

# COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Cllr Avril Kerswell

**DATE:** 14 January 2019

**REPORT OF:** Martin Flitcroft, Chief Finance Officer

**SUBJECT:** Scheme of Members' Allowances  
and Members' IT

## PART I

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is recommended to:

- a) Consider the recommendations made in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Appendix I) and decide the Scheme of Members' Allowances for the 2019/20 municipal year.
- b) Provide all Councillors with IT devices for the purpose of carrying out their District Council duties and remove the element for IT equipment from the Basic Allowance.
- c) Thank the Independent Remuneration Panel for their report.

## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 Teignbridge District Council (TDC) reviews and publicises a scheme for the payment of Members' allowances. The last report from an Independent Panel was received by the Council on 25 January 2016. The forthcoming elections in May provide a timely opportunity to review and for any changes to be in place for the new term.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require Councils to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) and to have regard to the recommendations made in relation to the Members' Allowances scheme.
- 2.2 Following the Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee on 31 May, the Strata Director's report 'Support of Councillor IT' was taken to the Strata Joint Executive Committee (JEC) on 11 June 2018. It highlighted the issues raised around Councillor IT equipment at Teignbridge and East Devon Councils and the challenges faced by Strata supporting Councillors' privately owned equipment. At Exeter City Council, Councillors had been provided with iPads supported by

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Strata, to enable them to access emails and various IT systems including Modern.gov. A discussion was held at the meeting on the four available options outlined in the report. Representative Members considered the use of tablets for all its Members and 'resolved that option 4 [Council provided hardware (tablet device)] be approved with implementation in May 2019. Councils would need to approve the budgets for this in their Council budgets for 2019/20.'

### 3. MAIN IMPLICATIONS – IRP report

3.1 Following the 2018 review of Members' Allowances, the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) makes 6 recommendations to come into effect with the new term. The full IRP report is attached as Appendix I of this report.

3.2 The main changes proposed by the Panel are:

- to increase the Basic Allowance by £500 – to ensure basic costs are covered;
- to replace future increases with Local Government pay award rather than Consumer Price Index (CPI) – TDC was the only authority in the benchmarking to use the index to increase allowances;
- the updating of Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) multipliers – to identify appropriate differentials between various roles based on responsibility, accountability, time and effort;
- amending/clarifying of section 8 of the current Scheme of Members' Allowances 'Carers' Rates' – to assist those eligible to claim;
- updating of travel and subsistence claims – referred to in HMRC guidance;
- the addition of a procedure for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances during maternity or sick leave – in case of the need in the future.

### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS – IRP report

4.1 The historic and proposed value of the Basic Allowance at TDC is shown in the table below.

<b>Municipal year</b>	<b>Basic Allowance</b>	<b>% change previous year</b>
2010/11	5,231	
2011/12	4,969	-5.0%
2012/13	4,969	0.0%
2013/14	4,969	0.0%
2014/15	4,969	0.0%
2015/16	5,235	5.4%
2016/17	5,235	0.0%
2017/18	5,355	2.3%
2018/19	5,489	2.5%
<i>2019/20 proposed by IRP</i>	<i>5,989</i>	<i>9.1%</i>

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- 4.2** The increase to 47 Councillors and an estimated CPI increase for the basic allowance to £5,627 has been budgeted for 2019/20. By accepting the recommendations made by the Panel for the increase in the Basic Allowance and the changes to the multipliers for the Special Responsibility Allowances, there will be an additional cost to the annual revenue budget of £23,290.
- 4.3** Using CPI the Basic Allowance was increased by 2.3% in 2017 and 2.5% in 2018. A two year deal to employees was tabled by the National Employers for Local Government Services for 2018/19 and 2019/20 with a flat rate increase for the majority of grades of 2% in each year. The Panel suggests from 2020 Members' increases would be based on the percentage applied to the majority of Local Government grades.
- 4.4** The proposed replacement for section 8 'Carers' Rates', using wording contained in IRP report, is attached as Appendix II. There have been no claims for the Carers' Allowance so there is currently no budget for the allowance in 19/20. Any cost from the dependants' allowance is currently unknown, but would become a budget pressure if claims were received.
- 4.5** It is not anticipated the proposed changes to travel and subsistence will substantially impact the budget. Neither will the transfer of SRA whilst a Councillor is on maternity or sick leave.

### **5. MAIN IMPLICATIONS - Members' IT**

- 5.1** The proposal from JEC for all Councillors' to be provided with devices and IT support by Strata has been further investigated. The chosen IT device would be used by all Councillors for all Teignbridge District Council duties, significantly increasing security and reducing the need for printing.
- 5.2** Strata recommend Apple iPads to those, including staff, whose main requirement from IT equipment is to be mobile, access emails and review attachments. There is the option of a standard iPad (9.7"), a similar device provided to the Councillors by Exeter City Council, or the larger iPad Pro (A4 size). Strata advise for Councillors' day to day use, accessing emails, internet browsing and minutes the standard iPad is sufficient. For improved screen resolution, ease of use and detailed work the iPad pro would be more suitable. Alternatively laptops may also be considered.
- 5.3** Apple iPads are Strata's preferred tablet option primarily due to increased security and reduced risk and because Android no longer offer a reliable, suitable, cheaper alternative. The operating systems of an iPad (iOS) present a managed environment, providing full encryption enforced by Airwatch and regular Apple updates ensure the device is guarded against vulnerabilities. All Strata systems are configured to work and integrate with iOS and Strata staff are trained to support and maintain the device.

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**5.4** The functionality of the potential devices is summarised in the table below.

Laptop	iPad (9.7")	iPad Pro (A4)
<b>Good For</b>		
Accessing Emails	Accessing Emails	Accessing Emails
Internet browsing	Internet browsing	Internet browsing
Office Based tasks	Using purpose built Mobile Apps	Using purpose built Mobile Apps
Line of Business Systems via Global Desktop	Using touch applications	Using touch applications
Working whilst sat down	Standing up and using an App	Transportable
Viewing documents	Lightweight	Viewing documents
Skype for Business	Photos	Photos
Bluetooth Connectivity	Bluetooth Connectivity	Bluetooth Connectivity
Accessing Global Desktop	Remote Security/Device Wipe	Remote Security/Device Wipe
Offline Access to files	Online or offline access to Modern.gov	Online or offline access to Modern.gov
USB based peripherals	Device Tracking	Device Tracking
<b>Not Good For</b>		
Using touch applications	Accessing Global Desktop	Accessing Global Desktop
Quick access, due to login and security	Using standard Line of Business Systems	Using standard Line of Business Systems
Working whilst standing	Skype for Business	Skype for Business
Photos		Standing up and using an app
<b>Can't do</b>		
Dedicated Mobile APPS	Phone calls	Phone calls
	USB based peripherals	USB based peripherals

**5.5** The software and applications needed would be set up on the device by Strata before being passed to Councillors. On an iPad this would include Modern.gov app, access to TDC emails through the Mail app, internet browser, SPARNET via the website, basic editing of Microsoft office documents and access to social media. IT training would be provided to ensure the device can be used effectively.

**5.6** It is proposed Office 365 will be replaced. Councillors will only be able to access their TDC emails on the device provided by TDC. Councillors will be unable to use additional email accounts or their own apps on their Teignbridge device. The device will have the benefit of increased security and if an iPad is lost or stolen, Strata are able to remotely remove data from the device.

**5.7** The proposed iPads offer Wi-Fi connectivity only, although tethering (i.e. using internet access via a mobile phone) would be possible where the mobile data plan allows. There are currently 10 Wi-Fi access points in Forde House, 2 of which are in the Council Chamber, which have a recommended 30 connections, but a maximum of 128 each. Modern.gov enables Councillors to work either offline or online. Councillors would be able to connect to the TDC private Wi-Fi, rather than the public connection, which is only available to

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Strata managed devices. It is likely Councillors would still need home broadband to be able to have online access at home.

- 5.8** If the recommendation is approved by Council, all hardware will be purchased before the elections and set up with the relevant applications by Strata before 7 May. IT training for all Councillors will be provided by Strata and completed by 10 May. Existing Councillors standing for re-election are likely to be set up with a device and trained before May. Strata will provide ongoing support, training and advice to Councillors and the Council provided device in accordance with their latest Business Plan. Strata staff will only be able to deal with calls which have been logged, impromptu visits may not be accepted. They can only deal with issues from the Strata office and are unable to make home visits. Strata will not be responsible for a Councillor's privately owned IT.

### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS - Members' IT**

- 6.1** The cost, at the time of writing, of the two proposed models of iPads and laptops are set out below, based on 47 users and 49 devices (2 spares). All Councillors would be given the same device. The iPad pros with cases would cost in the region of an additional £27,000 compared to the standard devices. The initial purchase of the devices would be funded by existing IT capital budget and revenue contributions.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Unit price</b>	<b>Total Year 1</b>
iPad 9.7 32GB (Wi-Fi only) and case	£275	£13,475
or iPad pro (Wi-Fi only) and case	£829	£40,621
or Laptop and case	£625	£30,625
and monthly connection charge (ongoing)	£5	£2,820

- 6.2** Paragraph 2 of the current Scheme of Members' Allowances states members are required to meet the costs of their IT and broadband provision from the Basic Allowance. This has historically been identified as £500. If IT hardware is purchased and maintained by the Council, the Basic Allowance would be reduced annually by £400, retaining £100 as a provision for home broadband, as identified by the IRP. The £400 would be retained by TDC to cover repairs, replacements, connection charges, software, licences and support by Strata. Councillors would no longer incur the costs relating to IT equipment and the reduction to the Basic Allowance reflects the transfer of responsibility to the authority.
- 6.3** The IT equipment is expected to last a minimum of 4 years but would not be replaced until the device was no longer fit for purpose. Any accidental damage would need to be covered by the Councillor. When a Councillor ceases being in office all hardware would need to be returned to TDC. The Terms of Reference for elected Members would need to be updated to include an agreement for the use of IT equipment.

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### 7. CONCLUSION

#### 7.1 IRP report

The Council is recommended to thank the Independent Remuneration Panel for their time and report to assist Councillors in deciding the Scheme of Members' Allowances for the 2019/20 municipal year.

#### Members' IT

- 7.2 At the Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee in May, the concern was minuted that the current policy for Councillors to purchase IT equipment from their basic allowance is a risk to a Councillors' ability to function effectively. Supplying all Councillors with IT equipment provides a greater opportunity for efficient working and is in line with the authority's drive towards digitalisation. It is a long term solution to reduce security risks and alleviate the majority of challenges faced by Strata in supporting Councillors. All Councillor IT equipment would be aligned with up to date, transportable technology, configured by Strata thus enabling comprehensive support. Sensitive data will be safeguarded, protecting Councillors, the Council and Strata. The use of tablets at Exeter City Council has been very successful and East Devon Council are also intending to supply their Members with tablets supported by Strata.

**Martin Flitcroft**  
**Chief Finance Officer**

<b>Wards affected</b>	All
<b>Contact for any more information</b>	Martin Flitcroft 01626 215246 or Clare Moors 01626 215248
<b>Background Papers (For Part I reports only)</b>	The Constitution Independent Remuneration Panel Report Strata Support of Councillor IT reports & minutes
<b>Key Decision</b>	N/A
<b>In Forward Plan</b>	N/A
<b>In O&amp;S Work Programme</b>	N/A
<b>Community Impact Assessment attached:</b>	No
<b>Appendices attached:</b>	I: Report of IRP II: Proposed amendment to section 8 of current Members' Allowances scheme

**Report of:** Independent Remuneration Panel

**Subject:** 2018 Review of Members' Allowances

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council is recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel to resolve with effect from 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019 that:

- 1. The Basic Allowance payable to all Councillors increases from £5,489 to £5,989 for the municipal year;**
- 2. CPI is removed and future increases in the Basic Allowance are linked to Local Government pay awards;**
- 3. The Special Responsibility multipliers are updated as detailed in the report, including the introduction of an SRA for the Chair of Standards;**
- 4. The Carers' Allowance is renamed the 'Dependants' Allowance' and updated as detailed in the report;**
- 5. Rates and terms for travel and subsistence claims are updated as detailed in the report;**
- 6. The scheme is amended to include a procedure for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances during maternity or sick leave.**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

The Independent Panel operates under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The regulations state that an independent remuneration panel shall produce a report making recommendations and the authority shall have regard to the recommendations made before making or amending the Members' Allowances Scheme.

## **2. PANEL MEMBERSHIP**

### **2.1 Composition**

The Panel for 2018 consisted of five people, one from the voluntary and community sector, two representing business interests and two members of the public.

### **2.2 The membership of the Panel is as follows:**

- L Darbyshire – representing Teignbridge Council for Voluntary Services (Chair)
- C Durowse – representing the business sector
- L Howsam – representing the business sector
- M Millman – member of the public
- D Stewart – member of the public

### **3. CONDUCT OF THE REVIEW**

#### **3.1 Scope of the Review**

The Panel considered the current scheme of Members' Allowances and revisited the areas identified in the last Panel report from the 2015 review.

#### **3.2 Research and Findings**

The Panel met on four separate occasions. The Panel were provided with benchmarking for all of Teignbridge's allowances against other local authorities and similar district councils as determined by CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy). Further information was requested by the Panel on specific areas. The information was gathered from other local authorities, South West Council's annual Members' Allowance survey and other relevant bodies such as HMRC. The Chair of the IRP also attended SW Council's IRP Chairs' meeting on allowances in June 2018.

All Councillors were invited to share their comments regarding levels of remuneration either in person or via email. The Panel were disappointed with the level of response from Councillors, but would like formally to thank those who participated and contributed to the review.

Interviews were conducted with:

Cllr Christophers

Cllr Clarence

Cllr Ford

Cllr Hook

Cllr Nutley

Cllr Prowse

Cllr Russell

Cllr Wrigley

Emailed submissions were received from:

Cllr Haines

Cllr Lake

#### **3.3 Scheme of Members' Allowances**

The Panel echoed the opinion of previous Panels that the Council's Allowances Scheme should not discourage anyone from standing for public office on the grounds of cost.

##### **3.3.1 Basic Allowance**

The Basic Allowance is intended to acknowledge the time that all Councillors should spend attending meetings, dealing with constituency matters and representing the Council on external bodies, while recognising a voluntary element to their work. It is also intended to cover expenditure incurred, such as IT equipment, internet access, stationery, postage and fuel when dealing with Ward matters.

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The Panel were conscious of rising costs and concluded the changes to the allowance are not reflective of the increases faced by Councillors, noting in 2011/12 that the level was reduced from £5,231 to £4,969. The median annual gross pay for all employed jobs in Teignbridge (produced by the National Statistics Office) had historically been used to calculate the allowance. By revisiting the calculation, the 2018/19 allowance of £5,489 fell short by £502. The Panel recommend a one-off increase of £500, thereby increasing the allowance to £5,989 for the new municipal year to ensure that Councillors' incidental costs are covered.

Included in the Basic Allowance is an element of IT allowance, which is identified as £500, of which the Panel identified £100 as provision for internet access. In the event of any changes to the supply of IT equipment or IT support, the Basic Allowance will be reduced because the costs will no longer be incurred by Councillors.

The Panel is aware of the reluctance of elected Members to award themselves increases in allowances. The last review recommended that future increases should be linked to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) with a review of its use to be undertaken after four years, so that the newly elected Council in 2019, would not be bound by it. The Panel felt that it would be more appropriate for increases to be linked to Local Government officers' pay, and it recommends the removal of the link to CPI.

### 3.3.2 Special Responsibility Allowances

The 2013 Panel's review made alterations to the multipliers for the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) paid to Councillors for significant additional responsibilities. The Panel concluded that the proposed multipliers differentiate between the various roles and are representative of current responsibilities and workloads.

<b>Special Responsibility</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Leader of Council	Remain 3.5
Deputy Leader	Remain 1.75
Executive Committee	Remain 1.5
Chair of Planning	Increase from 1.4 to 1.475
Chair of Overview & Scrutiny	Remain 1.4
Chair of the Council	Remain 1.0
Chair of Licensing	Remain 0.75
Chair of Regulatory & Appeals	Reduce from 0.6 to 0.5
Chair of Audit Scrutiny	Remain 0.5
Vice Chair of Planning	Remain 0.5
Vice Chair of the Council	Reduce from 0.4 to 0.1
Deputy Chair of Overview & Scrutiny	Reduce from 0.4 to 0.2
Vice Chair of Licensing	Increase from 0.4 to 0.5
Vice Chair of Regulatory & Appeals	Reduce from 0.25 to 0.2
Chair of Standards	New 0.2 instead of £50 per meeting

The Panel acknowledged the growing relevance of the work of the Chair of Standards and agreed the Chair should be remunerated by a multiplier rather than

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claiming per meeting. The multiplier is set to recognise the ongoing responsibility and increased workload of the role but recommend a review in 12 months' time.

The current Members Allowance scheme states that only one SRA may be claimed by an individual councillor, with the exception of the Group Leader's allowance. The Panel were asked to consider the removal of the rule. Although the decision was not unanimous the Panel resolved that the rule should remain unchanged as the distribution of Special Responsibility roles among all Councillors should be encouraged. The Panel noted that the majority of councils used in the benchmarking process also enforce this rule.

In 2011 the Leader of the Council removed the Group Leaders' allowance from the list of SRAs. In 2014 the Panel recommended that it should be reintroduced and calculated by dividing the Basic Allowance by the total number of Councillors and multiplied by the number of Councillors in each group. The Panel reviewed the arrangement and agreed that the Group Leaders' Allowance should remain unchanged. In addition, because it is outside the committee structure, it should be excluded from the SRA remuneration rule.

Towards the end of the review, the issue of the absence of a procedure in the event of a Councillor with special responsibilities being unable to carry out their additional duties due to maternity leave or sickness, was highlighted by another council and the opportunity was taken to include this in the Teignbridge review. The Panel recommend that the scheme should be updated to recommend that for any period for which a Councillor is on maternity or sick leave, the SRA will cease and will be paid to the Councillor undertaking the additional duties, unless an SRA is already being claimed by that Councillor, in accordance with the SRA remuneration rule.

### 3.3.3 Co-optees' Allowance

A Co-optees' Allowance is payable to the independent members appointed to advise under the standards code. The Panel considered that the Co-optees' Allowance should be regarded as a token payment rather than reflecting an hourly rate. As the service is partly voluntary and there have been no difficulties recruiting, the Panel resolved the allowance should remain unchanged.

### 3.3.4 Travel Allowance

The Panel considered the current travel allowances for approved duties and recommends the allowance should be as the rates and rules set by HMRC and be automatically updated with HMRC changes. Claims are to be made within 1 month. The only change needed to the current rates is to reduce bicycles from 25p, to ensure that no tax liability arises.

Car/van first 10,000 miles	Car/van over 10,000 miles	Passenger	Motorcycles	Bicycles
45p	25p	5p	24p	20p

The Panel would also like to take the opportunity to encourage Councillors to use greener methods of transport, such as public transport whenever practicable.

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Electric cars are included in the mileage rates and Councillors are eligible for the TDC cycle scheme.

### 3.3.5 Subsistence Allowance Claim Limits

Subsistence allowance may be claimed in connection with approved duties and should be submitted within 1 month. The Panel recommends amending the allowance and adopting the rates and rules set by HMRC and to automatically update them in line with future HMRC changes. Receipts must be provided to claim up to the following amounts:

Minimum journey time	Maximum amount of meal allowance
5 hours	£5
10 hours	£10
15 hours (and ongoing at 8pm)	£25

Where a scale rate of £5 or £10 is paid and the qualifying journey in respect of which it is paid lasts beyond 8pm, a supplementary rate of £10 can be paid to cover the additional expenses necessarily incurred as a result of working late.

### 3.3.6 Carers' Allowance

The Carers' Allowance may be claimed when the care for a dependant has been engaged to enable a Councillor to carry out an approved duty. The Panel believes that a robust allowance can play an important role in preventing the exclusion of any resident from standing at an election and thought it important to make suggestions to clarify the allowance and ensure that claiming it is not too onerous.

The Panel felt that the current title implies that it relates only to the care of the elderly or sick, so would like to amend the name to the 'Dependants' Allowance'. A dependant should be defined as a person needing the presence of a responsible adult including a child under the age of 14 years. A dependant will either be a child of which the Councillor is the legal guardian or the spouse of the Councillor. The care of the dependant does not necessarily have to be provided by a registered or professionally qualified provider, but it cannot be claimed for care carried out by a member of the same household. In addition, it may not be claimed if the care is already paid for by another body or if claimed elsewhere. A receipt would be required with the cost of the care, counter-signed by both the Councillor and the carer. It was agreed that the allowance should contribute to reimbursing the cost of care but that it might not necessarily cover the whole cost. A claim can be up to the NMW rate for aged 25+ per hour, automatically increasing as NMW increases. If the actual hourly rate is lower, the actual sum paid would be reimbursed. Special circumstances could be considered on an individual basis.

### 3.4 Previous Review

The report of the last Panel requested a review in the future to seek evidence on the impact on Councillors' work arising from The Care Act 2014 and work associated with attendance at Strata meetings. The Panel concluded that no amendments were necessary for either of these areas.

#### 4. JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel advises that its work is complete and makes the following recommendations:

##### 4.1 Basic Allowance

The Basic Allowance payable to all Councillors should be increased by £500 from £5,489 to £5,989 from May 2019.

*Panel's rationale: The increase addresses additional expenditure, such as rising fuel costs, incurred by travel within their Ward, especially for those in rural areas. The increase of £500 will return the Basic Allowance to a level that ensures that such costs are adequately covered. There is a growing public expectation that Councillors can be contacted at almost any time, and a fair Basic Allowance recognises the importance of their role and the good work most Councillors do for their electorate.*

##### 4.2 Annual increases to the Basic Allowance

The Panel recommends the removal of the link to CPI and that future increases be linked to Local Government officer pay awards applied at the start of each municipal year.

*Panel's rationale: It is difficult for Councillors to make decisions on their own remuneration, and the proposal to link the Basic Allowance to CPI removed this constraint. The Panel now believes linking increases to officers' pay is more appropriate but would still obviate the need and dilemma faced by Councillors when making annual decisions about their own remuneration.*

##### 4.3 Special Responsibility Allowances

The Panel suggests that the multipliers be updated as detailed in the report, including the introduction of a multiplier for the Chair of Standards.

*Panel's rationale: The proposed multipliers are a fairer reflection of work load and differentiate among the responsibilities of the various roles.*

##### 4.4 Carers' Allowance

The Panel recommends that the allowance be renamed the 'Dependants' Allowance' and that it should be updated as detailed in the report.

*Panel's rationale: Dependants' Allowance is a more suitable description of the eligible claims. The allowance should contribute to the costs incurred and, it is hoped, not discourage anyone with a dependant from standing as a Councillor.*

##### 4.5 Rates for travel and subsistence

The travelling allowance and subsistence rates as recommended by HMRC should be used and automatically be updated in line with HMRC guidelines.

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*Panel's rationale: These payments are not normally taxable because they are matched by an equivalent deduction for allowable expenditure. They should be automatically updated to remain within HMRC rules.*

### **4.6 Procedure for payment of SRA during maternity or sick leave**

The current scheme to be updated to include for any period for which a Councillor is on maternity or sick leave, the SRA will cease and will be paid to the Councillor undertaking the additional duties, unless another SRA is already being claimed, in accordance with the SRA remuneration rule.

*Panel's rationale: The allowance is paid for the additional workload and responsibility which would not be undertaken by a Councillor whilst on leave.*

### **5. CONCLUSION**

The Panel concluded that their recommendations focus on providing fair remuneration for all Councillors.

**Proposed amendment to section 8 of current Members' Allowances Scheme**

**Dependants' Allowance**

The Dependants' allowance may be claimed when a carer for a dependant has been engaged to enable a councillor to carry out an approved duty as defined in Appendix A. [of the Members' Allowances Scheme]

A dependant is defined as a person needing the presence of a responsible adult, for example a child under the age of 14 years, or a person with a recognised physical or mental disability. The dependant must reside with the councillor and either be a child of which the councillor is the legal guardian, or the spouse/civic partner of the councillor.

The allowance may not necessarily cover the whole cost of care but will provide the reimbursement of expenditure up to the current National Minimum Wage hourly rate for 25+. If the actual hourly rate is lower, the actual sum paid would be reimbursed. The allowance will be paid for the duration of the approved duty, plus an allowance for up to one hour's total travelling time before and after the meeting.

The care of the dependant does not necessarily have to be provided by a registered or professionally qualified provider, but it cannot be claimed for care carried out by a member of the same household. In addition, it may not be claimed if the care is already paid for by another body or if claimed elsewhere. A receipt would be required with the cost of the care, counter-signed by both the councillor and the carer.

Special circumstances could be considered on an individual basis.

The allowance will be updated annually in line with National Minimum Wage.

Payment of the allowance will be made under the powers of Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972.