

Title of Report:	Scheme of Allowances 2025/2026 update
Committee Report Submitted To:	Finance Committee
Date of Meeting:	13 November 2025
For Decision or For Information	For information
To be discussed In Committee YES/NO	No

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Council has agreed policies and procedures and decision making is consistent with them.
Lead Officer	Chief Finance Officer

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	31 March 2025

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£993,530
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	YES/NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	YES/NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes /No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes /No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes /No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes /No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes /No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes /No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

This report provides an update to members regarding changes to the Scheme of Allowances in light of updated Department Guidance, LG17/2025 issued in October 2025.

2.0 Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council must establish a scheme of allowances payable to Members annually. The scheme provides for the payment of allowances to Councillors on the basis that:

- 1 – The maximum level of basic allowance as determined by the Department for Communities (DfC) is paid
- 2 – The maximum level of carers allowances as determined by the DfC are paid
- 3 – The maximum level of mileage rates as determined by the DfC are paid
- 4 – Councillors' payments are made on the third last banking day of each month

2.1 Detail

The scheme of allowances for 2025/26 v3, a copy of which has been included with this report, considers a number of factors:

- 1 – basic allowance – increases to £18,916 – increase has been budgeted for in the 2025/26 estimates
- 2 – mileage rates
- 3 – rates for dependant carer's allowance
- 4 – Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)

The four items are in keeping with the normal periodic update of the scheme of allowances.

2.2 Amendments

Circular LG 17/2025 (attached as an appendix) from DfC dated October 2025 sets out the revised consolidated Councillor's Allowances guidance, as our scheme is predicated on the inclusion of the maximum rates allowable under departmental guidance any updates to rates of basic allowance will be automatically applied Council having agreed this following the March 2025 Finance Committee. The update will be effective from and backdated to 1 April 2025.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

Scheme of allowances payable to Councillors

This scheme is made under the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019.

In this scheme:

- approved duties are as listed in Schedule 1, as provided for in the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019;
- Department means the Department for Communities;
- Guidance means the Department for Communities guidance on Councillors' allowances, LG12/2025 issued in April 2025; and
- Regulations means the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019.

1. Basic Allowance

- 1.1 Subject to sub-paragraph 2.3 and paragraph 6 below, for the year ending on 31 March 2026
- 1.2 an annual basic allowance of £18,916(≠) shall be paid to each member.
- 1.3 Not more than one basic allowance is payable to any councillor
- 1.4 Where applicable this will be paid pro-rata.

≠ (The basic allowance includes an element for incidental and consumable costs incurred by councillors in their official capacity. In 2015/16 this element was £1,000 and each year this amount is uplifted in line with the increase applied to the basic allowance, therefore this element within the basic allowance is £1,331 from 1 April 2025.)

2. Mayor's, Deputy Mayor's and Special Responsibility Allowance

- 2.1 For the year ending 31 March 2026, Mayor's, Deputy Mayor's and special responsibility allowances shall be paid to councillors as follows:

Mayor	£12,000
Deputy Mayor	£5,000
Partnership Panel Representative	£1,000
Committee Chair (x5)	£3,000
Audit Committee Chair	£750
Planning Committee member*	£2,400

Planning committee recipient to rotate annually with 8/7 members receiving.

- 2.2 Subject to paragraph 3.4 and paragraph 6 below, the amount of each such allowance shall be the amount specified in paragraph 3.1. Regulation 5 of the 2019 Regulations stipulates that a special responsibility allowance must not be paid to more than 50% of the councillors in the Council.
- 2.3 Not more than one special responsibility allowance is payable to any councillor, in the event of a Councillor qualifying for more than one allocation the higher amount shall be paid.
- 2.4 Where applicable the allowances in 2.1 above will be paid pro-rata.

3. Dependants' Carer's Allowance

- 3.1 Councillors are entitled to claim a dependants' carer's allowance towards reimbursement of actual reasonable costs necessarily incurred in providing care for a dependant while carrying out an approved duty.
- 3.2 A dependant lives with a claimant and is defined as:
- a child under 16 years old;
 - a child 16 years old or more, where there is medical/social work evidence that full-time care is required;
 - an adult with a recognised physical/mental disability where there is medical/social work evidence that full-time care is required; or
 - an elderly relative requiring full-time care.
- 3.3 A dependants' carer's allowance shall be payable based upon actual receipted costs or at the appropriate hourly rate, whichever is the lower; up to the monthly maximum. Payments shall be at the rates given in paragraph 3.4, which are subject to the limits determined by the Department.
- 3.4 For the year ending 31 March 2026, the hourly rate of dependants' carer's allowance for standard care shall be £12.21*, and for specialised care shall be £24.42. The monthly maximum for standard care paid to individual councillors shall be £635, and the monthly maximum for specialised care shall be £1,270. Councillors may claim only one DCA in respect of each occurrence of approved duty. Only one DCA rate is payable even if there are 2 or more children/dependants being cared for.

* based on national living wage

4. Travel and Subsistence Allowances

- 4.1 A councillor or committee member is entitled to claim travel and subsistence allowances where expenditure on travelling and subsistence has been necessarily incurred in connection with an approved duty as specified in Schedule 1.
- 4.2 The rates of travel allowance for travel by public transport shall not exceed the actual amount paid. Where reasonably available, the cheapest available form of public transport should be used, except in urgent cases.
- 4.3 The rates of travel allowance for travel by private vehicle shall be the amounts shown below, which are within the maxima determined by the Department.

Type of Vehicle	Rate
A pedal cycle	20.0p per mile
A motor cycle – all engine capacities	24.0p per mile
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 450cc but not exceeding 999cc	46.9p per mile 13.7p per mile*
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 999cc but not exceeding 1,199cc	52.2p per mile 14.4p per mile*
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 1,199cc	65.0p per mile 16.4p per mile*
An electric car	45.0p per mile 25.0p per mile**
Passenger rate	5.0p per mile

* National Joint Council for Local Government Services – casual user rates after 8,500 miles.

** For mileage above 10,000 miles

- 4.4 The rates of subsistence shall be the amounts shown below, which are within the maxima determined by the Department.

Period/M meal	Rates	
	British Isles £	London £
An absence involving an overnight stay only , away from the normal place of residence	100.70	122.45
Breakfast Allowance (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period before 11am)	11.50	11.50
Lunch Allowance (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 12 noon and 2pm)	13.50	13.50
Tea Allowance (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 3pm and 6pm)	4.70	4.70
Evening Meal Allowance (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period ending after 7pm)	20.95	20.95
Sub-total for meals	50.65	50.65
Total maximum rate (absence of 24 hours)	151.35	173.10

Note: **All** claims must be supported by appropriate receipts relating to actual expenses incurred.

- 4.5 The amount claimed for subsistence should include VAT
- 4.6 The amount claimed for subsistence should not include any alcohol.

5. Part-Year Entitlement

- 5.1 This scheme may be revoked and amended at any time.
- 5.2 The amounts stated in paragraph 1 will be subject to any indexing increase during the year
- 5.3 The amounts stated in paragraph 3 will be subject to any increase to the national living wage.
- 5.4 If an amendment to this scheme is made which affects the payment of a basic allowance or special responsibility allowance in the year in which the amendment is made, then in relation to each of the periods:
- beginning with the year and ending with the day before that day on which the first amendment in that year takes effect; or
 - beginning with the day on which an amendment takes effect and ending with the day before that day on which the next amendment takes effect, (if none) with the year,

the entitlement to such allowance shall reflect the proportion of the year when entitlement existed.

- 5.5 Where the term of office of a councillor begins or ends other than at the beginning or end of a year, entitlement to a basic allowance shall reflect the proportion of the year when entitlement existed.
- 5.6 Where a councillor has during a part of, but not throughout, a year such special responsibilities as attract entitlement to a special responsibility allowance, that entitlement shall reflect the proportion of the year when entitlement existed.
- 5.7 Where a councillor is suspended or partially suspended from his or her responsibilities or duties as a councillor, in accordance with section 59(5) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, the part of the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowance, or Mayor/Deputy Mayor allowance payable to the Councillor in respect of the period for which the Councillor is suspended or partially suspended, will be withheld.

6. Claims and Payment

- 6.1 Payments regarding basic allowance and special responsibility allowance shall be made in *instalments of one twelfth of the amount specified in this scheme on the third last banking day of each month.*
- 6.2 Claims for dependants' carer's allowance, travelling allowance or subsistence allowance should be made in writing within three months of the end of the month being claimed for, and should be accompanied by receipts, where appropriate.

SCHEDULE 1

In accordance with Regulations, only the following are specified as the duties in respect of which basic allowance, dependants' carers' allowances, and travel and subsistence allowances are available.

1. attendance at a meeting of the council;
2. attendance at a meeting of a committee of the council;
3. attendance at a meeting of a sub-committee of the council;
4. attendance at a meeting of a joint committee;
5. attendance at a meeting of a sub-committee of a joint committee;
6. attendance at a meeting of a group committee established under the provisions of the Local Government (Employment of Group Building Control Staff) (Northern Ireland) 1994 or the Local Government (Employment of Group Environmental Health Staff) Order (Northern Ireland) 1994; or
7. the doing of anything approved by a council or anything of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the council, or any of its committees or sub-committees, or as the case may be, of the joint committee or any of its sub-committees.

A site visit is now included in the list of approved duties and a site visit is defined as a visit made by a councillor in connection with an application for planning permission:

- which has been referred to a council for consultation under Part 2 of The Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016.; or
- at the request of the applicant for that planning permission, or the agent of an applicant, or at the request of an objector to that application.

Regarding Point 7, specific duties approved by Council include:-

- Conferences, Courses and Seminars
- Civic Functions
- Official & Courtesy Visits
- Special Council Meetings
- Attendance at a meeting of a working group/sub-committee of the Council, or other meeting related to the functions of the Council.
- Meetings of all outside bodies to which councillors are appointed, and meetings at which representation is required by councillors as a result of sitting on various groups/committees. Membership of these bodies has been rolled forward until the end of the Council term. Any member not wishing to be on an outside body can be replaced by a party colleague or if the party does not wish to retain the position, an alternative can be nominated at an appropriate Committee meeting of Council.



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

From: Gerard Murray

Chief Executive of each District Council
Finance Officer of each District Council
Other Interested Parties

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Our ref: CO1-25-3729

20 October 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

CIRCULAR LG 17/2025 - CONSOLIDATED COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES
CIRCULAR (Updated October 2025)

This Local Government Circular provides a consolidated record of all councillor allowances and supersedes Local Government Circular LG 12/2025.

This consolidated circular is required to determine and reflect a further increase of 3.20% in maximum rates for Basic and Special Responsibility Allowance from 1 April 2025.

You will be aware that the Department is seeking an amendment to the relevant legislation to transfer responsibility for setting the rate of this allowance paid to councillors to the Department. We will keep you informed as this progresses.

All determinations are made by the Department under section 31 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019.

If you have any queries on the content of this circular please contact Jeff Glass on 028 9082 3375 or Ian Lewis on 028 9082 3506 or by email jeff.glass@communities-ni.gov.uk or ian.lewis@communities-ni.gov.uk .

Yours sincerely,

GERARD MURRAY
Director of Local Government and Housing Regulation

1. Basic Allowance

- valid from 1 April 2025 (as per the Review of Councillors Allowances)

Basic Allowance
Maximum £18,329 per annum ≠

≠ (The basic allowance includes an element for incidental and consumable costs incurred by councillors in their official capacity. In 2015/16 this element was £1,000 and each year this amount is uplifted in line with the increase applied to the basic allowance, therefore this element within the basic allowance is £1,290 from 1 April 2025.)

- further increase valid from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

Basic Allowance
Maximum £18,916 per annum ≠

≠ (The basic allowance includes an element for incidental and consumable costs incurred by councillors in their official capacity. In 2015/16 this element was £1,000 and each year this amount is uplifted in line with the increase applied to the basic allowance, therefore this element within the basic allowance is £1,331 from 1 April 2025.)

2. Dependants' Carers' Allowance

- valid from 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

The following table states the maximum rates for dependants' carers' allowance.

Dependants' Carers' Allowance	Hourly Rate	Maximum Monthly Amount
	£	£
Standard	11.44^	595
Specialist	22.88	1,190

^(Based on national living wage)

- valid from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

The following table states the maximum rates for dependants' carers' allowance.

Dependants' Carers' Allowance	Hourly Rate	Maximum Monthly Amount
	£	£
Standard	12.21^	635
Specialist	24.42	1,270

^(Based on national living wage)

3. Travel Allowances

– valid from 1 April 2017

The following table states the maximum rates for travel allowances.

Type of Vehicle	Rate per Mile Pence	Rate per Mile Above 8,500 miles Pence	Rate per Mile Above 10,000 miles Pence
A pedal cycle	20.0p	20.0p	20.0p
A motor cycle (all engine capacities)	24.0p	24.0p	24.0p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 450cc but not exceeding 999cc	46.9p	13.7p	13.7p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 999cc but not exceeding 1,199cc	52.2p	14.4p	14.4p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 1,199cc	65.0p	16.4p	16.4p
An electric car	45.0p	45.0p	25.0p
Passenger rate (per passenger)	5.0p	5.0p	5.0p

4. Special Responsibility Allowance

– valid from 1 April 2025

The following table states the maximum rate of Special Responsibility Allowance that a council may pay. The maximum rate is based on the size of the council population. Each council's population figures are updated each year by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and it is the duty of each council to operate within the total maximum rate appropriate to its population band. For ease the maximum any councillor can receive, within each band, is also provided.

Population of council	Maximum Special Responsibility Allowance £	Maximum (1/5th) for individual councillor £
Less than 120,000	63,426	12,685
120,000 to 199,000	88,796	17,759
200,000 +	136,999	27,400

5. Subsistence Allowances

– valid from 1 April 2015

The following table states the maximum rates for subsistence; however, where councils believe it is necessary there is flexibility for councils to increase these rates by applying a suitable measure of price inflation.

PERIOD/MEAL	British Isles Rates £	London Rates £
Accommodation allowance - An absence involving an overnight stay, away from the normal place of residence. This rate does not include any meal allowance.	100.70	122.45
Breakfast allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period before 11 am)	11.50	11.50
Lunch allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 12 noon and 2pm)	13.50	13.50
Tea allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 3pm and 6pm)	4.70	4.70
Evening meal allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period ending after 7pm)	20.95	20.95