

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Council
Date of Meeting:	24 January 2017
Subject:	Scheme of Members Allowances
Report of:	Lin O'Brien, Head of Democratic Services
Corporate Lead:	Sara Freckleton, Borough Solicitor
Lead Member:	Councillor R J E Vines
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

The Council's current Scheme of Allowances expires on 31 March 2017. In determining a new Scheme of Allowances the Council must have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel. The Council can determine a Scheme effective from one to four years but, having determined its Scheme, it cannot make any changes to it without considering the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel.

Recommendation:

The Council is asked to determine the Scheme of Allowances to take effect on 1 April 2017 until 31 March 2018 having regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out at Appendix 1.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To enable the Council to put into place a Scheme of Allowances prior to the expiry of the current Scheme.

Resource Implications:

The current budget for Basic Allowances and Special Responsibility Allowances is £331,644. The total cost of the recommendations of the Panel is £4,325 representing a 1.3% increase on this budget.

Legal Implications:

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, require Authorities to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel. The purpose of the Panel is to make recommendations to the Authority about the Allowances to be paid to Councillors.

Independent Remuneration Panels will make recommendations which must include the level of Basic Allowance for all Councillors, the level of Special Responsibility Allowances, and to whom they should be paid, and on whether Dependants' Carers' Allowance, Travelling & Subsistence Allowances and Co-Optees' Allowance should be paid and the levels of these Allowances. Schemes must be made by 31 March for implementation in the forthcoming financial year. A Scheme may be amended at any time, following consideration of the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations, but may only be revoked with effect from the beginning of a year, except in the case where a Council has begun to operate:

- (a) executive arrangements, where they are being operated in place of existing alternative arrangements;

- (b) alternative arrangements, where they are being operated in place of existing executive arrangements; or
- (c) different executive arrangements which involve an executive which takes a different form.

The 2003 Regulations place certain duties on Local Authorities in connection with publicising the recommendations made by their Independent Remuneration Panel, their Scheme of Allowances and the actual allowances paid to Councillors in any given year.

The Regulations require that, as soon as reasonably practicable after receiving a report from its Panel which sets out the Panel's recommendations, a Local Authority must ensure that copies of the report are available for inspection at its Principal Office at all reasonable hours. A Local Authority must also, as soon as reasonably practicable after it receives the report, publish a Notice in at least one newspaper circulating in its area which:

- States that the Authority has received recommendations from an Independent Remuneration Panel about its Scheme of Allowances.
- States that copies of the report detailing the Panel's recommendations are available for inspection at the Principal Office of the Authority at all reasonable hours.
- States the address of the Principal Office.
- Describes the main features of the Panel's recommendations, including the amounts of allowances the Panel has recommended should be payable to Councillors.

The 2003 Regulations also require that members of the public may take copies of the Panel's report on payment of such reasonable fee as the Local Authority may determine.

In respect of the Local Authority's Scheme of Allowances, the Regulations require that, as soon as reasonably practicable after determining a Scheme of Allowances, a Local Authority must ensure that copies of the Scheme are available for inspection at its Principal Office at all reasonable hours. A Local Authority must also, as soon as reasonably practicable after determining the Scheme, publish a Notice in at least one newspaper circulating in its area which:

- States that the Authority has adopted a Scheme of Allowances and the period for which the Scheme has effect.
- States that copies of the Scheme are available for inspection at its Principal Office at all reasonable hours.
- States the address of the Principal Office.
- Describes the main features of the Scheme, including the amounts of Allowances payable to Councillors under the Scheme.
- States that, in determining the Scheme, the Authority had regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel.
- Describes the main features of the Panel's recommendations, including the amounts of allowances the Panel had recommended should be payable to its Councillors.
- Describes any responsibilities or duties in the Scheme which would merit the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance and Travelling and Subsistence Allowance.

The final publicity requirement in the Regulations is that, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of a year to which a Scheme relates, a Local Authority must make arrangements for the publication in its area of the total sum paid by it to each Member in respect of Basic, Special Responsibility, Travelling and Subsistence, Co-Optees' and Dependants' Carers' Allowances.

All these publicity requirements are statutory minimum requirements. However, the guidance on the Regulations from the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister also states that a Local Authority should publicise more widely the report from its Panel, its Scheme of Allowances and

the sums paid to each Member. This should include, where possible, publishing this information on the Authority's website and in the Council's own newspaper (where they have one).

Risk Management Implications:

If the Council does not adopt a Scheme of Allowances prior to the expiry of the current arrangements it will be unable to pay any allowances.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Once a new Scheme is agreed the appropriate amendments will be made and actioned and the statutory requirements in respect of publicity will be undertaken.

Environmental Implications:

None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 The current Independent Remuneration Panel was formed in 2015 and undertook a fundamental review of allowances culminating in a report to Council in January 2016. Accordingly, at that meeting the Council **RESOLVED**:

That the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for the 2016/17 Scheme of Allowances be **AGREED** as follows:

- That the Basic Allowance payable to all Councillors remain at £7,200.
- That the following Special Responsibility Allowances be payable:

Leader of the Council	£8,400
Deputy Leader	£6,300
Lead Members (7)	£4,200
Committee Chairmen (5)	£2,100
Planning Committee	
Licensing Committee	
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Audit Committee	
Standards Committee	
Mayor	£2,100
Deputy Mayor	£1,300
- That the provision which states that Councillors who carry out more than one role which would attract a Special Responsibility Allowance are only entitled to claim the highest applicable Special Responsibility be deleted from the Scheme and that any Member carrying out a role subject to a Special Responsibility Allowance should receive payment for each role undertaken.

(In respect of the current Mayor particularly, who was also a Lead Member; this provision should be back-dated so that he receives both Special Responsibility Allowances during his Mayoral Year. Accordingly, it is recommended that the provision in the 2015/16 Scheme restricting claims to one Special Responsibility

Allowance be removed).

- That no reference to IT be included in the Council's Scheme of Allowances.
- That the arrangements for travel allowances remain unchanged except that the reference to 'journeys exceeding 50 miles in total will be payable at a mileage rate of 1p per mile after the first 50 miles' be deleted as the Panel cannot see any rationale for this to remain in the Scheme.
- That the arrangements for subsistence allowances remain unchanged except that the Democratic Services Group Manager be given delegated authority to approve increased amounts in special circumstances, such as visits to London, subject to them being reasonable and upon the production of receipts.
- That the Dependent Carers' Allowance remains in place but that the maximum amount payable be increased from £6 per hour to £7.20 in line with the living wage.
- That it be noted that, from 1 April 2014, the entitlement of local Councillors to join the Local Government Pension Scheme was abolished.
- That the repayment provision within the Scheme remain unchanged.
- That the Scheme be introduced for one year from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, during which period the Panel will meet to review the Scheme and recommend any amendments if necessary.
- That no other changes be made to the Scheme of Allowances, including the Schedule of Approved Duties.

2.0 SCHEME OF MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2017/18

2.1 The Council's existing Scheme expires on 31 March 2017 and, before making a new Scheme, the Council must have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel. Once a Scheme has been determined, the Council can only make any changes to it after having considered the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel.

2.2 The report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel, setting out its recommendations for a Scheme of Members Allowances 2017/18, is attached at Appendix 1.

2.3 Members are asked to consider the Panel's report having regard to its recommendations before determining a Scheme of Allowances for 2017/18.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 Not applicable.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 As set out in the Independent Remuneration Panel's report.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 Not applicable.

- 7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)**
- 7.1 Not applicable.
- 8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)**
- 8.1 Not applicable.
- 9.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)**
- 9.1 Not applicable.
- 10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS**
- 10.1 Council Report considered on 26 January 2016.

Background Papers: None.

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Appendices: One – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.