

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No 5

MEETING: 20 MARCH 2017

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME FOR THE
FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/18**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY AND STRATEGIC
FINANCE MANAGER**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Authority uses the Independent Remuneration Panel appointed by the Lead Authority, Sunderland City Council, to make recommendations about the allowances to be paid to elected members in the following financial year.

2 REVIEW OF ALLOWANCES

- 2.1 The Panel has received written submissions from members and met with the Chairman and has determined that it would welcome further information before finalising its recommendations. As the Authority is required to determine a Scheme before the 1st April in each year, the Panel has recommended that the terms of the existing Scheme continue to apply during the year 2017/2018, until the review is complete and the Panel is able to report back with its detailed recommendations. A summary of the Scheme of Allowances is shown in the appendix to this report.
- 2.2 When making a Scheme of Allowances, in accordance with the relevant regulations, regard is had to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panels for the constituent authorities and the Panel takes account of this information when formulating its recommendations. This requirement may assist with consistency, although many roles and responsibilities within principal authorities are not directly comparable to those of a member of a fire authority. The requirement does however help to avoid the payment of "double allowances" for the same duties. None of the schemes of the constituent authorities contain a special responsibility allowance for members who sit on the Fire Authority. The current basic allowances for the authorities are:

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Gateshead | 10,446 |
| Newcastle | 8,775 |
| North Tyneside | 9,759 |
| South Tyneside | 7,298 |
| Sunderland | 8,369 |

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the terms of the existing Scheme of Allowances continue to apply in the financial year 2017/2018, with further consideration being given to the terms of the Scheme following completion of the Panel's Review.

APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF MEMBERS’ ALLOWANCES

Summary of Members’ Allowances

£

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 Leaders of the Parties who are so represented.

Carer’s 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)

The rates for travel and car allowances are Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs Rates. Allowances to be updated as and when HMRC publishes revised allowances.

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.