

## **SECTION E1 (e)**

### **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME**

This section sets out the allowances that may be claimed by Fire Authority Members and how to do so. It also explains how these payments may affect your finances.

Members Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances will be paid directly and taxation of allowances, National Insurance contributions will be calculated by ESFRS.

Members Allowances may alter you Income Tax and Welfare situation. Because the rules relating to these are complex and subject to change, this guidance can only be a general nature.

The Members' Allowance Scheme includes the following sections:

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Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
Assistant Director of Planning & Improvement	November 2005	March 2017 December 2017 September 2021	

## **1 The Scheme and Allowances Payable**

### **The Scheme**

- 1.1 The East Sussex Fire Authority Members' Allowance is based on the provisions contained in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. It also has regard to relevant Government guidance.
- 1.2 A year, for the purposes of the Scheme, starts on 1 April and ends on 31 March.

### **Allowances Payable**

#### **Basic Allowance**

- 1.3 A basic allowance of £2,472 is payable to each Member of the Fire Authority and is the same for all. Any Member appointed for part of a year is paid on a pro rata basis.
- 1.4 The allowance is paid as recognition of the requirement for Members to attend meetings of the Authority as part of their duties and to recompense for out of pocket expenses incurred and other ancillary work.
- 1.5 The basic allowance is subject to Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions.

#### **Special Responsibility Allowances**

- 1.6 Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) are additional payments made to recognise the greater responsibilities required by some roles on the Fire Authority and are of varied amounts.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Allowance per Annum £</b>
Chairperson of CFA	10,818
Vice-Chairperson of CFA	5,409
Leader of a Political Group (except where the Group includes either or both the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Fire Authority)	2,493
Chairperson of Panels	1,994
Panel membership for Policy & Resources, Scrutiny & Audit (and their respective Working Groups) and Urgency Panels	860

The Local Pension Board (equivalent to half the Special Responsibility Allowance for membership of a Panel)	430
An Independent Chair of the Local Pension Board (equivalent to half the Basic Allowance)	1,236

1.7 Each Member may only receive one SRA. If a Member is appointed to more than one post carrying different SRAs then they will receive the greater amount.

1.8 SRAs are subject to Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions.

## **2 Travel and Subsistence Allowances**

2.1 These claims are payable in respect of the following approved duties:

- a meeting of the Authority or any of its Panels or Working Groups;
- a meeting of a bodies (or a committee or sub-committee of such a body) to which the Authority makes appointments or nominations;
- a meeting which has both been authorised by the Authority, or any of its Panels or a joint committee of the Authority and any other authority; and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited;
- a meeting of a local authority association of which the Authority is a member;
- a visit or tour for Members of the Authority area;
- training sessions, Members Seminars and visits arranged for the better performance of duties and responsibilities or to enable better understanding of the Authority's functions;
- any duty including Officer Panels which have a single (or more) Member(s) of the Authority on them, Member briefings, Group meetings with the Chief Fire Officer or other Officer of Authority, Chairpersons' visits to Stations, Chairpersons' attendances at major incidents, Chairpersons' visits to organisations pursuant to the Authority's business.

## **Travel Rates**

Car Mileage Allowance	45p per mile
Bicycle Allowance	20p per mile
Motorcycle Allowance	25p per mile

- 2.2 Fuel receipts must be provided alongside a completed claim form in order to be valid. It is Members responsibility to provide these with their claim forms.

## **Passengers**

- 2.3 An additional allowance of 5p per mile per passenger (in addition to the standard mileage allowance) is payable for conveying another Member or an officer to the same event which is an approved duty.

## **Car parking**

- 2.4 Members can be reimbursed for car parking charges by completing the relevant section of the travel claim form. Claims for such charges will only be paid when supported by a valid receipt. It is Members responsibility to provide these with their claim forms.

## **Public Transport**

- 2.5 When travelling by train or coach Members should obtain a ticket at the most preferential rate available and reclaim the expense. Either the ticket or receipt must be attached to the claim. It is Members responsibility to provide these with their claim forms.
- 2.6 Taxi fares may be claimed but only in cases of urgency or for meetings outside normal working hours (8.30 a.m. - 6.30 p.m.) where there is no suitable public transport available or for those Members suffering from mobility problems where it is left to the discretion of the Chief Fire Officer. A receipt must be produced in order to make a claim.

## **Subsistence Rates**

- 2.7 Subsistence may be claimed in exceptional circumstances. If a Member believes that they are like to undertake a duty that will require a subsistence claim to be made they must contact Democratic Services in advance.
- 2.8 Members are not entitled to claim subsistence to the extent that suitable accommodation is provided for them while they are undertaking the

approved duty. Accommodation will be booked for Members and the Authority will pay direct.

- 2.9 If a subsistence claim is approved and submitted receipts must be provided in order for the claim to be paid. Members must provide these when submitting a claim form. If a receipt is not provided, claims for Subsistence Allowance will be subject to deductions for Income Tax and National Insurance.

### **Day Subsistence**

- 2.10 The subsistence rates applied to LGS support are also applied to Members also. The rates below are the maximum that can be claimed. Eligibility is based on the time of day meals are taken and time away from home, as follows:

Breakfast	More than four hours absence before 11.00am	£6.13
Lunch	More than four hours absence including 12 noon – 2.00pm	£8.47
Tea	More than four hours absence including 3.00pm – 6.00pm	£3.34
Evening Meal	More than four hours absence ending after 7.00pm	£10.49

### **Overnight Subsistence**

- 2.11 If an overnight stay is required, subsistence for bed and breakfast may be claimed up to a maximum of:

London/Conference Rate	Not exceeding	£180.00
Standard Rate	Not exceeding	£90.00

- 2.12 For overnight stays, up to £21.62 can be claimed for an evening meal. Receipts must be produced for all subsistence claimed.

## **3 How to Claim**

- 3.1 There is no need to claim the basic flat rate allowance or any special responsibility allowances these are paid automatically.

- 3.2 Claims for Travel and/or Subsistence Allowance should be submitted monthly on the standard forms. These forms can be requested from Democratic Services and must be returned by the 7th of that month to ensure they are in your monthly allowance payment.
- 3.3 Claims should be submitted no later than 2 months after the date of the duty attended. Claims over 6 months old will not be paid, unless the express approval of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer is obtained.
- 3.4 Members must ensure that all claim forms are completed correctly and in full and all relevant receipts are attached. It is your responsibility to fill in the details of the meetings and the amounts that you are claiming for travel or subsistence. You must also ensure that the meetings in question are eligible for such allowances as listed in section 1. When you sign your claim form you are declaring that all the information is present and correct. Any incomplete claims will be returned to you.
- 3.5 Claims for Travel Allowance are subject to deductions for Income Tax and National Insurance for journeys between home and ESFRS Headquarters (designated place of work) but not for journeys to/from other locations.

## **4 How allowances are paid**

- 4.1 One-twelfth of the basic allowance and any special responsibility allowance is paid each month together with any travel and subsistence allowances which have been claimed. Payment is made direct to a bank account and a payslip showing a breakdown of pay and deductions is provided electronically.

## **5 Election not to receive payment**

- 5.1 A Member may elect to forgo entitlement or any part of their entitlement to allowances under the Scheme, by notifying the Chief Fire Officer in writing. In practice this relates to the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance, which are the allowances which will otherwise be paid automatically.

## **6 Dependents' Carers' Allowance**

- 6.1 It is outside the powers of the Authority to approve Dependents' Carers' Allowance. However, it is possible for the Constituent Authorities to pay Dependents' Carers' Allowance to Members of the Authority in limited circumstances. Members should contact their Constituent Authority to find out if they are entitled.

## **7 Tax and Insurance**

- 7.1 It is Members responsibility to satisfy themselves personally that their tax and insurance arrangements are in order and they should consult their own advisers as they think fit about these matters.

## **8 Statutory Sick Pay**

- 8.1 Provided certain requirements are satisfied, Members can claim Statutory Sick Pay from their respective Constituent Authority to whom they should approach for further details as being the primary employer in this respect.

## **9 Social Security Benefits**

- 9.1 The receipt of allowances may affect Members who are receiving Social Security Benefits. All allowances should be declared to the DWP who will be able to advise Members about the way in which allowances affect benefits such as Income Support.
- 9.2 Members should note that failure to disclose any allowances to the DWP may result in prosecution.

## **10 Insurance**

- 10.1 The Authority provides some insurance cover for Members when they are engaged on business which relates to their activities for the Authority. The insurance does not cover Party Political activities.
- 10.2 The insurance covers certain risks in the following broad categories:
- Public Liability
  - Officials Indemnity
  - Libel and Slander
  - Employers Liability
  - Personal Accident Insurance
  - Business Travel Insurance.
- 10.3 For further details relating to the extent of this cover Members should contact the Fire and Rescue Service's Finance Manager.

## **11 Updating of Allowances**

- 11.1 The rates of basic and special responsibility shall be upgraded by using the national headline increase applied to Local Government Support (LGS) staff.



- 11.2 The upgrade shall take effect on and from 1 April, based upon the headline increase of the previous year's national pay award for LGS staff.
- 11.3 The Chief Fire Officer shall keep the travel and subsistence rates under review
- 11.4 The Policy & Resources Panel shall monitor this and other Combined Fire Authorities' (CFAs) allowance schemes to ensure that it remains equitable and fair.