



**The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel  
appointed to review the allowances paid to Councillors  
of Worthing Borough Council**



December 2022

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## **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the 2003 Regulations"), as amended, require all local authorities to appoint an independent remuneration panel (IRP) to advise on the terms and conditions of their scheme of councillors' allowances.
- 1.1.2 Worthing Borough Council formally appointed the following persons to undertake this process and make recommendations on its future scheme.
- Julia Carrette, Local Resident
  - Ray Chudley, Local Resident
  - Neal Goddard, Local resident
  - Barry Hillman, Local Resident
  - Karen Keeley, Local Resident
  - Tim Ransley, Local Resident
  - Mark Palmer, South East Employers (Chair)
- 1.1.3 Our terms of reference were in accordance with the requirements of the 2003 Regulations, together with "Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances" issued jointly by the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Inland Revenue (July 2003). Those requirements are to make recommendations to the Council as to:
- (a) the amount of basic allowance to be payable to all councillors.
  - (b) the level of allowances and whether allowances should be payable for:
    - (i) special responsibility allowances.
    - (ii) travelling and subsistence allowance.
    - (iii) dependants' carers' allowance.
    - (iv) parental leave and.
    - (v) co-optees' allowance.
- and the amount of such allowances.
- (c) whether payment of allowances may be backdated if the scheme is amended at any time to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made.
  - (d) whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years before its application is reviewed.

## **2. CURRENT SCHEME**

- 2.1.1 The last review of councillors' allowances was undertaken by the IRP for the Council in 2018.
- 2.1.2 The Scheme currently provides that all councillors are each entitled to a total basic allowance of £5,453.89 per annum. The basic allowance is indexed annually in line with staff salary increases. The last indexation was applied from April 2022. Some councillors also receive special responsibility allowances for undertaking additional duties.

- 2.1.3 Councillors may also claim the cost of travel and subsistence expenses and for expenditure on the care of children or dependants whilst on approved duties.

### 3. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING OUR REVIEW

#### 3.1 The Public Service Principle

- 3.1.1 This is the principle that an important part of being a councillor is the desire to serve the public and, therefore, not all of what a councillor does should be remunerated. Part of a councillor's time should be given voluntarily. The consolidated guidance notes the importance of this principle when arriving at the recommended basic allowance.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, we found that a public service concept or ethos was articulated and supported by all of the councillors we interviewed and in the vast majority of responses to the questionnaire completed by councillors as part of our review.
- 3.1.2 To provide transparency and increase an understanding of the Panel's work, we will recommend the application of an explicit Public Service Discount (or PSD). Such a PSD is applied to the time input necessary to fulfil the role of a councillor. Further explanation of the PSD to be applied is given below in Section 4.

#### 3.2 The Fair Remuneration Principle

- 3.2.1 Alongside the belief that the role of the elected Councillor should, in part, be viewed as unpaid voluntary service, we advocate a principle of fair remuneration. The Panel in 2022 continues to subscribe to the view promoted by the independent Councillors' Commission:

*Remuneration should not be an incentive for service as a councillor. Nor should lack of remuneration be a barrier. The basic allowance should encourage people from a wide range of backgrounds and with a wide range of skills to serve as local councillors. Those who participate in and contribute to the democratic process should not suffer unreasonable financial disadvantage as a result of doing so.<sup>2</sup>*

- 3.2.2 We are keen to ensure that our recommended scheme of allowances provides reasonable financial compensation for councillors. Equally, the scheme should be fair, transparent, logical, simple, and seen as such.
- 3.2.3 Hence, we continue to acknowledge that:
- (i) allowances should apply to roles within the Council, not individual councillors.
  - (ii) allowances should represent reasonable *compensation* to councillors for expenses they incur and time they commit in relation to their role, not *payment* for their work; and

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<sup>1</sup> The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and The Inland Revenue (now HM Revenue & Customs), *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraph 68.

<sup>2</sup> Rodney Brooke and Declan Hall, *Members' Remuneration: Models, Issues, Incentives and Barriers*. London: Communities and Local Government, 2007, p.3.

- (iii) special responsibility allowances are used to recognise the *significant* additional responsibilities which attach to some roles, not merely the extra time required.
- 3.2.4 In making our recommendations, we have therefore sought to maintain a balance between:
- (i) the voluntary quality of a councillor's role.
- (ii) the need for appropriate financial recognition for the expenses incurred and time spent by councillors in fulfilling their roles; and
- (iii) the overall need to ensure that the scheme of allowances is neither an incentive nor a barrier to service as a councillor.
- 3.2.5 The Panel also sought to ensure that the scheme of allowances is understandable in the way it is calculated. This includes ensuring the bandings and differentials of the allowances are as transparent as possible.
- 3.2.6 In making our recommendations, we wish to emphasise that any possible negative impact they may have is not intended and should not be interpreted as a reflection on any individual councillor's performance in the role.

## 4. CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 Basic Allowance

- 4.1.1 A Council's scheme of allowances must include provision for a basic allowance, payable at an equal flat rate to all councillors. The guidance on arriving at the basic allowance states, "Having established what local councillors do, and the hours which are devoted to these tasks the local authorities will need to take a view on the rate at which, and the number of hours councillors ought to be remunerated."<sup>3</sup>
- 4.1.2 In addition to the regular cycles of Council and committee meetings, a number of working groups involving councillors may operate. Many councillors are also appointed by the Council to a number of external organisations.
- 4.1.3 We recognise that councillors are responsible to their electorate as:
- Representatives of a particular ward.
  - Community leaders.
  - Decision makers for the whole Council area.
  - Policy makers for future activities of the Council.
  - Scrutineers and auditors of the work of the Council; and
  - Other matters required by Government.

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<sup>3</sup> The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, and Inland Revenue (now HM Revenue and Customs), *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraph 67.

<sup>4</sup> The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Inland Revenue (now HM Revenue and Customs), *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraphs 66-81.

4.1.4 The guidance identifies the issues and factors an IRP should have regard to when making a scheme of allowances.<sup>4</sup> For the basic allowance we considered three variables in our calculation: the time required to execute the role effectively; the public service discount; and the rate for remuneration.



4.1.5 Each of the variables is explained below.

#### Required Time Input

4.1.6 We ascertained the average number of hours necessary per week to undertake the role of a councillor (with no special responsibilities) from questionnaires and interviews with councillors and through reference to the relevant information. In addition, we considered further information about the number, range, and frequency of committee meetings.<sup>5</sup>

4.1.7 Discounting attendance at political meetings (which we judged to be centred upon internal political management), we find that the average time commitment required to execute the role of a councillor with no special responsibilities is 11 hours per week.

#### Public Service Discount (PSD)

4.1.8 From the information analysed, we found councillors espoused a high sense of public duty. Given the weight of evidence presented to us concerning, among other factors, the levels of responsibility, the varied nature of the role, the need for learning and development, and the increasing accessibility and expectations of the public, we recommend a Public Service Discount of 45 per cent to the calculation of the basic allowance. This percentage sits within the higher-range of PSDs applied to basic allowances by councils.

#### Remuneration Rate

4.1.9 After establishing the expected time input to be remunerated, we considered a remuneration rate. We came to a judgement about the rate at which the councillors ought to be remunerated for the work they do.

4.1.10 To help identify an hourly rate for calculating allowances, we utilised relevant statistics about the local labour market published by the Office for

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<sup>45</sup> The summary responses to the questionnaires are attached as Appendix 2.

National Statistics. We selected the average (median), full-time gross<sup>6</sup> wage per hour by place of residence for the South East of England £17.58<sup>7</sup> per hour.

### Calculating the basic allowance

- 4.1.11 After determining the amount of time required each week to fulfil the role (11 hours), the level of PSD to be applied (45%) and the hourly rate to be used (£17.58), we calculated the basic allowance as follows:



- 4.1.12 The gross Basic Allowance before the PSD is applied is **£10,055.76**. Following the application of the PSD this leads to a basic allowance of **£5,530.67** per annum.
- 4.1.13 This amount is intended to recognise the overall contribution made by councillors, including their work on council bodies, division work and attendance on external bodies.
- 4.1.14 We did also note the levels of basic allowance currently allocated by other comparative District and Borough Councils across Sussex, (see table below and Appendix 3).

Council	Sussex, District and Borough Councils: Basic Allowances (£) 2021-2022 <sup>8</sup>
Adur District Council	5,039
Arun District Council	5,730
Chichester District Council	5,200
Crawley Borough Council	6,617
Eastbourne Borough Council	2,808
Hastings Borough Council	6,429
Lewes District Council	3,196
Rother District Council	4,703
Wealden District Council	4,846
<b>Worthing Borough Council</b>	<b>5,454</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>5,002</b>

<sup>6</sup> The basic allowance, special responsibility allowance, dependants' carers' allowance, and co-optees' allowance are taxable as employment income.

<sup>7</sup> The Nomis official labour market statistics: Hourly Pay – Gross median (£) For full-time employee jobs by place of residence: UK December 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Figures drawn from the South East Employers, Members' Allowances Survey 2022 (October 2022).

- 4.1.15 The Panel wished to ensure the level of basic allowance does not constitute a barrier to candidates from all sections of the community standing, or re-standing, for election as councillors. The Panel was of the view the approach undertaken in this review of the introduction of a transparent and clear formula for calculating the Basic Allowance will assist a future Panel in recommending a Basic Allowance.

**WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the Basic Allowance payable to all members of Worthing Borough Council be £5,530.67 per annum**



## 4.2 Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)

- 4.2.1 Special Responsibility Allowances are awarded to councillors who perform significant additional responsibilities over and above the roles and expenses covered by the basic allowance. These special responsibilities must be related to the discharge of the council's functions.
- 4.2.2 The 2003 Regulations do not limit the number of SRAs which may be paid, nor do they prohibit the payment of more than one SRA to any one councillor. They do require that an SRA be paid to at least one councillor who is not a member of the controlling group of the Council. As the guidance suggests, if the majority of councillors receive a SRA, the local electorate may rightly question the justification for this.<sup>9</sup>
- 4.2.3 We conclude from the evidence we have considered that the following offices bear *significant* additional responsibilities:
- Leader of the Council
  - Deputy Leader of the Council
  - Executive Members (8)
  - Chairman of Council
  - Vice Chairman of Council
  - Chairman of Planning
  - Vice Chairman of Planning
  - Chairman of Licensing and Control
  - Vice Chairman of Licensing and Control
  - Chairman of Joint Overview and Scrutiny
  - Vice Chairman of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee
  - Chairman of Joint Governance Committee
  - Vice Chairman of Joint Governance Committee
  - Leader of Opposition Group
  - Deputy Leader of the Opposition Group
  - Co-Opted Members

### One SRA Only Rule

- 4.2.4 To improve the transparency of the scheme of allowances, we feel that no councillor should be entitled to receive at any time more than **one SRA**. If a councillor can receive more than one SRA, then the public are unable to ascertain the actual level of remuneration for an individual councillor from a reading of the Scheme of Allowances.
- 4.2.5 Moreover, the One SRA Only Rule avoids the possible anomaly of the Leader receiving a lower allowance than another councillor. If two or more allowances are applicable to a councillor, then the higher-valued allowance would be received. The One SRA Only Rule is common practice for many councils. Our calculations for the SRAs are based on this principle, which should be highlighted:

**WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that that no councillor shall be entitled to receive at any time more than one Special Responsibility Allowance and that this One SRA Only Rule be adopted into the Scheme of Allowances.**

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<sup>9</sup> The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraph 72.

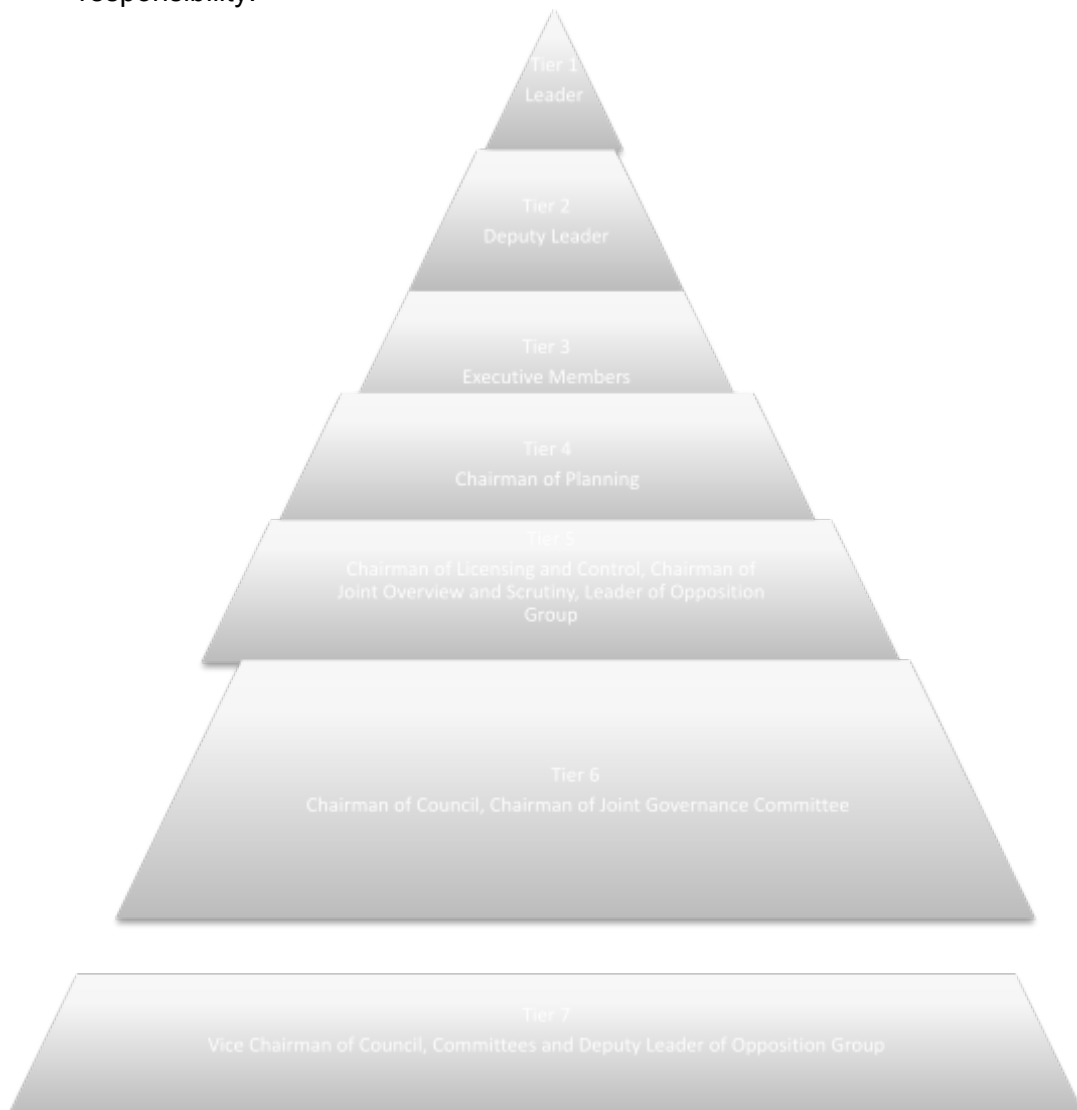
## The Maximum Number of SRA's Payable

- 4.2.6 In accordance with the 2006 Statutory Guidance (paragraph 72) the Panel is of the view that the Council should work towards the principal that no more than 50% of Council Members (18) should receive an SRA at any one time

## Calculating SRAs

- 4.2.7 The Panel supported the criteria and formula for calculating the Leader of the Council allowance based on a multiplier of the Basic Allowance; this role carries the most significant additional responsibilities and is the most time consuming.
- 4.2.8 We applied a multiplier of the basic allowance to establish the Leader's SRA. Other SRAs are then valued downwards as a percentage of the Leader's allowance. This approach has the advantage that, when future adjustments to the SRAs are required, changing the Leader's SRA will have a proportionate and easily calculable effect on the other SRAs within the scheme.

We grouped together in Tiers those roles that we judged to have a similar level of responsibility. The outline result of this approach is illustrated in a pyramid of responsibility:



The rationale for these seven tiers of responsibility is discussed below.

#### Leader (Tier One)

- 4.2.9 The Council elects for a four-year term of office a Leader who is ultimately responsible for the discharge of all executive functions of the Council. The Leader is the principal policy maker and has personal authority to determine delegated powers to the rest of the Executive. The Leader is also responsible for the appointment (and dismissal) of members of the Executive and their respective areas of responsibility.
- 4.2.10 The multiplier we applied to calculate the Leader's SRA is 300% (3 x times) the basic allowance. If the recommended option of a basic allowance with a PSD of 45% is adopted, this results in a Leader's Allowance of £16,592.01.

**WE RECOMMEND that the Leader of the Council should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 300% of the recommended basic allowance, £16,592.01.**

#### Deputy Leader (Tier Two)

- 4.2.11 The Deputy Leader usually acts on the Leader's behalf in their absence. From the information we gathered, we continue to consider this additional responsibility should be reflected in the level of allowance. Therefore, we recommend the Deputy Leader's SRA be set at 55% of the Leader's SRA. If our recommendations concerning the basic allowance and the Leader's SRA are adopted, this results in an allowance of £9,125.60.

**WE RECOMMEND that the Deputy Leader receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 55% of the recommended Leader's Allowance, £9,125.60.**

#### Executive Members (Tier Three)

- 4.2.12 Executive Members appointed by the Leader of the Council have significant delegated decision-making responsibilities and this responsibility has increased.
- 4.2.13 The Panel was of the view that it is important to provide the Leader with greater flexibility to appoint an Executive that is best able to respond to the current and future challenges. The panel is therefore of the view that the Special Responsibility Allowance for a Executive Member should be based on a per Member basis and move away from the current approach of a ringfenced total available to support the Executive. We therefore recommend that the allowance should be 45% of the Leader's Allowance, £7,466.40.

**WE RECOMMEND that an Executive Member should receive an allowance of 45% of the recommended Leader's Allowance, £7,466.40.**

#### Chairman of Planning (Tier Four)

- 4.2.14 The role of the Chairman of Planning is highly visible across the borough and has a considerable impact. The role of Chairman of planning is both time consuming and complex, the Panel therefore recommends that the Chairman of Planning should receive an allowance of 35% of the recommended Leader's Allowance, £5,807.20.

**WE RECOMMEND that the Chairman of Planning receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 35% of the recommended Leader's Allowance, £5,807.20.**

#### Leader of the Opposition Group, Chairman of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman of Licensing and Control Committee (Tier Five)

- 4.2.15 From the evidence gathered, including questionnaire responses and face to face interviews, we continue to consider the Leader of the Opposition Group to be a significant role and the 2003 Regulations require that the Principal Opposition Group Leader receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. The Leader of the Opposition Group has to both ensure democratic accountability and the holding to account of the administration but also manage and develop a Group of a significant size. The Panel is therefore of the view that the Leader of the Main Opposition Group should continue receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 25% of the Leader's Allowance, £4,148.
- 4.2.16 Overview and Scrutiny is a key role of the Council ensuring accountability and the holding to account of the decisions of Cabinet and external organisations. Overview and Scrutiny also leads on policy development and has a significant statutory role supported by legislation. The strategic co-ordination of the overview and scrutiny and their effective work programmes are key responsibilities of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman. The Panel is therefore of the view that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman should continue to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 25% of the Leader's Allowance, £4,148. Finally, the Panel was of the view that the Chairman of the Licensing and Control Committee should also receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 25% of the Leader's Allowance, £4,148.

**WE RECOMMEND that the Opposition Group Leader, the Chairman of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Charman of the Licensing and Control Committee should receive a Tier Five Special Responsibility Allowance of 25% of the recommended Leader's Allowance, £4,148.**

#### Chairman of Council and Chairman of Joint Governance Committee (Tier Six)

- 4.2.17 The role of Chairman of Council continues to be a high-profile role that has a significant impact across the borough and Council meetings. The role has a high workload based on the number and frequency of civic engagements, although these are remunerated outside of this Scheme of Allowances. The Panel is of the view that the role of Chairman of Council should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance based on 20% of the Leader' Allowance, £3,318.40.
- 4.2.18 The Joint Governance Committee Chairman also continues to be a key role and the Panel therefore recommends that the Chairman of the Joint

Governance Committee receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 20% of the recommended Leader's Allowance, £3,318.40.

**WE RECOMMEND that the Chairman of Council and Chairman of Joint Governance Committee receive a Tier Six Special Responsibility Allowance of 20% of the recommended Leader's Allowance, £3,318.40.**

Vice Chairman of Council, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Group and Vice Chairman Committees (Tier Seven).

- 4.2.19 The role of Vice Chairman of Council continues to be a key role that supports the Chairman of Council in the chairing of Council meetings. The role also supports the Charman with civic engagements, although these are remunerated outside of this Scheme of Allowances. The Panel is of the view that the role of Vice Chairman of Council should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance based on 25% of the Chairmans' Allowance, £829.60.
- 4.2.20 The Panel was of the view that each Vice Chairman of a Committee should receive an allowance of 25% of the Chairmans' Allowance. This will apply to the Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee, Vice Chairman of Licensing and Control Committee, Vice Chairman of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Vice Chairman of Joint Governance Committee.
- 4.2.21 The Deputy Leader of the Opposition Group is a role of perceived importance and the Panel was therefore of the view that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Group should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. The Panel is of the view that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Group should receive a Tier Seven allowance, 25% of the recommended allowance for the Leader of the Opposition Group, £1,037.

**WE RECOMMEND that the Vice Chairman of Council should receive a Tier Seven Allowance, 25% of the recommended Chairman's Allowance, £829.60.**

**WE RECOMMEND that the Vice Chairman of each of the Committees should receive an allowance of 25% of the respective Chairman's allowance, Vice Chairman of Planning Committee, £1,451.80, Vice Chairman of Licensing and Control Committee, £1,037, Vice Chairman of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, £1,037 and Vice Chairman of Joint Governance Committee, £829.60**

**WE RECOMMEND that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Group, should receive a Tier Seven Allowance, 25% of the recommended Leader of the Opposition Groups Allowance, £1,037.**

Co-Optee's Allowance

- 4.2.22 The Council currently award a Co-Optees Allowance. The Panel therefore recommends no change to the Co-Optee allowance.

- 4.2.23 The Panel is also of the view that this allowance should also be subject to indexation at the same rate as the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances.

**WE RECOMMEND that there be no change to the Co-Optee Allowance. WE ALSO RECOMMEND that this allowance should be subject to indexation at the same rate as the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances.**

### **4.3 Travelling and Subsistence Allowance**

- 4.3.1 A scheme of allowances may provide for any councillor to be paid for travelling and subsistence undertaken in connection with any of the duties specified in Regulation 8 of the 2003 Regulations (see paragraph 5.10). Similarly, such an allowance may also be paid to Co-opted Members of a committee or sub-committee of the Council in connection with any of those duties, provided that their expenses are not also being met by a third party.

**WE RECOMMEND that travelling and subsistence allowance should be payable to councillors and co-optees in connection with any approved duties. The amount of travel and subsistence payable shall continue to be at the levels payable to council staff in line with NJC rates. We propose no changes to the current travel and subsistence allowances.**

The Panel would also like to highlight that in most Councils Travel Allowances are payable in line with the HMRC regulations and rates. The Council may wish to consider this approach in the future.

### **4.4 Dependent Person Carer Allowance and Child Carer Allowance**

- 4.4.1 The dependent's carers' allowance should ensure that potential candidates are not deterred from standing for election to council and should enable current councillors to continue despite any change in their personal circumstances. The current scheme awards reimbursement for Child Care at the rate of £10.25 per hour and more specialist care to a maximum rate of £15.00 per hour when undertaking Approved Councillor duties.
- 4.4.2 The Panel is of the view that the Dependent Persons Carer Allowance and Child Carer Allowance should both be reimbursed based on the actual cost of the care. The Panel was conscious that the cost of both childcare and more specialist care had increased and the current rates would in effect leave those claiming the allowance 'out of pocket'.
- 4.4.3 The Panel is therefore of the view that the cost of both childcare and more specialist care should be reimbursed at the actual cost incurred by the councillor upon production of receipts. In respect of specialist care provision medical evidence that this type of care provision is required should also be provided and approved by an appropriate officer of the Council.

**WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the Dependent Persons Carer Allowance and both Child Carer Allowance should be based at cost upon production of receipts. In the case of specialist care a requirement of medical evidence that this type of care be required, the allowance should have no daily or monthly maximum claim when undertaking Approved Councillor Duties.**

**WE ALSO RECOMMEND that the Council should actively promote the allowance to prospective and new councillors both before and following an election. This may assist in supporting a greater diversity of councillor representation.**

#### **4.5 Parental Leave**

- 4.5.1 There is no uniform national policy to support councillors who require parental leave for maternity, paternity, or adoption leave. According to the Fawcett Society (Does Local Government Work for Women, 2018) a *'lack of maternity, paternity provision or support'* is a real barrier for women aged 18-44 to fulfil their role as a councillor.
- 4.5.2 We are of the view that support should be provided for parental leave although we do not wish to stipulate an exact policy/procedure. The Panel is aware that the Local Government Association (Labour Group) has developed a model policy that has been adopted by a growing number of councils across the southeast region.
- 4.5.3 There is no legal right to parental leave of any kind for people in elected public office. However, as a way of improving the diversity of Councillors, the Panel would recommend that the Members' Allowance Scheme should be amended to include provisions that clarify that:
- All Councillors shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full for a period up to six months in the case of absence from their Councillor duties due to leave relate to maternity, paternity, adoption shared parental leave or sickness absence
  - Councillors entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance shall continue to receive their allowance in full for a period of six months, in the case of absence from their Councillor duties due to leave related to maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental leave or sickness absence
  - Where for reasons connected with sickness, maternity leave, adoption leave, paternity leave or shared parental leave a Councillor is unable to attend a meeting of the Council for a period of six months, a dispensation by Council can be sought in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972
  - If a replacement to cover the period of absence under these provisions is appointed by Council or the Leader (or in the case of a party group position the party group) the replacement shall be entitled to claim a Special Responsibility Allowance pro rata for the period over which the cover is provided.
  - If a Councillor stands down, or an election is held during the period when a Councillor is absent due to any of the above and the Councillor is not re-elected or decides not to stand down for re-election, their Basic Allowance and any Special Responsibility Allowance will cease from the date they leave office.
- 4.5.4 The Panel is conscious that these provisions do not replicate the LGA policy, but that a policy introduces elements that are more akin to employees which in terms of employment legislation does not include Councillors. We feel that our recommendations more simply and adequately reflect the situation relating to Councillors and clarify for them what they can

expect. Councillors however may wish to further develop the above recommendations so that they reflect the LGA (Labour Group) policy.

**WE RECOMMEND that the approach outlined is adopted as a basis of a policy to support parental leave for councillors. Should a policy on Parental Leave for Councillors be approved it should be actively promoted to prospective and current Councillors alongside the Dependent Person Carer Allowance and Child Carer Allowance. This should form part of a wider 'Be A Councillor' (LGA led initiative) programme led by the Council and supported by political groups; to enhance and further increase the diversity of councillor representation.**

#### **4.6 Indexing of Allowances**

- 4.6.1 A scheme of allowances may make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances in line with a specified index. The present scheme makes provision for the indexation of the basic allowance, the special responsibility allowances and Co-optee(s) allowance to be adjusted annually. The allowances were last indexed from April 2022.

**WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that an annual indexation of the basic allowance, each of the SRAs and the Co-optee(s)' Allowance should continue on an annual basis. The allowances should be increased annually in line with the percentage increase in staff salaries from April 2023 for a period of up to four years. After this period, the Scheme shall be reviewed again by an independent remuneration panel.**

#### **4.7 Revocation of current Scheme of Allowances / Implementation of the new Scheme**

- 4.7.1 The 2003 Regulations provide that a scheme of allowances may only be revoked with effect from the beginning of a financial year, and that this may only take effect on the basis that the authority makes a further scheme of allowances for the period beginning with the date of revocation.

**WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the new scheme of allowances to be agreed by the Council be implemented with effect from the beginning of the 2023-24 municipal year, at which time the current scheme of allowances will be revoked.**



## **5. OUR INVESTIGATION**

### **5.1 Background**

- 5.1.1 As part of this review, a questionnaire was issued to all councillors to support and inform the review. Responses were received from 14 of the 37 current councillors (38% response). The information obtained was helpful in informing our deliberations.
- 5.1.2 We interviewed eight current councillors using a structured questioning process. We are grateful to all our interviewees for their assistance.

### **5.2 Councillors' views on the level of allowances**

- 5.2.1 A summary of the councillors' responses to the questionnaire are attached as Appendix 2.

## **6. APPROVED COUNCILLOR DUTIES**

- 6.1.1 The Panel reviewed the recommended duties for which allowances should be payable and recommend that no changes be made.

**WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND: That no changes are made to the Approved Councillor Duties as outlined in the Members' Allowance Scheme.**

**Mark Palmer (Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel)  
Development Director, South East Employers  
December 2022**

## Appendix 1: Summary of Panel's Recommendations

Allowance	Current Amount for 2022-23	Number	Recommended Allowance (45% PSD)	Recommended Allowance Calculation
<b>Basic (BA)</b>				
<b>Total Basic:</b>	<b>£5,453.89</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>£5,530.67</b>	

<b>Special Responsibility:</b>				
Leader of the Council	£16,361.80	1	£16,592.01	300% of BA
Deputy Leader	£8,180.89	1	£9,125.60	55% of Leader's Allowance
Executive Member	£6,817.45	8	£7,466.40	45% of Leader's Allowance
Chairman of the Council	£2,727.01	1	£3,318.40	20% of Leader's Allowance
Leader of Opposition Group	£2,727.01	1	£4,148.00	25% of Leader's Allowance
Chairman of Planning	£5,453.88	1	£5,807.20	35% of Leader's Allowance
Licensing & Control Committee Chairman	£4,090.45	1	£4,148.00	25% of Leader's Allowance
Chairman Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£4,090.45	1	£4,148.00	25% of Leader's Allowance
Chairman Joint Governance Committee	£2,727.01	1	£3,318.40	20% of Leader's Allowance
Vice Chairman of Council	£1,363.43	1	£829.60	25% of Chairman's Allowance
Deputy Leader of Opposition Group	£1,363.43	1	£1,037.00	25% of Leader of the Opposition Groups Allowance
Vice Chairman Planning Committee	£1,363.43	1	£1,451.80	25% of Chairman's Allowance
Vice Chairman Licensing and Control Committee	£1,363.43	1	£1,037.00	25% of Chairman's Allowance
Vice Chairman of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£1,363.43	1	£1,037.00	25% of Chairman's Allowance
Vice Chairman of Joint Governance Committee	£1,363.43	1	£829.60	25% of Chairman's Allowance
Co-Opted Member	£100 per meeting Chairman and £75 per meeting Panel Member		No Change	