



# **MEMBERS TRAVEL POLICY**

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# **MEMBERS TRAVEL POLICY**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy covers all local, UK and foreign travel undertaken by Elected Members of Aberdeen City Council.

All financial transactions undertaken by or on behalf of the Council are also subject to the Council's Financial Regulations that are referenced in section 7.1 of this policy.

The purpose of this policy is therefore to ensure that all travel arrangements:

- Satisfy the purpose of travel;
- Demonstrate due regard for the safety and welfare of the Member; and
- Offer value for money and meet Financial Regulations.

The policy sets out key principles of compliance, purpose and outcome of travel, cost effectiveness of travel and approval responsibilities.

Appendix 1 to the policy contains detailed guidance for applying the policy.

The Members Travel Scheme for Aberdeen City Council comprises the policy, detailed guidance and associated request forms and records.

## **2. COMPLIANCE**

It is the duty of all Elected Members to fully comply with this Policy. Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy and the associated guidance and procedures may result in an investigation under the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

## **3. PURPOSE AND OUTCOME OF TRAVEL**

Members travel within and away from Aberdeen either to meet the business objectives of the Council or for specific Member defined travel activities.

### **Member travel to meet Council Business Objectives**

For UK and foreign travel to meet business objectives, a full description of the purpose of travel and outcome should be made before the travel is booked. Members will be asked to record how the travel purpose aligns to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes in order to achieve best value. This will be forwarded for approval by the Relevant Committee for foreign travel or Chief Officer for UK travel.

The objectives of the Council include the promotion of and participation in the economic development of the City. These are justifiable purposes for undertaking UK and foreign travel under this policy.

Applications which the Business Services Team considers are not fully completed in this respect may be referred to the Chief Officer - Finance.

### **Additional defined travel activities for Members**

In addition to meeting a clearly defined business purpose, Members may claim travel expenses for the following defined activities:

The Council Co-Leaders may attend meetings within the UK convened by or with other local authorities, Government departments, other statutory bodies or organisations at which matters relevant to the interests of the Council are to be considered.

- The Co-Leaders may be accompanied by an appropriate officer.
- The Co-Leaders may ask a substitute Elected Member of the Council to attend a meeting in his/her absence.

Similarly, the Convener of any Committee or Sub Committee or Policy Lead, may attend meetings within the UK convened by or with other local authorities, COSLA, joint negotiating bodies, Government departments, other statutory bodies or organisations at which matters relevant to the interests of the Convener's Committee or Sub Committee or Policy Leads are to be considered.

- The Convener may be accompanied by an appropriate officer.
- The Convener may ask a substitute Elected Member of the Committee to attend a meeting in his/her absence.

Members of the Council appointed to any office by COSLA, where that appointment has been notified to and approved by Council, are entitled to attend all meetings and conferences required by that appointment.

Members appointed to an outside body will be entitled to attend any ordinary meeting and the annual conference of that body.

The Lord Provost and Lord Lieutenant will be entitled to represent the City on all occasions within the UK when it is appropriate and customary for the City to be represented.

- The Lord Provost may be accompanied by an appropriate officer.

Where a Member is required to be accompanied because of an infirmity or disability, the travel and subsistence cost of the companion will be met by the Council on the same basis as the Member.

Any expenses and allowances payable to any Member attending a meeting or conference will be in accordance with the scheme approved by Council and the relevant approvals will apply.

#### **4. COST EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAVEL**

Members must choose the best value option and in that consideration of best value whether the travel is necessary, the most cost-effective mode of transport and the most economic time and date of travel.

Members are expected to exercise judgement regarding expenses incurred under this policy and to neither personally gain nor lose financially from its implementation.

Timeliness of travel booking is a key factor in cost effectiveness. All travel applications will be completed in a timely way when the travel need is identified to make best use of cost effective options.

Business Services can provide advice before the application is made on the best value option.

The travel application form requires Members and Relevant Chief Officers to confirm cost effectiveness checks and timeliness of the travel booking. Any applications which the Business Services team considers are not compliant in this respect will be referred to the relevant Chief Officer – Finance.

## **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF TRAVEL**

Before booking travel, claimants should consider whether the trip is necessary or whether teleconferencing or video conferencing offer a viable alternative.

When arranging travel, the Council encourages Members to use modes of transport that results in the least environmental impact. More energy efficient forms of transport such as electric and hydrogen vehicles and low emission vehicles should be considered more appropriate than high emission diesel vehicles.

Records are maintained and monitored of the estimated environmental impact of council travel costs. The Council has a clear intent to reduce the environmental impact of travel by being more efficient and use technology to avoid travel wherever possible.

## **6. APPROVAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

All travel and subsistence will be subject to a budget availability and cost effectiveness check by the relevant Chief Officer. The relevant Chief Officer will be the Officer responsible for the budget to which the travel will be charged.

Approval exceptions that are allowed within the policy detailed guidance in Appendix 1 (for example special needs requirements or higher cost due to lack of availability of accommodation) will be approved by the Chief Officer – Finance.

### **6.1 Foreign Travel**

The relevant Committee will approve programmes of foreign travel for the financial year ahead subject to a business case and ensuring the purpose of travel complies with the travel policy.

Where a requirement arises for foreign travel during the course of a financial year which was not included within the approved programme of foreign travel, the relevant Committee will require to authorise that travel.

### **6.2 Travel within UK**

The relevant Chief Officer will authorise all travel within the UK ensuring the purpose of travel meets the objectives and outcomes of the Council.

Travel in Scotland will be restricted to road and rail networks with the exception of the Northern and Western Isles where sea or air networks may be used.

Travel outside Scotland may involve air networks and therefore the approver should consider carefully the number of participants at events and the costs associated with this mode of transport.

### **6.3 Responsibility of the Chief Officer with the relevant Delegated Powers**

The Chief Officer - Finance is responsible for monitoring the Members Travel Policy. The Chief Officer - Finance shall ensure the Members Travel Policy is reviewed on annual basis. Operational experience will be taken into account in this review.

The Chief Officer - Finance may update the Detailed Guidance to the Members Travel Policy in Appendix 1 following consultation with the Business Manager and the Chief Officer – Customer Experience. Process improvements such as digitalisation do not require consultation unless the Chief Officer – Finance deems that necessary.

The Chief Officer - Customer Experience is responsible for administering the Members Travel Scheme and ensuring arrangements are in place to allow travel to be booked in accordance with this Members Travel Policy.

### **6.4 Responsibility of Relevant Chief Officers**

Relevant Chief Officers are responsible for approving Member travel within the UK and the Chief Officer – Finance is responsible for approving exceptions that are allowed within the scope of the Member travel policy.

Relevant Chief Officers are responsible for checking receipts and ensuring that the claim is appropriate to meet the business needs of the organisation.

All individual claims are not re-checked afterwards – they are subject to audit testing and sampling exercises routinely carried out throughout the year.

Relevant Chief Officers may delegate their responsibilities to a direct report as a depute to cover for annual leave and sickness, ensuring that the depute is fully aware of their responsibilities.

## **7. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

In applying this policy, compliance is required with all documents contained within the ACC Scheme of Governance, and specifically with the associated documents set out below.

### **7.1 Financial Regulations**

Financial Regulations are an integral part of the stewardship of Council Funds. Adhering to the Regulations ensures that all financial transactions of the Council are conducted in a manner which demonstrates openness, integrity and transparency. They form a significant part of the governance of the Council.

[https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s80098/AppE\\_FinancialRegs.pdf](https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s80098/AppE_FinancialRegs.pdf)

### **7.2 The Local Government (Allowances and Expenses) (Scotland) Regulations 2007**

Arrangements for Members travel must comply with the The Local Government (Allowances and Expenses) (Scotland) Regulations 2007. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure consistency with legislation.

**POLICY DETAILED GUIDANCE**

**A. DETAILED GUIDANCE – RELEVANT TO ALL TRAVEL**

**A.1 Booking and Approval**

The Council will fund approved, ordinary and necessary travel to undertake the business of the Council. All travel applications should be fully completed, authorised and emailed to [Travel@aberdeencity.co.uk](mailto:Travel@aberdeencity.co.uk) or sent to Travel Team, Business Services, Business Hub 15, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor South, Marischal College for processing.

All major travel expenses for UK and foreign travel should be booked by the Business Services Team. This allows the Council to ensure that this policy is observed, to achieve purchasing economies, to reclaim any VAT on purchases, to best use time, and to meet its duty of care.

**A.2 Personal Business**

Travel applications must include clear information on any time spent on non-Council business, personal travel, recovery time and any other non-Council related activity.

A Member may extend a business trip for personal reasons in accordance with the booking and approval section of this policy.

Incremental costs relating to extension must be paid for personally. It must be clearly demonstrated that Council business was the primary purpose of the visit.

Council insurance does not cover Members for the additional days of any extension of a business trip for personal reasons.

**A.3 General Exceptions**

The Chief Officer - Finance may approve requests for upgrades in class of travel, hotel or additional travel expenses where there is a documented health issue relating to the applicant or their family circumstances with corresponding medical advice that justify the additional cost involved in such a decision. In addition to upgrades, travel arrangements may be generally revised in such circumstances where an additional cost may be incurred to protect the safety and well-being of the Member.

In the event that the Member is attending an event hosted at a higher standard hotel, or has a business need for a higher standard hotel, then approval in advance is also required from the Chief Officer – Finance.

Where there is an exceptional personal or business need for choosing a travel method that is not the most cost effective option, then approval in advance is also required from the Chief Officer - Finance.

Evidence of the reason for such exceptions should be provided to the Business Services Team at the time of the request for a higher class or higher cost of travel in advance of the travel taking place.

#### **A.4 Travel Insurance and Emergencies**

The Council has a travel insurance policy with Zurich Municipal. The policy number is QLA-14U003-0013.

This policy covers all Council employees, Members and relevant representatives of the council for whom the council has accepted responsibility for travel insurance. The policy covers medical expenses, cancellations, delay, personal effects, etc. while engaged in foreign travel for a business purpose, subject to the policy terms and conditions.

Cover is provided for loss of money or personal property and, where expenses are incurred, receipts will be required to support any claim. In the event of theft, the loss should be reported to the police and a copy of their report obtained. Welfare assistance is also provided such as counselling, legal advice, security advice, bereavement advice.

If personal items such as jewellery, phones/tablets, watches etc. are taken on a trip then these are taken at an individual's own risk and are not covered under the policy, unless damage or loss is caused by an Aberdeen City employee. Should a Member want such items to be covered then this would need to be arranged by them independently of the council.

In the event of an emergency the number +44 (0)1489 868 888(*Security Assistance*) should be contacted immediately, but in any event within 48 hours of any serious accident or illness abroad requiring in patient hospitalisation, extended treatment or alteration to travel arrangements. The number is available 24 hours a day, including weekends and will accept call collect and reverse charge calls.

No arrangements should be made without involving and obtaining the agreement of *Security Assistance*.

An information letter and emergency phone numbers will be supplied by the Business Services Team as part of your travel information.

A copy of the insurance policy is available from the Business Services Team. Any concerns about the adequacy of this policy should be raised in advance with the Business Services Team so that these can be checked with the insurers prior to departure.

#### **A.5 Safety**

The Member and the approver should ensure a suitable and sufficient health and safety risk assessment is carried out, if required for the trip, and appropriate risk controls are in place.

This will identify, for example, any risk due to the country of location of the visit or due to the nature of activities being undertaken.

This form should be submitted to the Business Services Team along with the application form.



On receipt of the application, the Business Services Team will review the application and the risk assessment for relevant health and safety information relevant to the country(ies) being visited.

On receipt of any information from the Business Services Team, the Member and Relevant Chief Officer will agree any mitigating action to be taken to minimise risk.

It is the Member's responsibility to ensure, as far as practicable, that adequate steps are taken regarding personal safety. This will include maintaining links, and taking advice from, the host where appropriate.

Before travel, the Member should leave a mobile telephone number and/or a contact at the host organisation, with a nominated council contact, which may be the Relevant Chief Officer or Business Services Team. The nominated contact should also be provided with a copy of the Member's travel itinerary, including departure and arrival times for the journey, and accommodation details.

On arrival at the Member's travel destination, contact should be made with the council nominated officer to confirm arrival. This could be via text, telephone or email depending on time of arrival and the most practical way to maintain contact.

Members who may have specific health issues or who are not British Citizens are strongly advised to obtain their own travel advice in relation to the information that will be supplied as a result of these checks as the Business Services Team will not have access to personal information about each Member.

## **A.6 Calculation of monetary rates applicable**

### **Foreign Travel**

HMRC produces tables of subsistence rates that provide a measurable value for different countries and in some cases different cities / regions in countries. These represent 'moderated' values for each country that HMRC will allow to be 'given' to an individual by an organisation up to which HMRC is not to be considered for tax purposes. These tables are broken down into different elements of subsistence to provide a framework that can be used to make calculations for advance payments and they provide a reasonable basis upon which to base a scheme for individuals travelling abroad.

The Council uses these as the basis for its currency calculations for staff travelling abroad in respect of hotel and expense advance payments.

These will be updated in consultation with the Accounting team on an annual basis adjusted for the Consumer Price Index for Restaurants and Hotels.

### **UK Travel**

The maximum rates for expenses and allowances which may be claimed by Members are determined by the Scottish Government in The Local Government (Allowances and Expenses) (Scotland) Regulations 2007 as amended.

### **All Travel**

All such travel living expenses must be receipted. The full value of the currency advance payment will require to be accounted for and any balance remaining unspent

along with receipts must be returned. This is to comply with The Local Government (Allowances and Expenses) (Scotland) Regulations 2007:

4.—(1) A member of a local authority shall be entitled to receive payments from that authority by way of reimbursement of travel, subsistence or other expenditure incurred by that member (whether the expenditure is incurred inside or outside the United Kingdom) if all the requirements stated in paragraph (2) are met.

(2) The requirements are that—

- the expenditure on travel, or as the case may be on subsistence or in respect of other expenditure, is expenditure that is reasonably incurred by the member for the purpose of enabling them to perform any approved duty as a member of the local authority;
- the expenditure is of a type described in Schedule 2; and
- the expenditure is receipted (apart from road and bridge tolls).

(3) Where expenditure is of a type described in Schedule 2, the expenditure shall be payable to the member by the local authority in accordance with the provisions in this regulation, but not exceeding (for expenditure incurred inside the United Kingdom) such rates as are stated opposite each type of expenditure in Schedule 2.

Relevant types of expenditure in Schedule 2 referred to above are set out below:

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner
- Overnight accommodation
- Costs of travel by car, motorcycle or bicycle
- Road and bridge tolls
- Public transport
- Telephone and computer costs and calls for approved duties

## **B. DETAILED GUIDANCE FOR TYPES OF TRAVEL**

### **B.1 Air Travel**

Flights will be booked ensuring best value, buying tickets with fixed dates and times. The cost of tickets will be considered in terms of “overall value for money” and factors such as the predictability of travel plans, airline schedules and connection times may mean that a more expensive ticket provides better value for money under a specific set of circumstances.

The Business Services Team will consult with the applicant regarding appropriate flight time and carrier arrangements and to allow sufficient rest time following the flight. Flight arrangements will be made by the Business Services Team giving due weight to the three criteria of travel set out in the Purpose and Scope of this document. If the applicant wishes to extend the trip for personal reasons, then this should be made clear in advance to the Business Services Team with any excess cost being agreed to be funded by the applicant.

While the Member may retain frequent flyer benefits, these must not result in any incremental cost to the Council.

### **B.2 Hotel Accommodation**

Hotel accommodation will be booked in a convenient hotel to the business location. The hotel standard will be booked by the Business Services Team with reference to HMRC guideline rates dependent on the location. The Business Services Team will take advice from the Travel Partner on suitable accommodation options and where appropriate safety advice from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) will be considered when making bookings.

Where the cheapest available accommodation exceeds HMRC guidelines by up to 10% the Business Services Team may approve the higher cost. If the cost exceeds this guideline then it must be referred to the Chief Officer-Finance.

Wherever possible, breakfast should be included in the hotel rate. If this is not possible, the cost of breakfast should be claimed in accordance with guidance on living expenses. In the UK where possible, an evening meal will also be booked.

Upgrades to executive floors / rooms are not acceptable unless the hotel offers them on an entirely complimentary basis (as could be the case for frequent visitors).

Accommodation within the UK

In the case of an absence overnight from the usual place of residence the maximum rates of receipted reimbursement are set out in the Local Government (Allowances and Expenses) (Scotland) Regulations 2007 and schedules.

This reimbursement covers the cost of bed and breakfast whether accommodation is booked on a “room only” or “bed and breakfast” basis.

### **B.3 Ground Transport**

Train travel will be booked in a class equivalent to UK standard class, buying tickets with fixed dates and times. If the applicant is in possession of a rail card, then this

should be notified at the time of booking for the Council to benefit from any relevant discounts.

Buses offer a cost-effective means of travel and will be considered as an option for local and UK travel.

Hire cars will be booked using a category sufficient for the number of passengers and luggage to be carried. The Business Services Team will make the necessary arrangements using the relevant Travel Partner. Hire cars should be considered as they can be a value for money option to meet the business need. Situations and circumstances where this should be used are where the cost of group travel by public transport is excessive, inaccessibility of the destination by public transport, personal safety, travel time and, weight of luggage.

Taxi use should be restricted to situations where personal safety, travel time, weight of luggage, inaccessibility of destination by public transport, or the cost of group travel by public transport makes a taxi journey clearly necessary.

#### **B.4 Car Travel**

The hire of cars (as referred to in the section above) and use of the Co-Wheels car club (<http://www.co-wheels.org.uk/>) scheme is usually the first and most cost-effective option. If a private car is the most cost-effective method of ground transport the Council will pay mileage for the actual distance covered for business purposes.

It is the Member's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy at all times and is taxed and has a current MOT certificate (if an MOT certificate is legally required). Members must also ensure that they have a valid driving license and that they have the relevant business use motor insurance in place at the time of travel. The cost of adding business use onto a personal motor insurance policy cannot be claimed by the Member.

**Mileage claims are made by a Travel and Subsistence Claim form.**

#### **Parking, congestion charges, tolls, ferries and other driving-related penalties**

Reasonable expenses incurred on parking, congestion charges, tolls and ferries may be claimed in respect of journeys which qualify for the mileage payments above. Receipts or other documentary evidence should be submitted as part of the claim.

Charges for overnight parking will be paid only when subsistence expenses are payable for the night(s) in question.

Should a Member be liable for clamping or other parking / congestion charge penalty (e.g. because a meeting over runs or due to non-payment of a congestion charge) then reimbursement of the charge will not be made. Similarly, reimbursements will not be made to a Member who receives a fine or other financial penalty relating to an offence committed whilst driving on Council business (e.g. for speeding or for using a hand held mobile phone or similar device). **Members are required to notify the Council of any such offences and penalties.**

## **C. DETAILED GUIDANCE FOR LIVING EXPENSES**

### **C.1 Foreign Currency Advance Payment Application**

For foreign travel, an advance payment to cover travel living expenses will normally be paid by means of a currency application in advance of travel. This will include an advance payment to cover breakfast, lunch and dinner based on HMRC recommended guidelines for the location to be visited. If meals have been booked as part of the travel arrangements or are provided by the host, then that will not be included in the currency advance payment. In addition, if it has not been possible to pay hotel costs in advance, it will include an advance payment for the hotel.

**All such travel living expenses have to be receipted. The full value of the currency advance payment will require to be accounted for and any balance remaining unspent along with receipts must be returned to the Business Services Team within seven days of returning to Aberdeen. All cases of non-compliance will be referred to the relevant Chief Officer and may result in recovery of advance payments.**

It is the responsibility of the Member to notify the Business Services Team of meals (or other living expenses) supplied as part of the travel / conference arrangements

The advance payment will be based on the time the Member is expected to be based in the foreign location based on 24-hour, 10 hour and 5-hour time periods up to the total expected time away. Calculations will be based on the scheduled time of arrival in the first country outside the United Kingdom of Great Britain (UK) and the scheduled time of departure of the route returning to the UK. Living expenses outside these times will be deemed UK travel and claimed in the normal way (see C.3. below).

The currency issued will be in the relevant local currency of the destination country. If more than one country is being visited, then this will be identified in the itinerary and a relevant split of currency will be made based on the time spent in each destination.

### **C.2 Foreign Currency Float**

In addition to the foreign currency application, the Member may apply for a float to meet the cost of minor travel expenses. **Floats for overseas travel must be submitted to the Chief Officer with the relevant delegated powers for approval. The full value of the Float will require to be accounted for and any balance remaining unspent must be returned to the Business Services Team within seven days of returning to Aberdeen.**

The Foreign Travel Float application should detail the itinerary of the Member(s) and any specific minor travel expenses that are known and likely to be incurred, e.g. taxis or hospitality. In general, a sum of £25 per 24 hours and part thereof will be calculated for minor travel expenses unless there is a clear and demonstrable need to provide a greater value on any day.

The currency issued will be in the relevant local currency of the destination country. If more than one country is being visited, then this will be identified in the itinerary and a relevant split of currency will be made based on the time spent in each destination.

### **C.3 Travel and Subsistence Claim Form**

For UK travel, living expenses will normally be paid by completion of a travel and subsistence claim form after travel has taken place. All such expenses must be receipted (in the unusual event that no receipt is available full justification / explanation must be given and accepted by the Chief Officer - Finance).

Travel and subsistence claim forms should not be used for recovering travel expenses that should be booked through a Business Services Team. In exceptional circumstances where it is necessary and expedient to do so, Members may book travel independently and payment will be authorised by the Chief Officer – Finance.

Payroll will forward a copy of all foreign travel expenses claims to the Business Services Team to confirm that the claimant has not already received currency to cover the costs either through Foreign Currency Expenses or Foreign Currency Float.

### **C.4 Inadmissible living expenses**

#### **Expenses the Council will NOT pay for:**

Personal telephone calls;  
Personal internet access;  
Parking fines and traffic offences;  
Mini-bar or in-room entertainment;  
Newspapers;  
Clothing or any other items that the Member may reasonably be expected to bring from home;  
Excess luggage costs, unless the Member is required to travel with significant quantities of business materials or equipment. This should be identified at the time of booking major travel expenses so that the Council can take account of reduced rates for booking this in advance;  
Laundry costs and dry-cleaning (except where the period of travel covers more than 5 days);  
Membership of airline frequent flyer / loyalty schemes or similar;  
Alcoholic drinks, tobacco products, personal gratuities;  
Travel Insurance;  
Equipment, materials or services that should be bought through the normal procurement process e.g. computers, phones.

Any claim that contains an item listed above (or similar) will require explicit approval by the relevant Chief Officer. In a travel emergency, the situation may arise where such expenditure may be appropriate.

## **D. MISCELLANEOUS DETAILED GUIDANCE**

### **D.1 Entertaining and Gift Expenses**

Members must not accept any offer by way of gift or hospitality which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on your part to show favour or disadvantage to any individual or organisation. Members should also consider whether there may be a reasonable perception that any gift received by your spouse or cohabitee or by any company in which you have a controlling interest, or by a partnership of which you are a partner, can or would influence your judgement. The term “gift” includes benefits such as relief from indebtedness, loan concession, or provision of services at a cost below that generally charged to members of the public.

Members must never ask for gifts or hospitality.

Members are personally responsible for all decisions connected with acceptance of gifts or hospitality offered to you and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in your Council and in local government. As a general guide, it is usually appropriate to refuse offers except:

- \* isolated gifts or a trivial character, the value of which must not exceed £50
- \* normal hospitality associated with your duties and which would reasonably be regarded as appropriate; or
- \* civic gifts received on behalf of the Council.

Members must not accept any offer of a gift or hospitality from any individual or organisation who is an applicant awaiting a decision from the Council or who is seeking to do business or continue to do business with the Council. If you are making a visit to inspect equipment, vehicles, land or property, then as a general rule you should ensure that the Council pays for the costs of these visits.

Members must only accept offers to attend social or sporting events where these are clearly part of the life of the community or whether the Council would be expected to be represented.

Members must only accept offers to attend social or sporting events where these are clearly part of the life of the community or where the Council would be expected to be represented.

Members must not accept repeated hospitality or repeated gifts from the same source.

If it is the practice of the Council to seek sponsorship from some of its activities or events, Members must ensure that your involvement with the sponsors is limited to the event in question and does not damage public confidence in the relationship between the Council and the sponsors

### **D.2 Travel Funded by Grant Expenditure**

Travel costs that are met by grant expenditure are subject to the same policy as all Council travel. The Member should ensure that the Council maximises the income to the Council in respect of that travel and grant claims are made in a timely and effective way.

### **D.3 Monitoring of Expenditure**

All major and minor travel expenses are subject to regular checks and performance monitoring information is gathered in respect of expenditure. Reports of expenditure may be presented to the Chief Officer Finance and Corporate Management Team and in general this would normally be anonymised. Attention may, however, be drawn to trip activity of high volume claimants.

From time to time the Council may be required to publish information relating to expenses claimed for instance in response to a Freedom of Information request.



## Appendix B

### Main Changes Between Current Policy and New Policy

	Change	Page
1	The previous policy was a combined Member and Officer travel policy	All
2	Section 1 – Introduction – the link to the Councils Financial Regulations is more strongly referenced in the new policy	3
3	Section 3 – Members travel to meet Council Business Objectives. There is a new requirement to record how the travel purpose aligns to outcomes in order to demonstrate Best Value	3
4	Section 3 – Additional defined travel activities for Members. The defined travel activities are moved from the Standing Orders to the Travel Policy to be more aligned with other aspects of travel. These activities have been updated to reflect current Member roles in the Council.	4
5	Section 4 – Cost effectiveness of travel. This has been strengthened to include consideration of the best value option and timeliness in response to the audit recommendation.	4;5
6	Section 5 – Environmental impact of travel. This has a raised profile in the policy and has an additional reference to low emission vehicles.	5
7	Section 6 – General responsibilities. This section clarifies the role of the Relevant Chief Officer in authorising Member travel and that Exceptions should all be approved by the Chief Officer – Finance. In the previous version, the role of dealing with exceptions was allocated to different Chief Officers.	5
8	Section 6.1 Foreign Travel. Foreign travel must now be approved by the relevant Committee in response to the audit recommendation.	5
9	Section 6.2 UK travel. UK travel must now be approved by the relevant Chief Officer, in lieu of the Director.	6
10	Section 6.3 Additional clarity is given regarding the review of the policy, and the administration of the policy	6
11	Section 7 – Associated documents. Additional reference is made to the Financial regulations and the Local Government (Allowances and Expense) (Scotland) Regulations 2007	6
12	Section A6 – monetary rates applicable Additional reference is made to the Financial regulations and the Local Government (Allowances and Expense) (Scotland) Regulations 2007	10
13	Section C3 – an additional options has been added in exceptional circumstances where it may be necessary and expedient for Members to book travel independently.	15
14	Section D1 – Entertaining and Gift Expenses. This has been revised to reflect the Members’ Code of Conduct.	16

## **Definitions**

The following definitions are used in this document.

**Local travel** means travel within Aberdeen City Council boundaries.

**UK travel** means travel outside Aberdeen City Council boundaries but within the UK.

**Foreign Travel** means travel outside of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (i.e. outside Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland)

**Major travel expenses** mean the costs of purchasing flights, train tickets, inter-city buses, car hire, visa costs and accommodation (including breakfast) that should normally be booked in advance.

**Minor travel expenses** mean the costs of taxis, local buses, car parking, business telephone calls and other incidental items incurred while travelling for business purposes.

**Car mileage expenses** – expenses paid for travel undertaken by personal vehicle.

**Living expenses** include the cost of meals, service charges, drinks, phone calls and similar costs. Those that can and cannot be claimed from the Council are referred to in the relevant section.

**Foreign Travel Float** means a sum of money provided in advance of foreign travel that enables Members to meet minor travel expenses.

**Business Services Team** means a person authorised to make bookings for major travel expenses (member of the Business Support Transactions Team).

**Travel Partner** is one or more companies contracted to provide travel services to the Council as organised by the Business Services Team.

**Long-haul flights** are those flights (including necessary same-day flight connections) outside Europe.

**Relevant Chief Officer** will be the Officer responsible for the budget to which the travel will be charged.