

# Appendix A

## Report of the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Independent Remuneration Committee:

### Introduction

This report sets out the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) arising from its review of the Council's Members' Allowance Scheme 2018/19 and its assessment of the Basic Allowance (BA), Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) and other expenses and allowances currently being paid under the Scheme.

In producing this report the IRP has considered the allowances currently being paid by other comparable councils; the outcomes of a workload survey undertaken by councillors; the views of councillors expressed in surveys and interviews with the IRP; and a request made by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority that the IRP consider the payment of allowances to Members serving on the Authority. The IRP has been guided by the need for the Scheme:

- to be perceived by everyone to be fair and evidence based;
- to be transparent and easy to administer; and
- to encourage both greater diversity amongst councillors and recognise their willingness to take on roles requiring greater time commitment.

The members of the IRP are Graham Jagger, Simon Harris and Grant Osbourn who have been supported in undertaking this review of the Scheme by the Council's Democratic Services Team.

### 1. Basic Allowance (BA)

The Council did not adopt the recommendation made in the IRP's 2018 report that there be a one off increase for that year in the BA to £5300 pa, (to bring it to the same level as the BA paid at that time to East Cambridgeshire Councillors. Consideration was given to proposing indexing changes to the Council's BA payment to changes in the national Living Wage, (as is the current practice in some other Councils). However following discussions and feedback from Councillors, the IRP has concluded that currently there is no consensus support for increasing the BA for 2019/20 by more than the percentage amount that the Council agrees to apply to the pay rates of Council staff.

The IRP therefore **recommends that the Basic Allowance for the 2019/20 financial year be increased by the same percentage as the Council has agreed to apply to the pay rates of Council staff for this period and that the Basic Allowance is increased annually in line with the annual staff pay award to the end of the 2021/22 financial year.**

### 2. Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)

**a) Office Holders:** The IRP has reviewed roles for which SRAs are paid and has taken account of the changed structure established following the May 2018 election. The IRP has

reviewed the outcomes of the workload survey conducted by Councillors and has consulted with Councillors on the relative importance and responsibilities of roles attracting SRAs and of the time commitment required of office holders. In considering its recommendations on changes to SRAs the IRP has taken into account:

- the additional responsibility and time commitment required of office holders (over and above that expected of all councillors ) in the roles for which SRAs are paid; and
- that levels of SRA payments had been unchanged for several years until last year's percentage adjustment in line with Council pay rates.

The Council did not adopt the proposed framework of SRA payments which the IRP had recommended in its 2018 report by which changes to SRA payments were to be specified as percentages of the Basic Allowance, (rather than by periodic review and determination of fixed amounts). The IRP remains of the view that this approach would provide a more consistent and coherent framework for determining the distribution and level of SRAs, whilst being adaptable to future changes. However **the IRP now recommends that for 2019/20 the SRAs paid to Councillors holding the following positions be increased to the levels set out below with effect from the date of adoption of by the Council of the new Scheme:**

Leader of the Council	£11220
Deputy Leaders	£ 8290
Cabinet Members	£ 7650
Major Opposition Group Leader	£ 3800
Chair of the Council	£ 4240
Vice Chair of the Council	£ 2120
Chair, Scrutiny & Overview Committee	£ 3800
Vice Chair, Scrutiny & Overview Committee	£ 1900
Chair, Planning Committee	£ 6360
Vice Chair, Planning Committee	£ 3180
Chair, Audit & Governance Committee	£ 2120
Chair, Civic Affairs Committee	£ 1060
Chair, Licensing Committee	£ 1060
Chair, Employment and Staffing Committee	£ 1060
Chair, Grants Advisory Committee	£ 1060
Chair, Climate Change & Environment Advisory Committee	£ 1060
Independent Member	£ 1060
Deputy Independent Member	£ 530

**b) Committee Members:** The reduction in the number of councillors from 57 to 45 following the implementation of the Local Government Boundary Commission recommendations in

2018 resulted in the cost of the Scheme's Basic Allowance being reduced by £38690 pa. However these changes also had the effect of increasing the number of electors per councillor and with some councillors being required to attend a greater number of parish councils than hitherto. Taking into account the impact of these factors on the time that councillors are expected to commit to their representative roles, and the need for the active participation of councillors on Council committees, the IRP has considered a proposal to introduce the payment of SRAs to councillors who are Committee members in the municipal year 2019/20.

In considering this proposal the IRP has had regard to the statutory Regulations and Guidance on Members Allowances for Local Authorities in England which:

- stipulate that "SRAs can be paid to members of a committee or sub committee which meets with **exceptional frequency or for exceptionally long periods**"; and
- states that "Local authorities will wish to consider very carefully the additional roles of members and significance of these roles in terms of responsibility and real time commitment before deciding which will warrant the payment of SRAs", (and that "if a majority of members of a council receive an SRA the local electorate may rightly question whether this was justified.")

A recommendation that all Council Committee members are paid an SRA would result in 40/45 Councillors being paid one or more SRAs. In reviewing the frequency of meetings of Committees and Sub Committees held in 2018/19 and scheduled for 2019/20, (and the time commitment required of members in preparing for and participating in these meetings) the IRP has received evidence that the most demanding of Members' time are the monthly Planning and Scrutiny and Overview Committees. The Grants Advisory Committee is also scheduled to meet monthly in 2019/ 20 and it is anticipated that there may be more than 36 meetings of the Licensing Appeals Sub Committee in that period.

**The IRP recommends the payment of the following allowances to Members of the following Council committees in the municipal year 2019/20 with effect from adoption of the new Scheme by the Council.**

a) Members of the Planning Committee	£500
b) Members of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee and Members of the Licensing Committee who undertake 4 or more panels a year	£250
c) Members of the Grants Advisory Committee	£125

**c) Members on Partnership Bodies:** The IRP considered whether SRAs should be paid to councillors taking on representative roles on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CA) and Greater Cambridge Partnership, (GCP). Other constituent Councils of the Combined Authority have also been asked to consider payments to those of their members holding roles on the Authority. From the oral and written evidence we have received we conclude that these roles carry significant responsibilities in addition to those expected of a District Councillor. We have taken account of the amount of time needed to prepare for and attend day time meetings at various locations within Cambridgeshire; the weight of decision making and necessity for proper scrutiny within both the Combined Authority and Greater Cambridge Partnership; and the increasing importance of these roles for the residents and businesses of South Cambridgeshire.

The IRP recommends:

**(1) The payment of SRAs to councillors holding the roles of Executive Board/Cabinet Member, Member of the Overview and Scrutiny and Member of the Audit and Governance Committee of the Combined Authority and the Board Member and Assembly Member of the Greater Cambridge Partnership, and that, with effect from adoption of the Scheme by the Council**

**(2) the payment of SRAs to these members is made on the same basis as those made to their counterparts on Cambridge City Council currently undertaking the same roles on the Combined Authority and Greater Cambridge Partnership, as follows:**

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority:

Executive Board/ Cabinet Member	100% of Basic Allowance (£4912)*
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Member	25% of Basic Allowance (£1228)*
Audit and Governance Committee Member	10% of Basic Allowance (£491)*

Greater Cambridge Partnership:

Board Member	25% of Basic Allowance (£1228) (50% if also the Chair of the Executive Board (£2456))*
Assembly Member	15% of Basic Allowance (£736)*

\*Based on 2018/19 Basic Allowance before uprating in line with council pay rates.

**d) The IRP recommends that the SRA payments in paragraphs 2a), 2b) and 2c) are increased annually in line with increases made to the Basic Allowance to the end of the 2021/2022 financial year.** However given the evolving nature of the partnership bodies and of the roles undertaken by Councillor members on these bodies it remains open to the Council in the interim to decide to review these allowances (and the other SRAs paid to Councillors) to take account both of any further changes in roles and responsibilities and the payments which other Councils have agreed to pay their Councillors on these bodies.

**e) Although there is no statutory limitation on the number of SRAs that an individual councillor may hold at any one time most Councils stipulate a limit of two SRAs. Para 4(2) currently stipulates a maximum of one and the IRP recommends that in line with good practice in other Councils the number of SRAs that any councillor may hold be normally limited to two and that Paragraph 4(2) of the Scheme be amended to read “No Councillor may normally receive more than two special responsibility allowances”.**

### **3. Other Allowances and Expenses: Public And Other Transport**

The IRP has been asked to review and clarify the process for reimbursement of Councillors' travel expenses when using taxis and **recommends that the current wording in the Scheme be amended to read as follows;**

- a) Travel by public transport will be reimbursed at the ordinary or any available cheap fare rate and tickets should be attached to the claim form

- b) The cost of travel by taxi may be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances, (eg where there no other usable alternative); and the **Chief Executive or his/her nominee** should be advised (where practicable) in advance of the journey. **Should prior approval not be practicable, actual reasonable costs may be met on the production of receipts but only with the approval of the Chief Executive (or his/her nominee).**

**Graham Jagger Simon Harris Grant Osbourn**

Annex 1 – Benchmarking information

Annex 2 - Results of SRA workload survey