

This report is public	
Members' Allowances Scheme 2025/2026	
Committee	Council
Date of Committee	24 February 2025
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	14 February 2025
Report of	Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, Shiraz Sheikh

Purpose of report

To determine the levels of the allowances to be paid to Members for the forthcoming 2025/2026 financial year and proposed changes to the Members Allowance Scheme, following the consideration of the report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (the "Panel") attached at Appendix 1.

1. Recommendations

Council resolves:

- 1.1 To consider the levels of allowances to be included in the 2025/2026 Members' Allowances Scheme, and whether the Panel's recommendations (as set out at paragraph 3.1 of this report and section 2) should be adopted or modified in any way.
- 1.2 To authorise the Assistant Director Law and Governance to prepare an amended Members' Allowances Scheme, in accordance with the decisions of Council for implementation with effect from 1 April 2025.
- 1.3 To authorise the Assistant Director of Law and Governance to take all necessary action to revoke the current (2024/2025) Scheme and to publicise the revised Scheme pursuant to The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).
- 1.4 To thank the Independent Remuneration Panel for its report and set a fee of £300 for each Panel Member for the work carried out on this review and propose the same level of fee for any reviews carried out in 2025/2026 capped at a maximum of £1200 per person, which can be funded from existing budgets.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel has met to review the current (2024/2025) Members' Allowances Scheme and its report on the recommended levels of the allowance payments for the 2025/2026 financial year, and other proposed changes to the scheme, which is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances (England) Regulations 2003 requires that before an authority makes or amends its Members' Allowance Scheme, it "shall have regard to the recommendations made in relation to it by an Independent Remuneration Panel."
- 2.3 Whilst the Council has a duty to have regard to the Panel's recommendations, it is the Council's choice whether to accept the Panel's recommendations in whole or in part, or not at all, or to determine any other scheme for 2025/2026.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	<p>Provision for an increase has been included in the draft 2025/2026 budget in line with the staff pay award as recommended by the Panel.</p> <p>If Members were minded to alter the levels of the allowances over and above those recommended by the Panel, this would be above the provision included in the draft budget.</p> <p>Rachel Ainsworth, Finance Business Partner, 11 February 2025: It is correct that the 25/26 provision is in line with the staff pay award and that financial provision has not been made for any further increases.</p>
Legal	<p>The Local Authorities Members' Allowances (England) Regulations 2003 ("the Regulations") require the Council to make a scheme in relation to the payment of Member's allowances.</p> <p>The Regulations also require the Council to establish an independent remuneration panel in order to review these allowances and for the Council to have regard to the recommendations of the said panel before making any amendments to the scheme.</p> <p>This report sets out the conclusions of CDC's independent remuneration panel in line with the Regulations and the Council should consider the same before deciding how to proceed.</p> <p>Denzil – John Turbervill, Head of Legal, 10 February 2024</p>
Risk Management	<p>There are no risks or implications arising directly from this report. Operational risks are managed and monitored at a service level, and escalated to the leadership risk register as and when deemed necessary.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 10 February 2025</p>

Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact		X		There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 10 February 2025
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		N/A
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		N/A
Climate & Environmental Impact				N/A
ICT & Digital Impact				N/A
Data Impact				N/A
Procurement & subsidy				N/A
Council Priorities	N/A – report submitted pursuant to statutory requirement			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	N/A			
Consultation & Engagement	Detailed at section 8.0 of the Panel’s report, Appendix 1.			

Supporting Information

3. Background

3.1 As set out in the Executive summary, paragraphs 2.1 – 2.3.

4. Details

Members' Allowances 2025/2026

4.1 Having given due consideration to the information provided to the Independent Remuneration Panel, the Panel recommends Full Council agree the following for inclusion in the Members' Allowance Scheme 2025/2026 (NB. the Members' Allowance Scheme corresponds to the financial year rather than municipal year and the 2025/2026 Scheme will therefore cover the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026)

- a. That the Basic Allowance be increased in in line with the 2025/2026 staff pay award (3.5%), rounded up to give 12 equal payments from 1 April 2025.

	Current level 2024/2025	Proposed 2025/2026 level
Basic Allowance	£5,040 pa	£5,220 pa

- b. That all Special Responsibility Allowances be increased in in line with the 2025/2026 staff pay award (3.5%), rounded up to give 12 equal payments from 1 April 2025.

Special Responsibility Allowance	Current level 2024/2025	Proposed 2025/2026 level
Chairman of the Council	£5,040 pa	£5,220 pa
Leader of the Council	£16,032 pa	£16,596 pa
Deputy Leader of the Council	£10,344 pa	£10,716 pa
Executive Member holding a portfolio	£7,476 pa	£7,740 pa
Leader of Main Opposition Group	£3,468 pa	£3,600 pa
Minority Opposition Group Leader (6 or more Members)	50% of Main Opposition Group Leader SRA	50% of Main Opposition Group Leader SRA
Minority Opposition Group Leader (2-5 Members)	25% of Main Opposition Group Leader SRA	25% of Main Opposition Group Leader SRA
Chairman of Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee	£4,164 pa	£4,320 pa
Chairman of Appeals Panel	£300 SRA plus £300 per meeting to a capped limit of £1800 per annum	£312 SRA plus £312 per meeting to a capped limit of £1872 per annum
Chairman of Budget Planning Committee	£4,164 pa	£4,320 pa
Chairman of General Licensing Committee / Licensing Acts Committee	£888 pa	£924 pa

Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£4,164 pa	£4,320 pa
Chairman of Personnel Committee	£1,488 pa	£1,548 pa
Chairman of Planning Committee	£4,980 pa	£5,160 pa
Chairman of Standards Committee	£888 pa	£924 pa

- c. That the co-optees allowance be increased in line with the staff pay award for 2025/2026 (3.5%) and rounded up to give 12 equal payments from 1 April 2025.

	Current level 2024/2025	Proposed 2025/2026 level
Co-optee Allowance	£864 pa	£900pa

- d. That the Independent Persons allowance be increased in line with the staff pay award for 2025/2026 (3.5%) and rounded up to give 12 equal payments from 1 April 2025.

	Current level 2024/2025	Proposed 2025/2026 level
Independent Persons Allowance	£864 pa	£900pa

- e. That Dependant' Carers' and Childcare Allowances remain at the current level, paid on the basis of the actual costs incurred up to the maximum hourly rate set out below and to a maximum cap of 40 hours per month, subject to production of receipts and which cannot be paid to a member of the claimant's household.

	Current level 2024/2025	Proposed 2025/2026 level
Childcare	£10 per hour	£10 per hour
Dependent relative care	£20 per hour	£20 per hour

- f. That mileage remain at the current level in line with HMRC approved mileage rates and if any adjustments are implemented by HMRC then the revised rates be applied to Members' travel allowances effective from the date of implementation by HMRC.

	Current level 2024/2025	Proposed 2025/2026 level
Bicycles	20p per mile	20p per mile
Motorcycles	20p per mile	20p per mile
Motor vehicles	24p per mile	24p per mile
Electric vehicles	45p per mile	45p per mile

- g. That, having regard to the detailed review of staff subsistence, the rates for subsistence allowance be aligned with the revised maximum staff subsistence levels, with claims permitted on approved duties of over 5 hours outside the district* subject to the submission of receipts (*subsistence allowances cannot

be claimed for any duties within the district as the basic allowance is deemed to cover all within district expenses).

	Current level 2024/2025	Proposed 2025/2026 level
Breakfast	£6.02	£7.50
Lunch	£8.31	£10.50
Tea / coffee	N/A	£4.00
Evening Meal	£10.29	£12.50

- h. That Democratic Services continue to book overnight accommodation if required.
- i. That there be no change to the list of approved duties for which claims may be made.
- j. That Non-Executive Director allowances be increased in line with the staff pay award for 2025/2025 (3.5%) rounded up to give 12 equal payments, from 1 April 2025 and costs recharged to the relevant company.

	Current level 2024/2025	Proposed 2025/2026 level
Non-Executive Directors Graven Hill Village Holding Company Limited and Graven Hill Village Development Company	£4,980 pa	£5,160

- k. That an in-depth “root and branches” review of the Members’ Allowance Scheme be undertaken with implementation to be determined when further information on local government reorganisation, devolution and the Cherwell boundary review is known.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To modify the Panel’s recommendations. This is within the Council’s discretion as the Panel recommendations are not binding. However, it is not recommended as the Panel has considered and justified the recommendations that it has made

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require local authorities to review their Allowances Schemes and to maintain and Independent Remuneration Panel to consider and

make recommendations on new schemes. The report complies with that requirement.

- 6.2 Sections 9 - 14 of the Panel's report (Appendix 1) set out the rationale for the recommendations of the Panel. It is the view of the Independent Remuneration Panel that the proposals represent realistic and fair levels of allowance for 2025/2026 and recommend adoption.

Decision Information

Key Decision	N/A
Subject to Call in	N/A
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
All	All

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Report of the Independent Remuneration panel on the Review of Members' Allowances for the 2026/2026 Financial Year
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Michael Carr, Interim Principal Officer Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
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Corporate Director Approval (unless Corporate Director or Statutory Officer report)	Report of Statutory Officer, Monitoring Officer