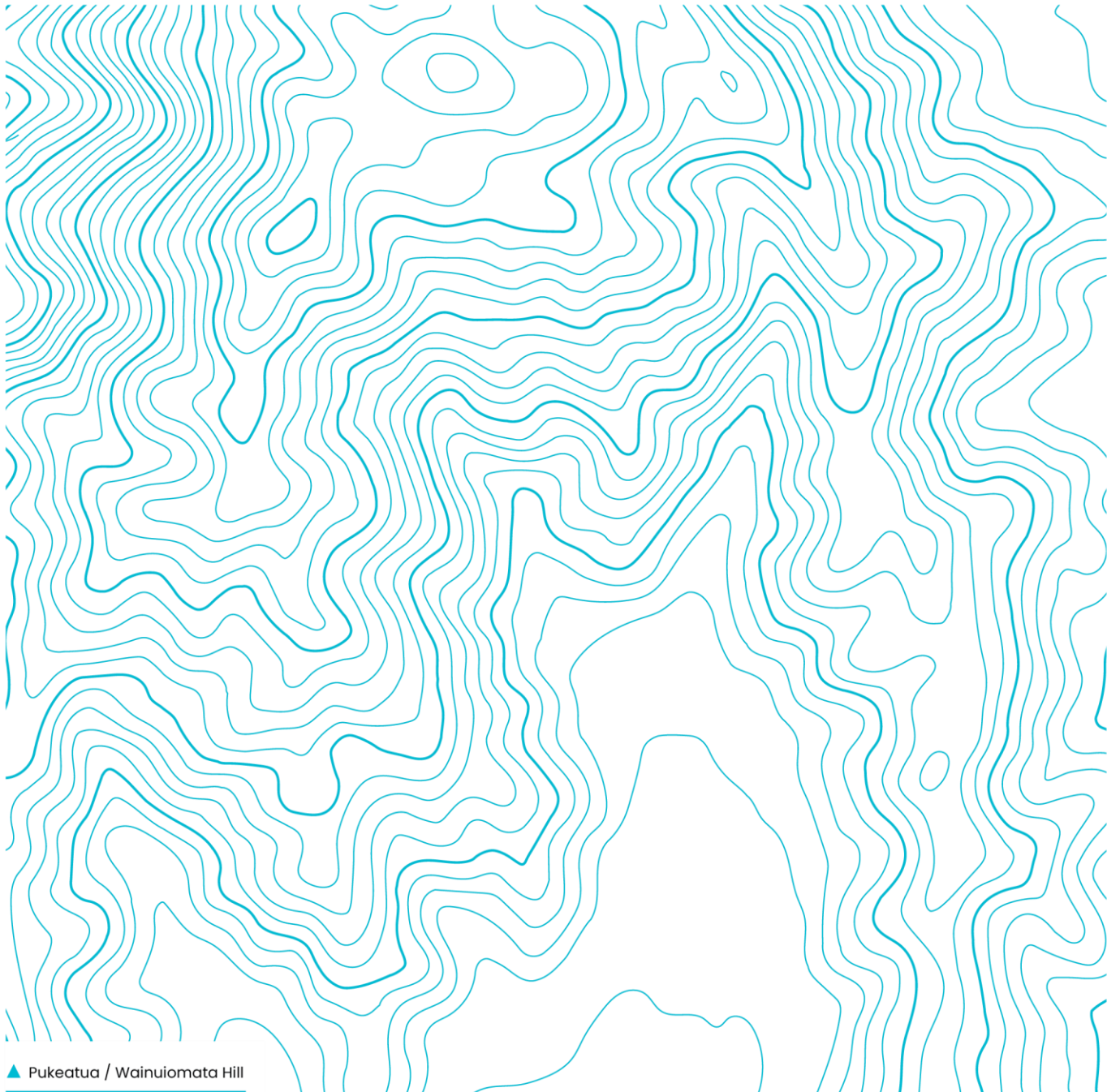


# Elected Member Support Policy 2022-2025



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## Record of Amendments

Version	Date	Approver	Summary of Amendments
1	28 March 2023	Council	
2	11 April 2023	Remuneration Authority	Removed paragraph 23
3	1 July 2023	Democratic Services	To reflect the 2023/24 Determination
4	20 August 2024	Democratic Services	To reflect the 2024/25 Determination

# Interpretation

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

**Reasonable** means that it is within the amount specified by this policy or as deemed reasonable by the Chief Executive or their delegate.

**Council business** includes: formal Council meetings, committee and subcommittee meetings, briefings, seminars, LGNZ Conference, 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, events where attendance is in a non-representative capacity, travel not related to council business or personal travel interspersed with Council business.

**Elected member** means those individuals declared to be elected to Council including as a member of a community board, Councillor, Mayor or Deputy Mayor.

**Remuneration Authority** is an independent body established by the Remuneration Authority Act 1977, with responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2022 to determine remuneration and expenses/allowance rules for local authority members.

## Travel and Associated Costs

- 1) All approvals for travel must consider the impact on climate change including whether there are any mitigations possible to reduce the impact such as the use of remote conferencing technology or a reduction in the number of elected member participants.
- 2) When the Mayor or Councillors are required and authorised to travel within New Zealand on official business, Hutt City Council will reimburse the Mayor or Councillor for actual and reasonable accommodation, meals (excluding alcohol) and other costs on production of receipts. Council business includes carrying out work on behalf of Hutt City Council or representing Council at an approved conference, briefing seminar or similar meeting.
- 3) When the Mayor or Councillors are required and authorised to travel outside New Zealand, Hutt City Council will reimburse the Mayor or Councillor for actual and reasonable accommodation, meals (excluding alcohol) and other costs on production of receipts.
- 4) Allowances for travel, accommodation, meals (excluding alcohol) and other costs may be advanced to the Mayor or Councillor to the level of estimated expenditure. The Mayor or Councillor must account for the expenditure of the advance with receipts and clear the balance immediately.
- 5) All travel and accommodation must be booked by Democratic Services except Mayoral travel which is to be booked by the Mayor's Office.
- 6) For the purpose of this policy, travel to Australia is considered to be domestic travel.
- 7) Elected members are expected to adhere to Council's Sensitive Expenditure Policy and associated guidelines.

## Vehicle Usage

- 8) Councillors are also entitled to be reimbursed for the cost of vehicular travel on council business. This can be an allowance for the use of a private motor vehicle based on the kilometres travelled, or reimbursement of the actual cost of public transport or where necessary a taxi, for which receipts need to be provided.
- 9) Where an elected member chooses to take their private motor vehicle to a conference or seminar for which airfares would normally be provided, the equivalent airfare will be reimbursed rather than the vehicle mileage allowance.
- 10) Elected members are entitled to use Council fleet charging units to charge private electric and hybrid vehicles free of charge.

## Vehicle Mileage Allowance under Local Government Members (2024/25) Determination 2024

- 11) A member's travel is eligible for the allowance if –
  - a) it occurs at a time when the member is not provided with a motor vehicle by the local authority; and
  - b) the member is travelling –
    - i in a private vehicle; and
    - ii on local authority business; and
    - iii by the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances.
- 12) The allowance payable to a member for eligible travel is –
  - a) for a petrol or diesel vehicle –
    - i \$1.04 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel to 30 June 2024; and
    - ii 35 cents per kilometre after the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel to 30 June 2024:
  - b) for a petrol hybrid vehicle –
    - i \$1.04 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel to 30 June 2024; and

- ii 21 cents per kilometre after the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel to 30 June 2024:
- c) for an electric vehicle -
  - i \$1.04 cents per kilometre for the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel to 30 June 2024; and
  - ii 12 cents per kilometre after the first 14,000 kilometres of eligible travel to 30 June 2024.

## **Travel Time Allowance**

- 13) As Hutt City Council has adopted a salary-only model, no travel time allowance payments are made to the Mayor or Councillors.

# Communications Allowance under Local Government Members (2024/25) Determination 2024

- 14) The following equipment is provided to Councillors by Council:
- Laptop or PC
  - Printer and associated consumables on request
- 15) An allowance of up to \$800 per year can be claimed for use of the member's own internet service for the purpose of the member's work on local authority business. This can be claimed in one lump sum at any time during the financial year.
- 16) An allowance of up to \$500 per year can be claimed for use of the member's own mobile telephone service for the purpose of the member's work on local authority business. Alternatively, the member may be reimbursed for the actual costs of telephone calls made on local authority business upon production of the relevant telephone records and receipts.
- Note:** The Communications Allowance has pro rata provisions for members not in a position for the full 12 months. This affects both members who do not return after the election and those who are elected for the first time in October (see the Local Government Members (2024/25) Determination 2024).
- 17) A home-based technology allowance of \$45 per month will be paid to the chairs of the Eastbourne, Petone and Wainuiomata Community Boards to reimburse the incumbents of those positions a portion of the communication costs (business-related telephone calls, internet connection etc) incurred by them in carrying out their duties.

## **Childcare Allowance under Local Government Members (2024/25) Determination 2024**

- 18) An allowance of up to \$6,000 per year per child can be claimed as a contribution towards expenses incurred by the member for childcare provided while the member is engaged in local authority business.
- 19) A member is eligible to be paid a childcare allowance in respect of childcare provided for a child only if –
- a) The member is a parent or guardian of the child, or is the person who usually has responsibility for the day-to-day care of the child (other than on a temporary basis); and
  - b) The child is aged under 14 years of age; and
  - c) The childcare is provided by a person who –
    - i. Is not a family member of the member; and
    - ii. Does not ordinarily reside with the member; and
  - d) The member provides evidence satisfactory to the local authority of the amount paid for childcare.
- 20) “Family member of the member” is defined as a spouse, civil union partner, de facto partner, and a relative, ie another person connected with the member within 2 degrees of a relationship, whether by blood relationship or by adoption.
- 21) The Head of Democratic Services can approve claims for the reimbursement of childcare allowance.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

- 22) Elected members are entitled to the flu vaccination employee benefit. Elected members can receive a voucher annually when it is made available to staff.



- 23) Council's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is now available to elected members. EAP is a confidential counselling and advice service that can provide short-term support for personal or work-related issues that are impacting a member and their work life.
- 24) Details on how elected members can access EAP support will be available on Diligent.

## **Resource Consent Hearing Fees**

- 25) A member who acts as the chair of a resource consent hearing is entitled to be paid a fee of \$116 per hour of hearing time and preparation.
- 26) A member who is not the chair of a resource consent hearing is entitled to be paid a fee of \$93 per hour of the hearing time and preparation time.

## **Car parks**

- 27) When elected members are undertaking Council business at the Council Administration building during office hours, limited free parking is available in the fleet carpark on Stevens Grove (behind the Dowse Art Museum) or in the carpark opposite the Administration Building on Laings Road. Carparks are provided on a first come, first served basis. Cars must be registered electronically.
- 28) In the event that all reserved parks are in use, Councillors are expected to use available public parking areas.
- 29) A car park is reserved for the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor in the Laings Road carpark.

## Access to Staff Benefit schemes

- 30) It is not appropriate for Council to offer staff benefit schemes to elected members as it is contrary to both the Local Government Act 2002 and the Remuneration Authority Act 1977.

## Training

- 31) Councillors are eligible for financial support for training, which may include formal training courses, attendance at seminars or attendance at conferences.
- 32) Financial support is capped at \$2,153 per councillor per annum.
- 33) Capped funding includes seminar costs or course fees or conferences as well as any associated costs. The cap does not include those conferences where attendance is because Council feels it is necessary to send a delegate(s). Nor does it include those activities the Mayor undertakes by virtue of his office.
- 34) Financial assistance for longer-term training (a course of study with a duration of more than three days) if approved is capped at 50% of costs (within the maximum stated above).
- 35) Requests to attend formal training courses or seminars with a value over \$1,000 are to be made in writing to the Chief Executive, for their decision.
- 36) The Head of Democratic Services can approve requests for training courses or seminars costing less than \$1,000.
- 37) The following guiding principles will be relied on in deciding whether to approve a request for training:
- a) the likely benefits of the intended training course or seminar;

- b) the needs of the Councillor as identified through the performance assessment process;
  - c) the cost of the training proposed;
  - d) reports and evaluations by Councillors who may have attended similar courses in the past; and
  - e) competing demands on the training budget.
- 38) All requests for financial support to attend longer-term training courses are to be made in writing to the Chief Executive, for their decision.
- 39) Additional guiding principles when in deciding on this situation are:
- a) what is the overall duration of the course; and
  - b) the point of time in the triennium when the training is requested.
- 40) Financial support, if approved, is capped at 50% of total costs (and within the maximum stated above).
- 41) Elected members are to provide an evaluation of the course or seminar attended to the Head of Democratic Services.

## **Sensitive expenditure and gifts**

- 42) Refer to Council's Code of Conduct about gifts received by, and in their capacity as, elected members (link to be inserted).
- 43) Council's [Sensitive Expenditure Policy](#) and associated guidelines applies to elected members, all Council employees and volunteers. It encourages common sense to sensitive expenditure that is fair, reasonable and able to withstand public scrutiny.
- 44) Refer to [Office of the Auditor General – Controlling Sensitive Expenditure: Guidelines for public entities](#) in relation to corporate hospitality and entertainment.

## Submitting Expense Claims

45) Expense claims must be made monthly and will not be accepted if the claim is provided more than two months after the end of the financial year to which it relates. Expense claims will be approved by the Elected Member Support Coordinator, with more complicated claims referred to the Chief Executive for final approval.

## Breach of Allowance and Expense Rules

- 42) If an elected member breaches this policy, the elected member must reimburse Council for any costs Council may have wrongfully incurred.
- 42) An alleged breach of allowance and expense rules may be considered under the Code of Conduct.

## Policy review

46) This policy will be reviewed at the beginning of each triennium. Council may direct a review of this policy at any time.

## Contact details

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