

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING	Council	
MEETING	21st November 2024	
TITLE:	Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1 Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 To consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to

- 2.1 Note the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on Members' Allowances and determine which recommendations to implement (set out at paragraph 3.5);
- 2.2 Agree that any changes be implemented from the start of the next financial year, aside from the changes to the Council Chair and Vice-Chair which would take effect from May 2025 Council AGM;
- 2.3 Appoint the IRP with effect from May 2027 to review the Basic Allowance in accordance with recommendations 1,2 & 3 of their report;
- 2.4 Formally thank the Panel for their work.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel has submitted its report on its review of the allowances which it recommends be paid to councillors from the start of the next financial year.
- 3.2 The report recommends that all allowances stay at present levels save for the proposed changes set out at paragraph 3.5 below;
- 3.3 With regard to the basic allowance, the Panel proposes no change to this at the moment as the stepped increases agreed at the last review in 2021 are still in place, with the final increase scheduled for 2025/26. They propose that they look at this again once the final incremental increase has been made, so that they can benchmark appropriately from the new rate (incorporating a review of unremunerated hours) (**Recommendations 1, 2 & 3**);
- 3.4 The Panel acknowledged that the annual staff increase for the last 2 years has been a fixed rate rather than a percentage; an arrangement not expressly covered within the scheme and recommended that the scheme sets out that the approach to be taken if/when this happens in future years should be to tie the increase to the staff allowance uplift (as has been the practice for the last 2 years) (**Recommendation 4**).

3.5 Special Responsibility Allowances

- (1) Planning Committee Vice Chair; increase rate as set out in **Recommendation 7**;
- (2) Chair of Corporate Audit Committee: allocate allowance as set out in **Recommendation 9**;
- (3) Chair of Council; adjust allowance as set out in **Recommendation 10**;
- (4) Vice Chair of Council; adjust allowance as set out in **Recommendation 11**.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 4.1 The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 constitute the legal framework for councillors' allowances. The Council must establish an Independent Panel to advise on these and the Council is required to have regard to the advice and recommendations of the Panel when it decides on the allowances that councillors are paid.
- 4.2 The Council's existing Scheme of Allowances remains in force until it is amended by any changes approved at this meeting following consideration of the Panel's report.
- 4.3 Any inflationary budget growth arising from Council decisions will need to be taken into account in the 2025/26 budget planning cycle.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 A risk assessment was not required.

6 EQUALITIES

6.1 Elected representatives should be remunerated fairly for the duties that they undertake and in doing so this should encourage a more diverse and broader spectrum of the community to enter public life.

7 CLIMATE CHANGE

7.1 No direct impact.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 None

9 CONSULTATION

9.1 The Independent remuneration Panel has consulted members and considered comparator authorities members allowance schemes in making its recommendations.

9.2 The Cabinet member for Resources, Group Leaders, Monitoring officer, Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer have been consulted.

Contact person	Michael Hewitt, Monitoring Officer tel: 01225 395125 Michael_Hewitt@bathnes.gov.uk
Background papers	None.
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	