

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL -  
REVIEW OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ALLOWANCE AND  
MEMBERS'S ALLOWANCES SCHEME FOR 2018/19**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In approving the current Members' Allowances Scheme in September 2016, Council also agreed to a thorough review being undertaken following the establishment of a new administration in May 2017.

1.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel met on 18 September 2017 and received oral representations from the following Members:

Councillor Peter Nutting	Leader
Councillor Pam Moseley	representing the Labour Group
Councillor Pauline Dee	Independent Group
Councillor David Turner	
Councillor Hannah Fraser	representing the Liberal Democrat Group

1.3 A further meeting was held on 6 October 2017 at which oral representations were received from Clive Wright, Chief Executive, and the following Members and Officer:

Councillor David Minnery	Portfolio Holder
Councillor Kevin Pardy	
Councillor Claire Wild	Scrutiny Chair
Councillor Elliott Lynch	
Councillor Edward Potter	
Councillor Lee Chapman	Portfolio Holder
Councillor Roger Evans	Group Leader - Liberal Democrats
Councillor Roy Aldcroft	
Councillor Alexander Phillips	
Councillor Simon Harris	
Councillor Ted Clarke	Chairman Planning Committee
Councillor David Evans -	Chairman Planning Committee

1.4 In addition, The Panel considered comparative data based on a CIPFA provided comparison package. Panel Members also took note of the general situation with Public Sector pay and external inflation movements. As well as their face to face meetings, Panel Members held further telephone conferences in order to compose their recommendations.

**2.0 MEMBERS BASIC ALLOWANCE**

**2.1 Recommendation**

That the basic allowance paid to members should remain unchanged at £11,514.00.

## **2.2 Reasoning**

The Panel noted that Council Members had previously and voluntarily taken a 5% reduction in allowances, that membership of a pension scheme was no longer possible and that inflationary pressure had eroded spending power generally. However, when compared against the basic allowance of other authorities, that of Shropshire Council Members was still some way ahead of the median allowance paid elsewhere. Additionally, there was little or no pressure from Council Members suggesting that an increase in basic allowance was needed. In light of that, Panel Members concluded that the basic allowance should remain the same.

## **SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES**

### **3.0 CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL/DEPUTY SPEAKER**

#### **3.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairman of Council/Deputy Speaker be reduced from 0.75 to 0.5

#### **3.2 Reasoning**

The importance of the work done by Chairman of the Council / Deputy Speaker was acknowledged freely by The Panel. However, having considered the work involved, The Panel took the view that the demands of the role were out of alignment with the level of SRA being paid and that a downward adjustment to a factor of 0.5 would be appropriate.

### **4.0 SPEAKER/VICE-CHAIRMAN**

#### **4.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Speaker/Vice Chairman be reduced from 0.75 to 0.5.

#### **4.2 Reasoning**

The importance of the work done by Speaker / Vice Chairman of the Council was acknowledged freely by The Panel. However, having considered the work involved, The Panel took the view that the demands of the role were out of alignment with the level of SRA being paid and that a downward adjustment to a factor of 0.5 would be appropriate.

### **5.0 LEADER OF COUNCIL (INC GROUP LEADER)**

#### **5.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Leader of Council (including Group Leader) be increased from 2 to 2.5.

## **5.2 Reasoning**

The amount of work being undertaken by the Leader of the Council has grown consistently over time but there has been no corresponding increase in SRA. Additionally, when compared to Leaders of other Authorities, the SRA of the Leader of Shropshire Council lags somewhat behind that of its comparators. Accordingly, in recognition of the increased level of work undertaken and time spent on Council business, The Panel formed the opinion that an increase in SRA was justified.

## **6.0 DEPUTY LEADER OF COUNCIL + PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

### **6.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Deputy Leader of Council (Portfolio Holder) remains unchanged at 1.25

### **6.2 Reasoning**

Having reviewed the SRA for the role, The Panel felt that the current level of SRA continued to fit well with the work and responsibilities of the Deputy Leader of the Council.

## **7.0 EXECUTIVE MEMBERS (PORTFOLIO HOLDERS)**

### **7.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Executive Members (Portfolio Holders) remains unchanged at 1

### **7.2 Reasoning**

Having reviewed the SRA for the Executive Member roles, The Panel felt that the current level of SRA continued to fit well with the work and responsibilities of the office holders.

## **8.0 DEPUTY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

### **8.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Deputy Portfolio Holders be reduced from 0.5 to 0.25

## **8.2 Reasoning**

The SRA for Deputy Portfolio Holders has been under consideration for some time. The Panel was therefore keen to get as wide a view as possible from those wishing to give evidence. Having done so, The Panel drew the overall conclusion that the multiplier was greater than that warranted by the associated work and responsibility level of the role and that this indicated the need for a reduction in the size of the related SRA multiplier.

## **9.0 OPPOSITION GROUP LEADERS (with at least 10% of the membership of the Council)**

### **9.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Opposition Group Leaders (with at least 10% of the membership of the Council) be increased from 0.5 to 0.75

### **9.2 Reasoning**

In assessing this SRA, The Panel noted an increased time and work commitment by Opposition Group Leaders in managing their groups and providing an opposition view to the Administration. Evidence given to The Panel supported this and led to the conclusion that an increase in the SRA multiplier was indeed appropriate.

## **10.0 CHAIRMEN OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE(S)**

### **10.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees be reduced from 1 to 0.5

### **10.2 Reasoning**

The SRA for Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees was one that featured a good deal in evidence given to The Panel. Having looked at the demands of the role and listened carefully to the evidence provided, The Panel concluded that associated SRA should be reduced by 50% to reflect the level of work and time commitment of Scrutiny Chairmen.

## **11.0 CHAIRMAN OF AREA PLANNING COMMITTEES**

### **11.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of Area Planning Committees be increased from 0.5 to 0.75

## **11.2 Reasoning**

Having considered the current situation, The Panel took the view that the current level of SRA did not recognize sufficiently the work undertaken by the Chairmen of Area Planning Committees. The same was considered to be true of the level of responsibility that they carry and the exposure that they can experience. Consequently, The Panel concluded that a 50% uplift in the level of SRA was justified.

## **12.0 VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE AREA PLANNING COMMITTEES**

### **12.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Vice Chairmen of Area Planning Committees remains unchanged at 0.125

### **12.2 Reasoning**

Having reviewed the SRA for these roles, The Panel felt that the current level of SRA continued to fit well with the work and responsibilities of the office holders.

## **13.0 CHAIRMAN OF STRATEGIC LICENSING COMMITTEE**

### **13.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of the Strategic Licensing Committee remains unchanged at 0.25

### **13.2 Reasoning**

Having reviewed the SRA for this role, The Panel felt that the current level of SRA continued to fit well with the work and responsibilities of the role.

## **14.0 CHAIRMAN OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE / VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE STRATEGIC LICENSING COMMITTEE**

### **14.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committee/Vice Chairman of the Strategic Licensing Committee be reduced to zero and be removed from the scheme

### **14.2 Reasoning**

The changing nature of the work in the area of Licensing has led The Panel to conclude that an SRA is no longer appropriate / needed in this area.

## **15.0 CHAIRMAN OF AUDIT COMMITTEE**

### **15.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairman of the Audit Committee remains unchanged at 0.5

### **15.2 Reasoning**

Having reviewed the SRA for this role, The Panel felt that the current level of SRA continued to fit well with the work and responsibilities of the role.

## **16.0 CHAIRMAN OF PENSIONS COMMITTEE**

### **16.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of the Pensions Committee remains unchanged at 0.25

### **16.2 Reasoning**

Having reviewed the SRA for this role, The Panel felt that the current level of SRA continued to fit well with the work and responsibilities of the role.

## **17.0 VICE-CHAIRMAN OF PENSIONS COMMITTEE**

### **17.1 Recommendation**

That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of the Pensions Committee remains unchanged at 0.125

### **17.2 Reasoning**

Having reviewed the SRA for this role, The Panel felt that the current level of SRA continued to fit well with the work and responsibilities of the role.

## **18.0 CHILD AND DEPENDENT CARERS' ALLOWANCE**

### **18.1 Recommendations**

That the Child and Dependent Carers' Allowance be increased from £6.19 per hour to the actual cost or the National Living Wage, whichever is the lower, subject to the maximum allowance which can be claimed per annum increasing from £2,500 to £3,000. The scheme is proposed to be further amended for clarification to read as follows:

“A councillor or co-optee may claim an allowance where they have incurred expenditure on engaging a carer for a dependant in order to carry out an approved duty, subject to the following conditions:

1. A carer will be any responsible mature person who does not normally live with the councillor or co-optee as part of their family.
2. An allowance will be payable if the dependant being cared for:
  - (i) is a child under 14 years of age
  - (ii) is an elderly person
  - (iii) has a physical or mental disability, or
  - (iv) has a learning disability

and normally lives with the councillor or co-optee as part of their family and is unable to be left unsupervised.

3. The Dependants' Carers' Allowance shall be set at the actual cost or the National Living Wage hourly rate, whichever is the lower, subject to a maximum of £3,000 per annum.

The period of duty is calculated on a 'door-to-door' basis, i.e. from the time a councillor or co-optee leaves their place of residence to carry out the council duty to the time they return.

4. Tax and National Insurance will be deducted by the council in appropriate cases.
5. No claim may be made and no allowance is payable where a Dependants' Carers' Allowance or the reimbursement of carers' expenses is paid by another body."

## **18.2 Reasoning**

The Panel were keen to ensure that Council Members with carer responsibilities should not be prevented from undertaking their Council duties. The existing scheme was set at a rate which was below the minimum wage and which, in the opinion of the Panel, lacked sufficient clarity for the scheme to be as effective as possible. That being so, it seemed appropriate to update carer support provisions and provide clear rules for accessing that support as outlined above.

## **19.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 19.1 That the basic allowance paid to members should remain unchanged at £11514.00.
- 19.2 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairman of Council/Deputy Speaker be reduced from 0.75 to 0.5

- 19.3 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Speaker/Vice Chairman be reduced from 0.75 to 0.5.
- 19.4 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Leader of Council (incl. Group Leader) be increased from 2 to 2.5.
- 19.5 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Deputy Leader of Council (Portfolio Holder) remains unchanged at 1.25
- 19.6 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Executive Members (Portfolio Holders) remains unchanged at 1
- 19.7 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Deputy Portfolio Holders be reduced from 0.5 to 0.25.
- 19.8 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Opposition Group Leaders (with at least 10% of the membership of the Council) be increased from 0.5 to 0.75
- 19.10 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees be reduced from 1 to 0.5.
- 19.11 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of Area Planning Committees be increased from 0.5 to 0.75
- 19.12 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Vice Chairmen of Area Planning Committees remains unchanged at 0.125
- 19.13 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of the Strategic Licensing Committee remains unchanged at 0.25
- 19.14 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committee/Vice Chairman of the Strategic Licensing Committee be reduced to zero and be removed from the scheme.
- 19.15 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of the Audit Committee remains unchanged at 0.5
- 19.16 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of the Pensions Committee remains unchanged at 0.25
- 19.17 That the Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier for the Chairmen of the Pensions Committee remains unchanged at 0.125
- 19.18 That the Child and Dependent Carers' Allowance be amended to read as follows:

“A councillor or co-optee may claim an allowance where they have incurred expenditure on engaging a carer for a dependant in order to carry out an approved duty, subject to the following conditions:



- 1 A carer will be any responsible mature person who does not normally live with the councillor or co-optee as part of their family.
2. An allowance will be payable if the dependant being cared for:
  - (i) is a child under 14 years of age
  - (ii) is an elderly person
  - (iii) has a physical or mental disability, or
  - (iv) has a learning disability

and normally lives with the councillor or co-optee as part of their family and is unable to be left unsupervised.

3. The Dependants' Carers' Allowance shall be set at the actual cost or the National Living Wage hourly rate, whichever is the lower, subject to a maximum of £3,000 per annum.

The period of duty is calculated on a 'door-to-door' basis, i.e. from the time a councillor or co-optee leaves their place of residence to carry out the council duty to the time they return.

- 4 Tax and National Insurance will be deducted by the council in appropriate cases.
- 5 No claim may be made and no allowance is payable where a Dependants' Carers' Allowance or the reimbursement of carers' expenses is paid by another body."

19.19 That in all other respects, the scheme for members' allowances remains unchanged.

Ciaran Martin (Chairman)  
Julia Baron  
June Jones

James Parker  
John Thomas