

Report 13.763  
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File E/05/02/03

Committee Council  
Author Fran Wilde, Chair

## Policy on elected members' allowances and expenses

### 1. Purpose

For the Council to adopt a new policy on elected members' allowances and expenses to submit to the Remuneration Authority for approval.

### 2. The decision-making process and significance

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.

#### 2.1 Significance of the decision

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking into account the Council's significance policy and decision-making guidelines. Due to the procedural nature of this decision officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

### 3. Background

The Remuneration Authority has recently set out its new approach to remuneration setting in the Local Authority Elected Member Remuneration Setting 2013 document (the Setting), which includes amended provisions relating to elected member remuneration, and allowances for mileage, travel time and communications. These changes necessitate the Council adopting a new policy on elected members' allowances and expenses to align with the provisions of the Setting, to take effect from the date that elected members assume office following the 2013 triennial elections. The Council has already adopted a proposal for remuneration to apply to positions of additional responsibility in the post-election period (Report 13.676 refers)

Council discussed the proposed rules for allowances and the recovery of expenses incurred by elected members at the Council workshop on 26 June

2013. These rules have been incorporated into the draft Policy on Elected Members' Allowances and Expenses 2013 (**Attachment 1**).

#### **4. Proposed changes to the current policy**

The Setting includes three provisions which differ from the provisions contained in the Council's current Policy on Elected Members' Allowances and Expenses. The current policy is consistent with the Determination previously issued by the Remuneration Authority.

##### **4.1 Vehicle mileage allowance**

The Setting provides for a change to the threshold distance that applies each day before mileage becomes payable. The threshold distance was previously the shorter of:

- a) the distance equivalent to a round trip between the member's residence and the nearest office of the Council by the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances; and
- b) 30 kilometres, if the distance equivalent to a round trip between the member's residence and the nearest office of the Council is greater than 30 kilometres by the most direct route that is reasonable in the circumstances.

The threshold distance has been changed to a uniform 30 kilometres.

The effect of this provision is that if the distance a member travels from their residence to the nearest office of the local authority and return by the most direct route is less than 30 kilometres, the elected member will be responsible for the cost incurred.

There has also been a change to the mileage allowance, with the maximum allowance per kilometre increasing from \$0.74 to \$0.77 for the first 5000 kilometres of eligible mileage, and the maximum allowance per kilometre increasing from \$0.35 to \$0.37 for any eligible mileage over 5000 kilometres.

##### **4.2 Travel time allowance**

The Setting provides for a change to the travel time allowance. The maximum hourly rate for travel (in excess of one hour) was previously \$15 per hour; this has been increased to \$35 per hour.

##### **4.3 Communications allowance**

The Communications allowance was previously a maximum rate of \$750, which was reduced by specified amounts where the Council provided elected members with individual items to use for Council related business.

The maximum rate payable has been increased to \$1,050. This rate is made up of the following annual allowances for each eligible item made available by an elected member for Council business purposes:

- Home computer: \$150
- Laptop computer or mobile tablet device: \$150
- Printer: \$40
- Telephone/Mobile phone: \$60
- Mobile calls: \$400
- Internet connection: \$250

If an elected member does not have a laptop computer or mobile tablet device available for Council business, they may be issued with a standard specification Greater Wellington Regional Council laptop computer or mobile tablet device for use on Council business. The provision of such equipment would result in the maximum allowance being reduced by \$150.

## **5. Communication**

The Council's decisions will be communicated to the Remuneration Authority to enable the new policy to be approved.

## **6. Recommendations**

*That the Council:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Adopts the Policy on Elected Members' Allowances and Expenses 2013.*
4. *Notes that the policy is subject to approval by the Remuneration Authority.*

Report prepared by:

Fran Wilde  
Chair

**Attachment 1: Draft Policy on Elected Members' Allowances and Expenses 2013**