



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Reimbursement of Members Expenses Scheme – Annual Uprating of Provisions 6 March 2025 Reference: SPCB (2025) Paper 15

Executive summary

1. The SPCB is invited to agree the uplifting detailed in this paper to be used to increase the Members' Expenses Provisions and the Party Leaders' Allowance for the financial year 2025-26.

Issues and options

2. Provision is made under paragraph 1.2.4 of the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme and Rule 6(1) of the Party Leaders' Allowance Scheme to increase the provision made on the 1st of April each year having regard to such indices as the SPCB considers appropriate. Paragraph 1.2.5 of the Members' Expenses Scheme also determines that any increased expenses limit for the major expense categories will be rounded up to the nearest £100 at each uprating.
3. The SPCB agreed in March 2020 to continue to increase the Office Cost Provision and other expenses provisions in line with the January All Items RPI figure. In 2024, the SPCB considered the staff cost provision uplift for 2025-26 as part of the budget submission process and agreed to an uplift using Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) only and that they will continue to use AWE only for the remainder of the session.
4. The figure for the AWE is 3.2%, meaning an increase of £5,100 to £162,000 per Member (when rounded up to the nearest £100 as per the requirements of the Scheme) equating to an actual increase of 3.25%.
5. The January All Items RPI figure is 3.6%, which equates to an increase of £800 for the Office Cost Provision bringing the figure for constituency Members to £21,900 when rounded up to the nearest £100 and equating to an actual increase of 3.79%.

6. The 3.6% All Items RPI increase also applies to the Edinburgh Accommodation Provision and the Engagement Provision as follows:
 - a. Engagement Provision increases by £700 meaning Engagement provision is £18,100 when rounded up to the nearest £100 equating to an actual increase of 4.02%.
 - b. Edinburgh Accommodation provision increases by £800 when rounded up and equates to £21,500 for the year and an actual increase of 3.86%.
7. The party leader's allowance also increases, and this is calculated using a combination of the staff cost provision and office cost provision increases as detailed in the Allowances notice attached as an Annexe to this paper.

Governance

8. The rules of the Scheme enable the SPCB to set any uplift it deems appropriate to the provisions laid out within the Scheme.

Resource implications

9. The approved 2025-26 budget contains adequate provision for the indexation of Members' expenses in line with the standard uprating provisions of the Scheme and as included in the SPCB's budget submission for 2025-26.

Publication Scheme

10. This paper will be published in line with the SPCB's publication Scheme.

Next steps

11. The Allowances Office will publish the attached notice to advise Members of the increases and provision limits for the year 2025-26 and update My Expenses as required. Regional Members will be advised separately of their office cost provision calculation based on the number of Members returned for the party in each region.
12. The necessary steps will be taken to apply the salary increases of those on the minimum of any point in the attached pay scales with their employing Members.

Decision

13. The SPCB is invited to agree the uprating of the Members Expenses Scheme provisions as detailed in the paper.

Allowances Office
26 February 2025

Annexe

Allowances Notice xx/2025

To All MSPs

Expenses Provision 2025-26

The purpose of this notice is to advise Members on the updated Members' Expenses Provision levels for the 2025/26 financial year.

The SPCB have agreed:

- the Office Cost and other provisions will be increased in line with the January All Items RPI figure of 3.6%;
- the Staff Cost Provision will be increased by 3.2% in line with the AWE; and
- the Party Leaders Allowance will be increased by a combination of both above figures.

The rates for 2025/26 as agreed by the SPCB are as follows:

| Provision | NEW Rate |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Start Up Provision | Not available to Members until new session or following a by-election. |
| Office Cost Provision | £21,900 Members can flex up to £6,586 from Engagement Provision to Office Cost Provision in 2025/26. Regional Members will be advised on an individual basis. |
| Engagement Provision | £18,100 Members can flex up to £6,586 from Office Cost Provision to Engagement Provision in 2025/26. |
| Staff Cost Provision | £162,000 |
| Edinburgh Accommodation Provision | £21,500 |

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| Edinburgh Accommodation Provision – Overnight Rate | £233 (includes dinner, bed and breakfast) |
| Overnight UK (excluding Greater London) | £233 (includes dinner, bed and breakfast) |
| Overnight (Greater London and outside UK) | £271 (includes dinner, bed and breakfast) |
| Winding Up Provision | £9,495 – Constituency Members Regional Members will be advised on an individual basis as required but will equate to one third of their maximum OCP |
| Party Leaders Allowance 30+ members | £50,496 |
| Party Leaders Allowance 15 to 29 Members | £26,586 |
| Motor Mileage | 45p per mile for first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter |
| Motorcycle Mileage | 24p |
| Pedal Cycle Mileage | 20p |

Members are required to ensure that their staff are paid in accordance with the minimum terms and conditions of employment and within the job families and associated salary ranges as determined by the SPCB. Annex A provides the updated job families and associated salary ranges which will come into effect from 1 April 2025.

Staff who are currently on the minimum of a job family range will automatically be moved to the new minimum as appropriate from 1st April 2025. Members who wish to increase staff salaries beyond the new minimums or who wish to increase the salary of those not on the minimum should contact the People Services Office, providing details of any proposed salary increases.

Should you have any queries in relation to this notice please contact the Allowances Office by email (AllowancesEnquiries@parliament.scot) or if your

query relates to the Staff Cost Provision please contact the Pay and Pensions Office by emailing (PayandPensionEnquiries@parliament.scot).

Allowances Office
March 2025

Job Families and Pay Range Annex A

| Job Family | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| <p>Administration & Office Management:</p> <p>This family comprises the following activities: acting as the first point of contact, using initiative and responding to and/or directing queries, managing diaries, including resolving conflicting demands, providing support for meetings and surgeries, collating and analysing information and producing documents. Moving up the range, individuals may also oversee the running of the office, including ensuring work is commissioned out effectively, collating papers and briefings, compiling reports, developing systems and managing staff in accordance with the Member's office structure.</p> | £24,050 | £44,070 |
| <p>Casework:</p> <p>This family comprises the following activities: managing and progressing portfolio of casework, gathering relevant information to resolve or progress cases appropriately, drafting responses, arranging and attending surgeries, liaising with Government agencies, voluntary sector and others to resolve constituency matters. Moving up the range, individuals may also maintain in-depth knowledge of the constituency/regional matters, develop knowledge in specialist areas, oversee the running of the office, including ensuring work is commissioned out effectively and managing staff in accordance with the Member's office structure.</p> | £28,125 | £42,999 |
| <p>Communications:</p> <p>This family comprises the following activities: promoting the Member's parliamentary work, including via broadcast, print and social media,</p> | £29,421 | £43,738 |

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| <p>building relations with journalists, drafting press materials and organising campaign activities. Moving up the range, individuals will also carry out research into local, regional, national and international issues as required, brief the Member on relevant issues and produce high quality written materials, manage provision of communications/press advice, oversee the running of the office, including ensuring work is commissioned out effectively and managing staff in accordance with the Member's office structure.</p> | | |
| <p>Research & Policy:</p> <p>This family comprises the following activities: researching and interpreting complex information, searching and extracting evidence from published reports, presenting data in different formats, drafting speeches, providing advice and recommendations on policy matters, proactively engaging with internal and external expertise as appropriate and presenting complex issues clearly and persuasively with excellent written and verbal communication. Moving up the range, individuals will also develop new areas of research and sources of information, take lead on specialist areas, oversee the running of the office, including ensuring work is commissioned out effectively and managing staff in accordance with the Member's office structure.</p> | <p>£30,912</p> | <p>£54,249</p> |