

Members' Allowances Scheme 2020/21

Purpose

- 1.1 Council is required to set a Members' Allowances Scheme for 2020/21, which provides for payment of a basic allowance and special responsibility allowances to councillors.
- 1.2 In setting a scheme of allowances, Council must have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). A report of the IRP was last considered in May 2018.

Whilst Council accepted the principle of the changes recommended at the time, it was resolved that the decision be deferred pending a review of the Council's governance arrangements.

- 1.3 Following the conclusion of this review in January 2020, recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 are presented to Council for due regard.

An approved scheme is required for the 2020/21 financial year. It is therefore proposed that the existing Members' Allowances Scheme is extended until such time as the Independent Remuneration Panel is in a position to make recommendations to Council.

- 1.4 A draft Members' Allowances Scheme, containing only consequential amendments to the previous 2019/20 scheme, is attached at Appendix 1 for approval.

Recommendation

- 2.1 To approve the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2020/21, as set out at Appendix 1, to take effect from 1 April 2020.
- 2.2 To request that the Independent Remuneration Panel review the Members' Allowances Scheme and make recommendations to Council during the 2020/21 municipal year.

Reasons

- 3.1 The Council is statutorily required to set a Members' Allowances Scheme under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) regulations 2003.
- 3.2 A further review of the scheme is consistent with the resolution of Council made on 23 May 2018, which stated:

To respectfully request that, following the outcome of Council's review of its decision-making arrangements, the Independent Remuneration Panel reconsiders the Members' Allowances Scheme, and makes any recommendations it sees fit thereafter.

- 3.3 It is not possible for the IRP to meet and prepare a report for consideration by Council before the start of the 2020-21 financial year, due to the governance review only recently having been concluded. It is therefore proposed that the existing scheme of allowances is extended until such time as a report of the IRP can be presented.

Supporting information

- 4.1 The IRP considered the Members' Allowances scheme in full during the 2017/18 municipal year, taking into account a broad range of evidence and making a series of recommendations.
- 4.2 Whilst Council accepted the principles of the changes proposed by the IRP, it was resolved to defer decisions on the majority of the recommendations until the review of the council's governance arrangements was concluded. This review was completed in January 2020.
- 4.4 Statute requires that Council has regard to the recommendations made by the IRP before it amends any part of the Members' Allowances Scheme. As no changes are proposed to the scheme in order to extend it for the 2020/21 financial year, a report of the IRP is not required at this stage. However, in order to comply with the previous resolution detailed at 3.2, it is intended that the IRP prepare a report for the Council meeting likely to take place in July 2020.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) regulations 2003 require councils to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) when setting a scheme of allowances.
- 5.2 The Chair of the IRP, Mr Narinder Sharma, has been consulted and is in support of the recommendation to extend the existing scheme, subject to a review in the 2020/21 municipal year.

Other options

- 6.1 None.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 The previous Members' Allowances Scheme was agreed by Council on 22 May 2019; only consequential changes are proposed to the proposed scheme attached at Appendix 1.

Any future recommendations of the IRP, if accepted, may have budgetary implications; these will be presented in a future report to Council.

Legal implications

- 8.1 None directly arising.

Other significant implications

- 9.1 None directly arising.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal Finance Service Director(s)	Emily Feenan, Director of Legal, Procurement and Democratic Services	4 February 2020
Report sponsor Other(s)	Paul Simpson, Acting Chief Executive	5 February 2020

Background papers:	Item 20 – Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, Council, 23 May 2018
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Draft Members' Allowances and Expenses Scheme 2020-21