

**APPROVAL OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL
FOR
ELECTED MEMBERS**

September 2025

Policy for approval of travel by Elected Members to International Functions/Events/Study Trips

The purpose of this document is to give clarity and consistency for Elected Members who are required/invited to travel abroad for official functions, events and study trips. Foreign travel may not take place without the prior **express** approval of the Organisation, Procedure and Finance Committee (OP and F Committee) or if the travel plans do not allow sufficient time for the OP and F Committee to consider the request, the request must go to the Corporate Policy Group (CPG).

Where invitations are received from Local Authorities, organisations, associations overseas to South Dublin County Council to send delegations to functions/events, where such invitations provide South Dublin County Council with the opportunity to promote the cultural, economic and visitor benefits of South Dublin overseas, where such study trips may be of benefit to the Elected Members, or where there is a significant connection to South Dublin, through its diaspora, it may be considered appropriate for the local authority to recommend sending a delegation to these events.

The consideration of any invitations received must have regard to the funding provided within the budget.

In all instances, the cost of attending such events must be weighed against the potential benefits for South Dublin in being able to promote itself globally as an attractive place to live, visit and do business. Authorisation of such delegations is a reserved matter under Section 142(5) of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) and sets out that the Council should *“have regard to the benefits likely to accrue, the general interests of its administrative area and the total cost involved.”* Section 142 (5) (c) states

that “A local authority may provide in its budget an amount to meet expenditure for the purposes of this subsection”

While most delegations may consist solely of The Mayor/An Méara, there are occasions where it may be appropriate for the Deputy-Mayor/An Leas-Mhéara to also attend. Where the event or visit is specific to a particular Local Electoral Area or a twinning etc., then ideally the representative would be The Mayor/An Méara, Chair of the Area Committee, with the addition of an Elected Representative from that geographical area in some instances taking account of local circumstances.

Having regard to events in relation to the promotion of the County from an economic or tourism or cultural point of view or for attendance in relation to study events, where a group of Councillors will be travelling, it is important to ensure that a fair, reasonable and transparent process for the nomination and approval of attendees is in place.

For such delegations The Mayor/An Méara would be accompanied by the Chair of the relevant SPC / Committee. The selection of the other delegates could be considered for such a visit according to the current Council representation. In addition, where an Elected Member has a particular involvement or strong interest in an item which is included in the event itinerary, the participation of such an individual may also be considered.

Any departures from this protocol should be agreed in advance by the CPG.

Travel arrangements

The Corporate Services section will make arrangements for Elected Members travelling outside of Ireland on behalf of South Dublin County Council mainly:

- Purchasing flight tickets and arranging hotel accommodation.
- Booking conferences.
- Calculating subsistence and out-of-pocket expenses and organising payment of expenses before and after the trip.

The Council's Business Travel Policy for Staff and Elected Members will be applied for the following: -

- Travel and Subsistence Policy for foreign travel for business requirements
- Allowable expenses incurred for business related foreign travel
- Accommodation and meals - claim entitlements