

| This report is public | |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Members' Allowance Scheme 2026/2027 | |
| Committee | Council |
| Date of Committee | 23 February 2026 |
| Portfolio Holder presenting the report | Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant |
| Date Portfolio Holder agreed report | 12 February 2026 |
| 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 2026/2027 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 2026/2027 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 2026.
- 1.3 To authorise the Assistant Director of Law and Governance to take all necessary action to revoke the current (2025/2026) 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 confirm a fee of £300 for each Panel Member for the work carried out on this review; and to delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Law & Governance to apply the same final percentage increase to the IRP fee, in line with the staff pay award (when agreed), for any reviews carried out in 2026/2027.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel has met to review the current (2025/2026) Members' Allowances Scheme and its report on the recommended levels of the allowance payments for the 2026/2027 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 2026/2027.

Implications & Impact Assessments

| Implications | Commentary |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Finance | <p>Provision for an increase has been included in the draft 26/27 budget in line with the staff pay award as recommended by the Panel. If Members were minded to alter the levels of 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, 5 February 2026</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, 11 February 2026</p> |
| Risk Management | <p>There are no risks implications arising directly from this report. In the case of any risks arising, they will be managed and monitored through the Service Operational risk register and escalated to the leadership risk register as and when deemed necessary.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 3 February 2026</p> |

| Impact Assessments | Positive | Neutral | Negative | Commentary |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Equality Impact | | X | | There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 3 February 2026 |
| 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 7.0 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 2026/2027

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 2026/2027 (NB. the Members' Allowance Scheme corresponds to the financial year rather than municipal year and the 2026/2027 Scheme will therefore cover the period 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027)

- (a) That the Basic Allowance be increased in line with the 2026/2027 staff pay award, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026. *(NB. Whilst the Panel's recommendations throughout are for an increase in line with the staff cost of living pay award, to give an indicative idea of cost and change, a 2.5% increase has been applied to the figures below for information):*

| | Current level 2025/2026 | Indicative 2026/2027 level |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Basic Allowance | £5,220 pa | £5,352 pa |

- (b) That the current combined Special Responsibility Allowance covering both the Chair of the Licensing Acts Committee and Chair of the General Licensing Committee end, and separate SRAs be introduced for the Chair of each Committee at the current combined SRA level.
- (c) That all Special Responsibility Allowances be increased in line with the 2026/2027 staff pay award, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026.

| Special Responsibility Allowance | Current level 2025/2026 | Indicative 2026/2027 level |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Chair of the Council | £5,220 pa | £5,352 pa |
| Leader of the Council | £16,596 pa | £17,016 pa |
| Deputy Leader of the Council | £10,716 pa | £10,992 pa |
| Executive Member holding a portfolio | £7,740 pa | £7,944 pa |

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leader of Main Opposition Group | £3,600 pa | £3,696 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 |
| Chair of Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee | £4,320 pa | £4,428 pa |
| Chair of Appeals Panel | £312 SRA plus £312 per meeting to a capped limit of £1872 per annum | £324 SRA plus £324 per meeting to a capped limit of £1944 per annum |
| Chair of Budget Planning Committee | £4,320 pa | £4,428 pa |
| Chair of General Licensing Committee | £924 pa – single allowance for Chair of both GLC and LAC | £948 pa |
| Chair of Licensing Acts Committee | | £948 pa |
| Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee | £4,320 pa | £4,428 pa |
| Chair of Personnel Committee | £1,548 pa | £1,596 pa |
| Chair of Planning Committee | £5,160 pa | £5,292 pa |
| Chair of Standards Committee | £924 pa | £948 pa |

- (d) That the co-optees allowance be increased in line with the staff pay award for 2026/2027, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026.

| | Current level 2025/2026 | Indicative 2026/2027 level |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Co-optee Allowance | £900 pa | £924 pa |

- (e) That Independent Persons allowance be increased in line with the staff pay award for 2026/2027, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026.

| | Current level 2025/2026 | Indicative 2026/2027 level |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Independent Persons Allowance | £900 pa | £924 pa |

- (f) That Dependants' 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 cap of 40 hours per month maximum, subject to the production of receipts and the Allowance cannot be paid to a member of the claimant's household.

| | Current level 2025/2026 | Proposed 2026/2027 level |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Childcare | £10 per hour | £10 per hour |
| Dependant relative care | £20 per hour | £20 per hour |

- (g) 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 2025/2026 | Proposed level for 2026/2027 |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Bicycles | 20p per mile | 20p per mile |
| Motorcycles* | 24p per mile | 24p per mile |
| Motor Vehicles* | 45p per mile | 45p per mile |
| Electric or similar specialised vehicles | 45p per mile | 45p per mile |

(*Motor vehicle and motorcycle rates apply whatever the cc of the vehicle concerned)

- (h) That the rates for subsistence allowance remain at the current level in line with the 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 2025/2026 | Proposed 2026/2027 level |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Breakfast | £7.50 | £7.50 |
| Lunch | £10.50 | £10.50 |
| Tea / coffee | £4.00 | £4.00 |
| Evening Meal | £12.50 | £12.50 |

- (i) That Democratic Services continue to book overnight accommodation if required.
- (j) That there be no change to the list of approved duties for which claims may be made.

- (k) That Non-Executive Director allowances be increased in line with the staff pay award for 2026/2027, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026, with costs recharged to the relevant company:

| | Current level 2025/2026 | Indicative 2026/2027 level |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Non-Executive Directors Graven Hill Village Holding Company Limited and Graven Hill Village Development Company | £5,160 | £5,292 |

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 8 - 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 2026/2027 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

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| Appendices | |
| Appendix 1 | Report of the Independent Remuneration panel on the Review of Members' Allowances for the 2026/2027 Financial Year, and annexe 1 |
| Background Papers | None |
| Reference Papers | None |
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| Corporate Director Approval (unless Corporate Director or Statutory Officer report) | Report of Statutory Officer, Monitoring Officer |