



**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item 4**

**MEETING: 13 MARCH 2023**

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**SUBJECT: MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR  
2023/2024**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY AND FINANCE  
DIRECTOR**

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**1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Authority is required to adopt a Members' Allowances Scheme for each financial year. The practice of the Authority has been to use the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) appointed by Sunderland City Council, to make recommendations regarding its Scheme.
- 1.2 The Panel proposes to undertake a detailed review of the Fire Authority Scheme during the course of the financial year 2023 to 2024. However, as there is a requirement to adopt a Scheme prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, this report is brought to the Authority with a recommendation that the Authority consider agreeing to continue with the terms of the current Scheme at this time. Any changes recommended by the Panel following its review, will be referred to the Authority for members' consideration.
- 1.3 In setting its Scheme for the forthcoming year, the Authority should have regard to any recommendations of IRPs made to the constituent authorities. 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 paid by the authorities are Gateshead £ 11,941, Newcastle £ 9,200, North Tyneside £ 10,829 South Tyneside £ 8,167, Sunderland £8369. This is in accordance with the recommendations of the relevant IRPs, although in respect of Sunderland, the Panel recommended an increase to the basic allowance for 2023/2024, which the Council declined to implement.
- 1.4 The terms of the Authority's current Scheme, which members may wish to adopt for the next financial year, are summarised in the Appendix to this report.



## **2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 The total cost of Allowances paid by the Authority to members of all of its various Committees, based on the existing scheme, will be £80,637. Of this sum £72,397 is paid to elected members and £8,240 to the three independent persons co-opted onto the Governance Committee.
- 2.2 The budget for 2023/2024 of £85,607 in addition includes provision for all expenses reasonably incurred by its members whilst attending meetings and carrying out the Authority's business. The Authority reports all of these costs as required in its Statement of Accounts and separately on its website.

## **3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Members are requested to consider whether to apply the terms of the current Scheme, which are summarised in the Appendix to this report, for the financial year 2023/2024.



## **APPENDIX – SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES FOR 2023/2024**

| <b><u>Summary of Members' Allowances</u></b>                                    | <b>£</b> |
|---|----------|
| <b>Basic Allowance</b>  | 2,500    |
| <b>Special Responsibility Allowances:</b>                                       |          |
| Authority Chair   | 12,798   |
| Authority Vice Chair (to include Chairing the Policy and Performance Committee) | 10,000   |
| Chair – Human Resources Committee   | 6,399    |
| Leader of Majority Party in Opposition  | 3,200    |
| <b>Co-optees' Allowances:</b>   |          |
| Governance Committee  |          |
| Chair of Governance Committee   | 3,296    |
| Independent Member  | 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 the equivalent of the current National Living Wage or National Minimum Wage hourly rate, as appropriate, dependent upon the age of the worker. The rate applicable shall be subject to automatic increases in line with uprating of the Adult National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage.

### **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 to be 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.