

# TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

<b>Report to:</b>	Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	26 January 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	Scheme of Members Allowances
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Democratic Services
<b>Corporate Lead:</b>	Borough Solicitor
<b>Number of Appendices:</b>	One

## **Executive Summary:**

The Council's current Scheme of Allowances expires on 31 March 2021. In determining a new scheme of allowances, the Council must have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel. Having determined its scheme, the Council cannot make any changes to it without considering the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel. The recommendations of the Panel are contained within this report.

## **Recommendation:**

**That the Scheme of Allowances for 2021/22 remain unchanged and be as set out at Appendix 1 in accordance with the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel.**

## **Reasons for Recommendation:**

To enable the Council to put in 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 (SRAs) is £350,775. The Independent Remuneration Panel is recommending a freeze in allowances for the 2021/22 year. If agreed by the Council, there would therefore be no increase in the 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 SRAs, and to whom they should be paid, and on whether dependants' carers' allowance, travelling and 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. 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, action will be taken to implement the scheme with effect from 1 April 2021 and to comply with the publicity requirements.

**Environmental Implications:**

None.

**1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel consists of four members of the public who are residents of the Borough and are involved with business, community and voluntary organisations which operate within the Council's area.
- 1.2 In 2019, the Panel undertook an extensive review of the Council's Scheme of Allowances which included analysing schemes from other authorities in Gloucestershire, and across the south west, meeting with Members and considering a presentation from the Head of Finance and Asset Management on the Council's financial position.
- 1.3 This review culminated in a recommendation that the Scheme for 2020/21 be adopted unchanged from that in place for 2019/20 except for an increase in the Basic Allowance of £150 which would result in the Basic Allowance rising from £7,200 to £7,350 and a percentage increase of 2%. The Council, at its meeting on 28 January 2020, agreed with the view of the Panel and the Scheme adopted for 2020/21 is attached at Appendix 1. This Scheme expires on 31 March 2021, so it is now necessary for a new Scheme be put in place.

**2.0 SCHEME OF MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2020/21/22**

- 2.1 In normal circumstances the Panel would have commenced a review at the end of last year and contact was made with the Panel members at that time. It was explained that in view of the situation with the Pandemic, which has since worsened, it had not been possible to obtain detailed comparative data and face to face meetings would be difficult to facilitate.

**2.2** The Panel was of the view that, in light of the Pandemic and the extensive work undertaken previously, the Scheme of Allowances shown at Appendix 1 be rolled on unchanged for one year.

**2.3** The Council is therefore asked to adopt the Scheme of Allowances, shown at Appendix 1, for the year 2021/22 in accordance with the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

### **3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

**3.1** Not applicable.

### **4.0 CONSULTATION**

**4.1** Not applicable.

### **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 in April 2002 - Basic allowance of £6,500 per annum increasing by £1,300 on an annual basis over a four-year period up to £10,400.

Council Report considered in February 2004 - Basic allowance of £9,100 effective from 7 May 2004 increasing to £10,400 on 7 May 2005.

Council Report considered in May 2008 - Basic allowance of £9,000 (three years).

Council Report considered in March 2011 - Basic allowance of £7,200 (four years).

Council Reports considered in April 2015, January 2016, January 2017, January 2018, January 2019 and January 2020 – Basic allowance of £7,200.

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**Background Papers:** None.

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**Appendices:** 1. Scheme of Allowances 2020/21.