



Oxfordshire County Council

Equalities Impact Assessment

Dependant Carers' Payment as part of the Members' Allowances Scheme

3 December 2025

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Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Law and Governance – Democratic Services
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	The current Dependants' Carers' Allowances, as part of the Members' Allowances Scheme.
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	This is an existing policy which has been reviewed as part of the Independent Remuneration Panel's (IRP) statutory review of Oxfordshire County Council's Members' Allowances scheme.
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	The assessment has come about due to differential of the payments currently made. It is unclear from current records whether this has been undertaken before, hence this EIA. Furthermore, on closer inspection it was considered that the current arrangements required further clarification. There is no suggestion that current arrangements impact disproportionately on individuals with protected characteristics. The purpose of this assessment is to tighten up the arrangements to avoid any suggestion that they do. Please see Section 3.
Completed By	Dave Burn, Chief Governance Officer (Interim)
Authorised By	Anita Bradley, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Date of Assessment	3 December 2025

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>All local authorities are required to have a Members' Allowances Scheme, which sets out Councillors basic allowance, as well as any special responsibility allowance. In addition, the scheme enables Members to claim expenses for travel, as well as expenses for Dependant Carers, to enable them to fulfil their elected duties. In essence, the purpose of these payments is to help ensure inclusivity and increase the pool of Oxfordshire residents who would be prevented from be able to serve their communities as a Councillor.</p> <p>Following the recent review of the Members' Allowances Scheme by the IRP, the amounts payable under that scheme were increased. The increases were changed to reflect the current Oxfordshire Living Wage. This is set out below. It should be noted that the increase is subject to Council approval on 9 December 2025.</p> <p><u>Dependants' Carers' Allowances (Oxfordshire)</u></p> <p>13. An allowance shall be paid to any councillor in respect of such expenses of arranging for the care of his/her child(ren) or dependant(s) as are necessarily incurred in carrying out any duty specified in Schedule 2.</p> <p>14. The amount payable shall be the actual cost incurred in providing such care up to the following maximum hourly rates:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(a) Childcare - £14.06 per hour, capped at 120 hours per year, payable on production of receipts</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(b) Care for an adult dependent relative - £28.12 per hour, capped at 120 hours per year, payable on production of receipts</p> <p>15. In calculating the length of time to be taken into account for the purposes of the preceding paragraph, the time reasonably spent by the councillor in travelling to and from the place at which the relevant duty is performed shall be included.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Proposals</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>Having assessed the recommendations from the IRP, having looked at the existing Dependants' Carers' Allowance scheme, and compared the Oxfordshire's arrangements with other councils, it was felt clarity was required. The revised wording is highlighted below.</p> <p><u>Dependants' Carers' Allowances (Oxfordshire)</u></p> <p>13. An allowance shall be paid to any councillor in respect of such expenses of arranging for the care of his/her child(ren) or dependant(s) as are necessarily incurred in carrying out any duty specified in Schedule 2.</p> <p>14. The definition of a dependant used in Section 57A (3) of the Employment Rights Act 1996 applies, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a spouse (or civil partner); • a child; • a parent; • a person who normally lives in the same household but is not an employee, tenant lodger or boarder. <p>15. The amount payable shall be the actual cost incurred in providing such care up to the following maximum hourly rates:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(a) General care such as childcare - £14.06 per hour, capped at 120 hours per year, payable on production of receipts</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(b) Care for an adult or child dependent relative requiring specialist care - £28.12 per hour, capped at 120 hours per year, payable on production of receipts</p> <p>16. In calculating the length of time to be taken into account for the purposes of the preceding paragraph, the time reasonably spent by the councillor in travelling to and from the place at which the relevant duty is performed shall be included.</p>
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<p>Evidence / Intelligence</p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>Other schemes were looked at. Exeter County Council, Berkshire County Council and West Berkshire Council were considered for comparison.</p> <p>The EIA will be shared with Members ahead of the meeting of Council on 9 December.</p>
<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>The alternatives were as follows:</p> <p>To leave the scheme as it is currently drafted. It was considered that the existing wording required clarity to avoid confusion and to make the process fair.</p> <p>To pay a flat dependant care rate. Whilst this might have been considered the easiest option, it would fail to acknowledge that some care rates can be higher than others, depending upon the needs of the person being cared for.</p> <p>To leave the scheme with a differential and to explain the criteria in more detail. This is the preferred option as it provides clarity to the scheme and acknowledges the different costs associated with care, based on need.</p>

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clarifies and widens claims based on need.		Democratic Services Manager	Annual
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clarifies and widens claims based on need.		Democratic Services Manager	Annual
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Armed Forces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Helps to ensure that carers are able to participate and engage in the democratic process.		Democratic Services Manager	Annual
Areas of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (* Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other Council Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provides support to Councillors and enables residents who may otherwise be excluded, from participating in the democratic process.		Democratic Services Manager	Annual
Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Social Value ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

¹ If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	May 2029
Person Responsible for Review	Democratic Services Manager
Authorised By	Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer