***Pembrokeshire Coast***

***National Park Authority***



**POLICY ON CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS COSTS OF CARE ALLOWANCE FOR MEMBERS**

February 2023

This document is also available in Welsh

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The purpose of this policy on contributions towards costs of care allowance is to enable people who have personal support needs and/or caring responsibilities to carry out their duties effectively as a Member of the Authority. We believe that additional costs of care required to carry out approved duties should not deter an individual from becoming, and remaining, a Member, or limit their ability to carry out the role.

**2. Eligibility of Members**

2.1 The policy applies to all Members and Co-opted Members of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority. Any member who meets the following criteria set out by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales is eligible to claim for a contribution towards the cost of care.

2.2 Reimbursement of a contribution towards of costs of care shall be paid to a Member or Co-opted Member, who has caring responsibility for dependent children or adults, or a personal care requirement, provided the Member incurs expenses in the provision of such care whilst undertaking approved duties on behalf of the Authority.

2.3 A claim for a contribution towards the costs of care can be made in respect of a dependant under 16 years of age, or a minor or adult who normally lives with the Member or Co-opted Member as part of their family and who cannot be left unsupervised. If a Member or Co-opted Member has more than one dependant the Member may claim more than one allowance, provided the Member or Co-opted Member can demonstrate a need to make separate arrangements for care.

2.4 Reimbursement may be claimed for a Member’s or Co-opted Member’s own care or support needs where the support and/or cost of any additional needs are not available or are not directly met by the Authority, such as Access to Work, Personal Independence Payments, or insurance. These could arise when the needs are recent and temporary.

**3. Approved duties**

3.1 Approved duties are classified as:

* attendance at a meeting of the Authority or of any Committee of the Authority or of any body to which the Authority makes appointments or nominations or of any committee of such a body;
* attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the Authority is a member;
* attendance at any other meeting the holding of which is authorised by the Authority or by a Committee of the Authority;
* a duty undertaken in pursuance of a Standing Order which requires a Member or Members to be present when tender documents are opened;
* a duty undertaken in connection with the discharge of any function of the Authority which empowers or requires the Authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises;
* attendance at any training or developmental event approved by the Authority;
* any other duty approved by the Authority, or any duty of class so approved, undertaken for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the Authority or any of its Committees.

3.2 In addition, a claim can also be submitted for appropriate and reasonable preparation and travelling time, e.g.

(a) attending official briefings/meetings with officers in the Authority’s office;

(b) preparation for meetings in the Member’s or Co-opted Member’s home to include reading agendas and reports;

(c) one claim of up to 4 hours’ preparation undertaken at home will be eligible for each meeting, the date of the meeting and the time spent on preparation to be clearly stated in the claim.

**4. Claim process**

4.1 Eligible Members or Co-opted Members may claim reimbursement of a contribution towards costs of care for actual and receipted costs incurred, as follows:

(a) formal (registered with Care Inspectorate Wales) care costs to be paid as evidenced, or

(b) informal (unregistered) care costs to be paid up to a maximum rate equivalent to the Real Living Wage hourly rates as defined by the Living Wage Foundation at the time the costs are incurred.

**N.B.** For clarification, care costs cannot be paid to someone who is part of a Member’s or Co-opted Member’s household.

4.2 Contribution towards costs of care claims **and receipts** should be submitted by the 5th of each month, using the claim form provided. Different forms must be used for each calendar month.

4.3 All claims should be made in writing to Democratic Services detailing times, dates and reasons for claim for audit purposes. Receipts are required for both informal and formal care arrangements.

4.4 For Members appointed by local authorities, claims will be checked with the relevant officer in that authority to avoid any duplication of claims. If claims are found retrospectively to have been duplicated the Member will be asked to make a repayment to the Authority.

4.5 Members’ entitlement to receive contributions to costs of care and personal assistance is referenced in the Authority’s annual Schedule of Member Remuneration, however costs are not attributed to individual Members.