

By: Linden Kemkaran, Leader of the Council

To: County Council – 19 March 2026

Subject: Members' Allowances Scheme 2026 – 2030

Status: Unrestricted

Summary: This report summarises the amendments proposed to the Members' Allowances' Scheme and asks the Council to agree the Scheme for 2026-2030

1. Introduction

- a) Member Allowances were introduced to Local Authorities in accordance with Section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended by the Local Government Act, 2000). The regulations governing Local Authorities schemes is set out in "The Local Authorities Members' Allowances (England) Regulations 2003."
- b) Full Council is the decision-maker on Members' allowances. However, there is a legal requirement under the regulations for Members to have before them a report by an independent Member Remuneration Panel setting out their recommendations regarding the scheme.
- c) The current Member Remuneration Panel (MRP) were appointed by County Council on 7 November 2025 to a four-year term.
- d) The Panel was asked to first produce recommendations for a one-year Member Allowances Scheme covering 2025/26, which was agreed by the Council in July 2025.
- e) The next review that the Panel has undertaken is to make recommendations for the next four-year scheme covering April 2026 to March 2030. The intention is that each four-year scheme will be offset from the election year. This will mean clarity for individuals considering standing for election, and has enabled the new Council to consider what will be needed for the next scheme.
- f) Members are thanked for their engagement with the Panel and the full report of the Member Remuneration Panel is set out in Appendix 1 and Members are advised to read this in full.
- g) The main change proposed by the Panel relates to the calculation of the annual increase to Member Allowances. This is recommended to uplift at CPIH going forwards with the previous more complicated arrangement being replaced. To ensure consistency with the remainder of the budget it is recommended that the CPIH figure from October each year is used, which for October 2025 was 3.8%.

- h) The proposed changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme are set out in Appendix 2. This shows with track changes the amendments to the current scheme as set out in the Constitution.
- i) County Council has already discussed that there are likely to be further reviews of Committee arrangements and responsibilities and any changes would need to be reviewed by the Member Remuneration Panel before approval. It is therefore recommended that Selection and Member Services are asked to keep the arrangements under review and report back to full Council as necessary.

2. Recommendation

The County Council is asked to:

- a) **Note this report;**
- b) **Note the report of the Member Remuneration Panel and thank the Panel Members for their work; and**
- c) **Agree the changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme as set out in Appendix 2, this scheme to be in place until 31 March 2030 including:**
 - i. **Increase for 2026/2027 to the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances of 3.8%**
 - ii. **Annual indexation mechanism to be the CPIH figure for October**
 - iii. **The annual scheme to be agreed with the annual budget for the year and coming into effect at the beginning of each financial year;**
 - iv. **The Co-opted Member Allowance remain the same in 2026/27 as 2025/26, but increase at the same rate as the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances in subsequent years.**
 - v. **The Independent Persons allowance be changed to a fixed per annum payment of £700.**
 - vi. **The Dependents' Carers' Allowance at the current level and compared annually with the Real Living Wage. Where the Real Living Wage is higher, then the Dependents' Carers' Allowance will be increased to the same level.**
 - vii. **That the Selection and Member Services Committee be asked to keep the arrangements under review and report to full Council (including a further report from the Member Remuneration Panel) where any future changes are recommended.**

3. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Full Member Remuneration Panel Report and Recommendations
Appendix 2 – Proposed Member Allowance Scheme

4. Background Documents

None.

5. Report Author and Relevant Director

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