

**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item No. 5**

**MEETING: 17 FEBRUARY 2020**

**SUBJECT: MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME FOR THE FINANCIAL  
YEAR 2020/2021**

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

**1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Authority is required to adopt a Members' Allowances Scheme for each financial year. In October 2019, the Authority agreed to continue to use the Independent Remuneration Panel appointed by Sunderland City Council, and to undertake reviews on an annual basis.
- 1.2 Arrangements are being made for the Panel to meet over the coming weeks and for Authority members to have the opportunity to submit comments for its consideration. As the review and Panel's recommendations are unlikely to be available in time for consideration by the Authority prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> April, the date by which a Scheme for 2020/2021 needs to be adopted, it is recommended that members continue the terms of the current Scheme, until the detailed review is complete and the recommendations are available. It may be considered appropriate for the Authority to consider the Panel's recommendations at its Annual Meeting in June, at which time any amendments can be considered.
- 1.3 In setting its Scheme for the forthcoming year, the Authority should have regard to any recommendations of Independent Remuneration Panels 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 £10,977, Newcastle £9,000, North Tyneside £10,358, South Tyneside £7,667, Sunderland £8,369.

**2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 The total cost of Allowances paid by the Authority to members of all its various Committees, based on the existing scheme, will be £81,489. Of this sum £74,897 is paid to elected members and £6,592 to the three independent persons co-opted onto the Governance Committee.

- 2.2 The budget for 2020/21 of £87,900 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 recommended to continue to apply the terms of the current Scheme for the financial year 2020/2021 and to agree to review the position following receipt of recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

## APPENDIX – SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

	£
<b>Basic Allowance</b>	2,500
<b>Special Responsibility Allowances:</b>	
Chairman	12,798
Vice Chairman (to include Chairing the Policy and Performance Committee)	10,000
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 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.