



**Subject** Board member, Committee member, Panel member and Adviser  
Attendance Allowance and Travel and Subsistence Policy

**Purpose** For Decision

**From** Remuneration Committee

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## 1. Summary

The Board member, Committee member, Panel member and Adviser Attendance Allowance and travel and subsistence policy is reviewed annually by the Remuneration Committee. The Committee then makes a recommendation to the Board as to whether any amendments are required; the Committee reviewed the policy at its May 2018 meeting following which amendments were agreed by the Board.

At its December meeting, the Committee identified some additional minor amendments to strengthen certain areas of the travel and subsistence policy, along with a small amendment to the half day rate, to assist administratively. The proposed amendments are as set out in the track changed version attached as **Annex A**.

## 2. Recommendations

It is suggested that the Board agree to:

- i. Increase the half day rate for Board and Committee members from £187.00 to £187.50.
- ii. Remove the hourly reading rate for Professional Conduct Committee Chair's and Members and amend to reference claiming at the day/half day rate in line with current practice.
- iii. Include reference to carer's allowance within the policy.
- iv. Amend the wording in relation to the use of taxis to state that we will not reimburse tips.
- v. Place a requirement to obtain prior approval for overseas air travel and cap the claimable amount for overseas flight bookings to £200 for a return journey.
- vi. Reference exchange rates for claims made in currency other than GBP.

## 3. Open session

## 4. Contribution to the Board's Purpose and Objectives

In delivering the Act, ARB's objectives are:

Protect the users and potential users of architects' services  
Support architects through regulation.

An appropriate level of remuneration for Board, Committee, Panel members, Advisers and ARB's staff ensures that ARB is fair, effective and efficient and assists in supporting all of ARB's strategic objectives.

## 5. Background

### i. **Board Member Attendance Allowance:**

At its September 2017 meeting, the Remuneration Committee recommended to the Board an increase in the Board and Committee member attendance allowance to £375 for a full day, and £187.50 for a half day. The Board agreed the increase, but decided that the half day rate should be payable at £187.00, as it was felt that the removal of the 0.50p would assist administratively. It has since transpired that with the payroll system we use, the reduction of the 0.50p actually places more of an administrative burden on the process, as it is not strictly half of the full day rate. It is therefore proposed to reinstate the original recommendation made by the Remuneration Committee that, Board member attendance is claimable at £375 for a full day, and £187.50 for a half day.

### ii. **Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) Chair and Member hourly Reading Rate**

Under the current policy, PCC Chairs can claim an hourly reading rate of £99 per hour, and PCC members at a rate of £55 per hour. In practice, the hourly rate is never used as the PCC reading time is calculated at the daily rate, which offers better value for money to ARB. It is therefore proposed to remove the hourly rate.

### iii. **Travel & Subsistence Policy**

The Travel & Subsistence Policy was last considered by the Board at its July 2018 meeting, where minor amendments to the wording around hotel bookings and to the wording surrounding advance travel booking were agreed.

### iv. **Travel & Subsistence Policy – Carer's Allowance (Proposed Section 6.2)**

The majority of additional suggested changes are minor; however one area is concerning payment of carer's allowance. In May, the Remuneration Committee discussed whether, as part of the wider travel and subsistence policy payable to Board members and all other external appointments, a provision should be introduced to compensate individuals if they have to pay for assistance with caring for a dependent.

As part of the external benchmarking that Crowe Clark Whitehill (CCW) undertook for us in 2017, CCW concluded that whilst all of the respondents to the benchmarking stated they did not have policies, they all said they would reimburse the costs of care to allow Board and Committee members to attend meetings.

After receiving the independent report from CCW, the Remuneration Committee asked the Executive to explore further how schemes were being run in other organisations. In May 2018 the Executive reported to the Committee that following further exploration with the benchmarked organisations it was apparent that the provision did not form part of organisation's policies, nor did they promote the provision, but would pay on receipt of a request (where appropriate). The Head of Finance and Resources

recommended to the Remuneration Committee that individual requests for assistance be considered on a case by case basis which was agreed.

However, at the July Board meeting some Board members raised concerns that this was not a transparent approach to financial assistance available in relation to carers' costs, and requested that the Remuneration Committee reconsider the position in relation to any financial assistance being offered to carers.

It was reported to the Remuneration Committee at its December meeting that the Executive had further explored what comparative organisations do and discovered that two organisations have published positions in relation to this topic. The General Osteopathic Council will reimburse costs relating to the care of children or elderly dependents. The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) policy also makes reference to providing child care and other expenses should they be incurred wholly for the purposes of GPhC business. Claimants are however required to discuss non-standard expense claims with staff before the expense is incurred; these are considered on a case by case basis.

Taking into consideration the previous discussions regarding the introduction of a policy for financial assistance being provided in this area, it is recommended that the provision of carers allowance be included in the travel and subsistence policy. We recommend that it should state that in exceptional circumstances, ARB will consider reimbursement of expenses occurred in this area. Such circumstances might include a meeting convened at short notice, or to enable the Board to proceed in an effective way, owing to quorum or expertise required for particular agenda items.

v. Travel & Subsistence Policy – additional amendments

The Committee considers that, in addition to the above, the amendments highlighted at [Annex A](#) will strengthen the policy; a summary of the additional suggested changes are listed below.

**Section 3 (Attendance Allowance):** There has been some ambiguity whether the amount claimable is based on the scheduled meeting length, or the length of time the meeting actually lasts. This amendment should help to clarify that.

**Section 4.3 (Taxi travel):** To make clear that tips are not claimable (mainly relevant to bookings and payments made via a mobile device).

**Section 4.5 (Air travel):** To place a requirement to obtain prior approval for overseas air travel and to cap the claimable amount for overseas flight bookings to £200 for a return journey. This is to mitigate any financial burdens placed on ARB should someone be appointed that is not from within the UK. The Registrar and Chief Executive still has the ability to approve such journeys (and increase the £200 cap if necessary); this is covered under 'Notes' at section 7.0.6.

**Section 7 (Notes)** – Now includes reference to expenses only being reimbursed in

sterling.

#### **Resource implications**

6. The above recommendations can be implemented within the existing budget.

#### **7. Risk Implications**

It is important that we continue to attract and retain high quality individuals who deliver key roles, in the most efficient and effective manner and that the policy support this without placing any significant financial burden upon the organisation.

#### **8. Communication**

The Board needs to ensure that its policies for payment of attendance allowances, reading times and travel and subsistence are set at a level where it attracts the skills and expertise required by the Board.

#### **9. Equality and Diversity Implications**

These are considered within the above paper as the attendance allowance must ensure that all appropriately qualified people can participate whatever their income or circumstances. Those with caring responsibilities may, for example, face an additional burden in seeking to contribute to ARB's work; however, ARB continues to pay an attendance allowance to assist those wishing to participate and would consider a carer's allowance on a case by case basis if an individual request for assistance was received.

#### **10. Further Actions**

Subject to approval by the Remuneration committee, a recommendation will be made to the Board at its December meeting with the above recommendations.