

# Thame Town Council

## Members' Allowance Scheme

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Councillors' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, Thame Town Council agrees to pay the following allowances to Councillors of the Council. The Scheme shall continue until revoked or amended.
- 1.2 The Scheme takes account of the report from South Oxfordshire District Council's Remuneration Panel dated January 2008. It is in accordance with and does not exceed the recommendations contained in the report.

### 2. Definitions

- 2.1 In this scheme, Councillor means a Councillor of Thame Town Council who is an elected Councillor or a co-opted Councillor pursuant to the appropriate regulations.

'Year' means the period from 1 April to 31 March.

### 3. Basic Allowance

- 3.1 A Basic Allowance of £320 per year shall be paid to each Councillor and reviewed annually with regard to the recommendations of the appropriate Local Independent Remuneration Panel. Chairman can have additional responsibilities above their duties as an ordinary Councillor and this is reflected in an enhanced payment of £400 per annum.
- 3.2 The Town Mayor will receive a Civic Allowance to cover Civic Duties under Section 15a Local Government Act 1972 during the year of office.
- 3.3 Payment of the allowance shall be paid by BACS payable to the Councillor's nominated bank account or by cheque.
- 3.4 Where a Councillor is suspended or partially suspended from his/her responsibilities or duties as a Councillor of the Town Council in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part, the part of the basic allowance payable to him/her in respect of the responsibilities or duties from which he/she is suspended or partially suspended will be withheld by the Council.
- 3.5 Where payment of the allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which the Councillor is:
  - i) Suspended or partially suspended from the responsibilities or duties as a Councillor of the Council in accordance with Part 111 of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made there under;
  - ii) Ceases to be a Councillor;

- iii) Is in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period,

the Council may require that such part of the allowance as relates to any such period be repaid.

- 3.6 Where the term of office of a Councillor begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, the Councillor's entitlement shall be to payment of such part of the allowance proportionate as to the number of days during which their term of office lasted.
- 3.7 Where the term of office of Mayor begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, their entitlement for the period during which they hold office of Mayor to the additional allowance under the Scheme shall be to payment of such part of the additional allowance will be proportionate to the number of days as Mayor.

#### **4. Travelling and Subsistence Allowance**

- 4.1 A Councillor shall be entitled to travel allowances under the Scheme in respect of the performance of an **approved** duty outside the administrative area of the Council. Councillors are entitled to travel the most conveniently available means within their choice however, the overall policy for travelling is based on the principle that the most cost effective means of travel is adopted, bearing in mind the numbers of Councillors travelling, the health and fitness of Councillors, the distance and location of the venue and the availability of public transport.
- 4.2 The rate for travel by a Councillor's own private vehicle, or belonging to a member of their family or otherwise provided for their own private vehicle or one provided for their use shall be paid at the rate of:
  - a) The amount per mile determined from time to time by HMRC as being a true reimbursement of costs incurred and therefore tax neutral.
  - b) For the use of a motor cycle of all cylinder capacities – 60% of the sum referred to in a) above.

The rate for travel by taxi shall not exceed the actual fare paid and any reasonable gratuity and must be supported by a receipt.

Bus fares, rail fares (Standard Class only), tolls and parking fees will be reimbursed at actual cost.

- 4.3 Subsistence allowances for meals will only be paid when a Councillor is required to undertake an approved duty more than five miles from Thame. Breakfast can only be claimed for if a Councillor needs to leave Thame prior to 7.00am; thereafter up to three meals a day can be claimed at intervals of five hours or more if meals are not otherwise provided.
- 4.4 Travel reimbursements and any subsistence allowance will be paid in arrears. Claim forms are provided for the purpose of claiming and must be supported by receipts.

- 4.5 If a Councillor uses their car or otherwise privately owned vehicle for a purpose relating to the role of Councillor (excluding travel from home to the Council's offices), they must ensure that their insurance company is aware that the vehicle is being used for 'Council Business' purposes.

## **5. Claims**

- 5.1 A claim for travel and subsistence allowances under this Scheme must be made in writing within three months of the date of the meeting in respect of which the entitlement to the allowances arises. A Councillor who is also a member of another council may not claim or receive payments from more than one council in respect of the same duties.

## **6. National Insurance**

- 6.1 National Insurance contributions are payable on any payment of Basic Allowances and taxable expenses, provided the gross amount of all the total payments reaches the lower earnings limit and no Certificate of Age Exception or Certificate of Earners' Non-liability is produced. Individual Councillors are responsible for ensuring the Department of Works and Pensions is kept informed of any declarable payments.

## **7. Forgoing Allowances**

- 7.1 A Councillor may elect to forego any part of his or her entitlement to an allowance under this Scheme by giving notice in writing to the Town Clerk. This right must be exercised prior to 1 April in any year and will apply for the whole of the ensuing year ending 31 March.

## **8. Councillors Personal Accident Cover**

- 8.1 The Council has a personal accident cover insurance policy for its Members, which covers the death or bodily injury sustained whilst engaged in the business of the Council. Full details of cover or to make a claim a Councillor should contact the Town Clerk.

## **9. Amendment and Revocation of the Scheme**

- 9.1 This Scheme will be reviewed in its entirety at the beginning of every new administration of the Council following the four yearly elections.
- 9.2 The Scheme may be amended at any time by a simple majority of those present and voting at a meeting of the Full Council. For the avoidance of doubt the annual review of amounts payable under the Scheme shall not be construed as an amendment.
- 9.3 The Scheme may only be revoked in its entirety from the beginning of a Council Year.

## **10. Records of Allowances**

- 10.1 In accordance with Regulations 31 of Local Authorities (Members' allowances)

(England) Regulations 2003 the Council will maintain records of the payments made to each Councillor in respect of the Basic Scheme and Travelling and Subsistence Allowance.

- 10.2 These records will be available for inspection by any local government elector for Thame who will be provided with a copy of such record or records as they request. By 30 April of each year the Council will also publish a notice stating the sums paid to each Councillor in respect of the Basic Scheme and Travelling and Subsistence Allowance.