Members' Allowances Scheme, May 2026 – March 2027

Councillors are not paid a salary. However, they do get allowances to cover some of the costs of being a Councillor. The Basic Allowance, the Special Responsibility Allowance, childcare and carer's allowance, and travelling costs are set by the Council having noted recommendations put to it by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

1. Basic Allowance, and Special Responsibility Allowance (taxable)

Basic allowance: This is an annual flat rate payment to all Councillors, intended to recognise the time devoted by Councillors to work in their wards and political groups, recognising the level of out-of-pocket expenses Councillors incur in carrying out their functions. It also recognises that Councillors undertake their Council work for the sake of public service and not for private gain. Each Councillor will receive an annual allowance of £8069.

Special Responsibility Allowance: This is paid to Councillors who have a higher than average workload, and/or hold particular positions of responsibility within the Council. The number of SRAs that any councillor may hold is limited to three.

Leader	£32276
Deputy Leader	£18155
Cabinet Member	£14524
Leader of the Main Opposition Group - Lib Dem	£8472
Leader of the Minority Opposition Group	£3631
Scrutiny Committees – Chair (Lib Dem)	£7262
Scrutiny Committees – Vice-Chair (Labour)	£3631
Scrutiny Committees - Opposition Spokes (Lib Dem/Green)	£2421
Housing Advisory Board Chair	£3631
Planning - Chair	£7262
Planning - Vice-Chair	£3631
Planning - Member	£2179
Licensing - Chair	£2421
Licensing - Member - if they have attended 4 or more sub cttee meetings	£726

Joint Development Management Control - Chair / City Spokes	£3631
Joint Development Management Control – Members	£1089
Civic Affairs & Audit Committee - Chair	£3631
Employment Committee Chair	£2420
Full Council - Chair	£3631
Greater Cambridge Partnership Board Member	£3631
Greater Cambridge Partnership Assembly Member	£1210
Combined Authority Cabinet Board Member	£6052
Combined Authority committee members	£1210
Police and Crime Panel Member	£1210

2. Travel and Subsistence Allowances

Councillors are paid at the same rates as Officers. Councillors must have a valid driving licence and insurance that covers business use.

Mileage allowances are:

Casual User Mileage (up to 10,000 miles):	45 pence per mile
Casual User Mileage (after 10,000 miles):	25 pence per mile

Bicycle rate is based on the HMRC advised rates, which is now 20 pence per mile.

The motorcycle rate is 24 pence per mile.

Travel and subsistence allowances are payable for those duties prescribed in Regulations; that is:

a. A meeting of the Cabinet;

b. A meeting of a committee of the Cabinet;

c. A meeting of the authority;

d. A meeting of a committee or sub-committee of the authority;

e. A meeting of some other body to which the authority make appointments or nominations;

f. A meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the authority make appointments or nominations;

g. A meeting which has both been authorised by the authority, a committee, or sub-committee of the authority or a joint committee of the authority and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited (if the authority is divided into several political groups) or to which two or more councillors have been invited (if the authority is not divided into political groups);

h. A meeting of a local authority association of which the authority is a member;

In addition, travel can be claimed for:

i) Meetings that are approved Council duties (including site visits);

ii) Meetings instigated by an officer, which are (or had the potential to be) cross party;

iii) Training and development for councillors organised by the Council; attendance at conferences and seminars that have been booked by officers;

i. Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises;

j. Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of Section 342 of the Education Act 1996; and

k. Any other duty approved by the authority in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

Reimbursement of public transport fares can be made when attending approved council duties. For journeys by train, also accommodation, please book through the Council's approved travel provider, Click Travel, as the Council can reclaim the VAT. For flights, please liaise with Members' Services.

You can only claim travel costs **from outside** Cambridge if your absence from Cambridge was unavoidable or if a meeting is called at short notice, and you have to make a journey which you would not otherwise have made. The exception to this rule is attending Planning or Licensing Committee meetings, as these take place more frequently than other meetings.

If a claim is made and an officer is unclear whether or not the travel expense should be reimbursed, the officer shall consult the political group leaders prior to approving payment. If any claim remains unresolved, it is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to determine.

You cannot claim subsistence allowance for duties carried out within three miles of your home or if meals are provided.

Subsistence: can only be claimed where meals/accommodation are not provided.

Breakfast Allowance: (More than 4 hours away from normal place of residence or where the authority permits, a lesser period, before 11 am.)	£6.72
Lunch Allowance: (More than 4 hours away from normal place of residence or where the authority permits, a lesser period, including the lunchtime between 12 noon and 2 pm.)	£9.28
Tea Allowance: (More than 4 hours away from normal place of residence or where the authority permits, a lesser period, including the period 3 pm to 6 pm.)	£3.67
Evening Meal Allowance: (More than 4 hours away from normal place of residence or where the authority permits, a lesser period, ending after 7 pm.)	£11.49

Overnight Subsistence.

Absence overnight from the usual place of residence:	£79.82
In London, or attending an approved conference:	£91.04

3. Members' Childcare and Carer's Allowance

A Childcare/Dependent Carer Allowance is payable for actual expenditure incurred whilst undertaking approved council duties. No cap shall be put on the overall budget for this Allowance, or on that which is paid to an individual member of the Council in any given year. This allowance is set by the Council having had regard to the recommendations annually of the Independent Remuneration Panel. The Panel considered allowances for childcare and dependent relatives and concluded that it was appropriate for actual expenditure to be reimbursed. The allowance should be subject to receipts being submitted. The member must provide care for a person who normally lives with the member as part of his/her family and who is:

a. A child below school age during school hours;

b. A child under 14 outside of school hours; and

c. An elderly, sick, or disabled dependent requiring constant care.

A Carer will be any responsible mature person who does not normally live with the member as part of the member's family.

Payments made under this scheme will be open to public inspection and the carer must be paid at least the Living Wage.

Travel, subsistence and care allowances is payable for any invitations (except social events) from any official bodies. The Scheme is set so that payment of care, travel and subsistence allowances would be such that unexpected circumstances or new responsibilities or activities were covered by default, ie that rather than having a prescribed list of activities that ARE covered, have a list of proscribed activities (that are not covered).

4. Expenses

In addition to the basic allowance, the Council can also provide personalised business cards.

5. Changes

Entitlements will be payable on a part-year basis in any given year where:

a. The scheme is amended;

b. A Councillor either is elected to or leaves the Council; or

c. A Councillor takes on, or gives up, a position for which a special responsibility allowance is payable.

6. Co-optee's Allowance

A co-optee's allowance of the Living Wage for hours served, plus out of pocket expenses, is available.

7. Adjustment

There is an adjustment of allowance levels by reference to the National Living Wage index.

8. Advice

Members may receive initial advice on the impact of receiving allowances on their tax and benefit position by contacting Mike Scott, Payroll Manager, in the Council's Finance Team. However, independent financial advice is also recommended.

9. Timeliness

Please make all claims within two months. Claims which are received by the fifth day of each month will be paid in that month.

10. Foregoing

Any member of the Council may, by notice in writing given to the Democratic Services Manager, elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to any Allowance under this scheme.

April 2026