

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING 24 MARCH 2014

REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME BY THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

REPORT OF THE CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY AND THE FINANCE OFFICER

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel) has completed its review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and its report is presented to the Authority for consideration.

2 THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL'S REPORT

- 2.1 The report of the Panel is annexed to this report. An authority must have regard to the advice of its Panel when deciding on its Members' Allowances Scheme and the amounts to be paid thereunder.
- 2.2 Members will see that the Panel does not recommend any changes to the responsibilities for which allowances are paid or the level of allowances.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from the review. The allowances are fully set out in Appendix 2 of the report and can be met from the Cost of Member Services within the Corporate and Democratic Budget for 2014/2015.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Authority is requested to consider the report and recommendations of the Panel and if approved, agree that the scheme for 2014-2015 shall continue in the same terms as the current scheme, such scheme to apply until further review and consideration by the Authority.

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Authority uses the Independent Remuneration Panel appointed by the lead authority, Sunderland City Council, to make recommendations on its members' allowances scheme. The Panel operates in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and its terms of reference are attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The Regulations are supported by detailed guidance issued by the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Inland Revenue, to which the Panel has had regard. The Panel has also had regard to the levels of allowances awarded by other authorities in the region.
- 1.3 The Panel last reviewed the Scheme in 2012 at which time it recommended a small number of amendments to reflect the discontinuance of the Civil Contingencies Committee and the merger of the Policy Advisory and Performance Review Committees. These amendments were accepted by the Authority.

2. CONSIDERATION OF CURRENT SCHEME

- 2.1 No representations were received from members of the Authority regarding the current scheme and the Panel noted that there had been no changes in the governance / committee arrangements within the Authority since the last review.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Panel recommends that no changes are made to the terms of the current scheme and that the allowances and associated terms and conditions continue to apply for the financial year 2014/ 2015.

A schedule of the members' allowances is set out at Appendix 2.

John Anderson CBE, Chair
Karen Straughair
John Cuthbert

February 2014

Appendix 1

The Work of the Panel

The regulations provide for independent remuneration panels to have the following functions:

- To make recommendations to the authority as to the amount of basic allowance that should be payable to its elected members.
- To make recommendations to the authority about the responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a special responsibility allowance and as to the amount of such an allowance.
- To make recommendations to the authority about the duties for which a travelling and subsistence allowance can be paid and as to the amount of this allowance.
- To make recommendations as to the amount of co-optees' allowances.
- To make recommendations as to whether the authority's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and if it does make such a recommendation, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined.
- To make recommendations on whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of a financial year in the event of the scheme being amended.
- To make recommendations as to whether annual adjustments of allowance levels may be referred to an index, and, if so, for how long such a measure should run.
- To make recommendations as to which members of an authority are to be entitled to pensions in accordance with a scheme made under section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972.
- As to treating basic allowance and special responsibility allowance as amounts in respect of which such pensions are payable.

Appendix 2

<u>Summary of Members' Allowances</u>	<u>Proposed</u> £
Basic Allowance	1,848
Special Responsibility Allowances:	
Chairman	12,798
Vice Chairman (to include Chairing the Policy and Performance Committee)	6,399
Chairman – Human Resources Committee	6,399
Leader of Majority Party in Opposition	3,200
Co-optees Allowances:	
Governance Committee	
Chair of Governance Committee	3,296
Independent Members	1,648

Where there is no single majority party in opposition and there is equal representation of any opposition parties on the Joint Authority, the allowance payable to the Leader of the Majority Party in Opposition shall be shared equally between the Leader of the Parties who are so represented.

Carers Allowances:

Actual expenditure up to a maximum of £ 7.15 per hour

Travel Allowances:

Motor Cycle Allowance	24p per mile
Bicycle Allowance	20p per mile

Car Allowance:

45p per mile for first 10,000 miles and 25p thereafter
 Passenger Supplement 5p per mile for the Passenger
 (not exceeding 4)

Accommodation and Subsistence Allowances:

Overnight Accommodation - the allowance will not be claimable as an allowance as such, rather reasonable costs of an overnight stay (including breakfast) will be met for business class accommodation (3 star or 4 star) within and outside of London. Unless there are exceptional circumstances officers will book the accommodation direct selecting the most economic option available and utilising the established procurement arrangements in place. Where exceptional circumstances exist, these will be approved in advance by the Finance Officer and reasonable costs will be reimbursed subject to submission of receipts.

The above approach is proposed for dealing with overnight stays (including breakfast). The subsistence rates for other meals, where necessary, are still considered appropriate and would be in addition.

In the case of absence from the usual place of residence for a continuous period which exceeds 4 hours but does not involve an overnight absence, subsistence is payable as per the table set out below:

Breakfast Allowance	£6.15
Lunch Allowance	£8.46
Tea Allowance	£3.33
Evening Meal Allowance	£10.48

Reduction of Subsistence Allowance for Meals Provided Free of Charge:

Reduction for Breakfast provided	£6.15
Lunch provided	£8.46
Tea provided	£3.33
Dinner provided	£10.48

A contribution in excess of the above amounts can be made in exceptional extenuating circumstances. Such circumstances must be approved in advance by the Finance Officer.

