

## BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>To:</b> BDC Council	<b>Report Number:</b> <b>BC/22/31</b>
<b>From:</b> Independent Remuneration Panel	<b>Date of meeting:</b> 25 October 2022
<b>Officer:</b> Janice Robinson Corporate Manager – Governance & Civic Office	

### RECOMMENDATION FROM THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel ('IRP') following a review of the Members' Scheme of Allowances as required under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the Regulations") and approve a revised scheme of allowances having regard to the recommendations made by the IRP.
- 1.2 To agree an implementation date for the revised scheme of allowances.
- 1.3 To instruct the Monitoring Officer to make necessary amendments to the Members Scheme of Allowances following approval of the recommendations.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Council considers whether it wishes to adopt all or part of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP):
  - a) That the Basic (Ward Representation) Allowance be set at £5,669.
  - b) That the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) be set at:-

Chairman of the Council	£5,699
Deputy Chairman of the Council	£2,834
Leader of Council	£14,172
Deputy Leader of the Council	£7,086
Chair of Planning Committee	£5,669
Vice-Chair of Development Control Committee	£2,834
Chair of the Joint Scrutiny Committee	£5,669
Vice Chair of the Joint Scrutiny Committee	£2,834
Chair of Joint Audit and Standards Committee	£2,834
Planning Committee Members	£708
Group Leaders with more than five members	£4,251
Group Leaders with less than five members	£1,472

Chair of Regulatory Committee	£2,834
Vice-Chair of Regulatory Committee	£1,472
Cabinet Member with Portfolio	£7,086
Cabinet Member Without Portfolio	£2,834
Member with Special Responsibility	£4,251

c) That only one SRA shall be paid to any one Member. Where two SRAs are applicable the higher rate SRA shall be applied.

d) That the Travel and Subsistence Allowance remain at:-

Mileage Rate 45p per mile  
Cycle Mileage Rate 27.7p per mile  
Passenger Allowance 5p per mile

e) That the Childcare and Dependants Allowance remain at:-

Childcare Allowance up to £13 per hour (subject to a receipt)  
Dependants Relative Care/Specialist Nursing Care Allowance up to £30 per hour (subject to a receipt)

with no monthly maximum claim when undertaking approved duties and that the scheme is promoted before and during elections.

2.2 That the revised Member Allowance Scheme will take effect from the 1st May 2023.

2.3 That the revised Members Allowance Scheme be increased in line with the Local Government Officer pay awards until the scheme is next reviewed in 2026 or earlier.

2.4 That a Parental Leave policy be formulated on the principles set out in the Panel's report and brought back to Council for approval.

2.5 That a revised Members Allowances Scheme incorporating the decisions of the Council be prepared by the Monitoring Officer. Further, that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make any typographical and other minor / consequential amendments prior to publication of the final document.

2.6 That the Council formally records its thanks to the Independent Remuneration Panel for their work in preparing the report.

### 3. KEY INFORMATION

3.1 Council appointed a pool of five people to form an Independent Remuneration Panel at the Council meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

3.2 The Corporate Manager for Democratic Services contacted the IRP members and provided them with Terms of Reference to carry out a review of the Members' Allowance Scheme as it was four years since the last review. The Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix B.

3.3 An IRP was formed of four members, from a pool of five, under the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The IRP has undertaken an extensive review exercise including conducting a questionnaire for all members, holding workshops, interviewing members and officers, and considering the schemes operated by other similar local authorities. The IRP have held their meetings using Teams and have been supported by the Governance and Civic Office team. The IRP's report and recommendations are attached at Appendix A.

#### 4. Financial Implications

4.1 There is provision in the budget for the proposed amendment to the Scheme of Allowances based on Council accepting the recommendation of the IRP.

Type of Allowance	Current Costs 2021/2022 £	Projected Costs 2023/24 based on IRP report £
Basic Allowance	170,624	181,408
Special Responsibility Allowance	94,108	106,450
Total per Annum	264,732	287,858

(Projected costs are based on current placings and 1 SRA)

4.2 A one-off cost of approximately £2,800 has been incurred for expenses associated with the IRP process, for which there is budgetary provision.

#### 5. Legal Implications

5.1 Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the Regulations"), the Council is required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to it about the allowances to be paid to Members. It is important that the Council appoints an Independent Remuneration Panel and has regard to the views of the Panel before any decisions are made in respect of changes to the scheme of allowances for Members. As the current scheme is indexed link a review must be carried out within four years of the last review.

#### 6. Risk Management

6.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Corporate / Significant Business Risk No.5C *Failure to develop clear governance arrangements that enable the right decisions to be taken that are appropriate for the environment that we are operating in*. Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Inability to attract candidates to become district Councillors	Unlikely (2)	Noticeable (2)	The IRP have been asked to consider a scheme of allowances that would enable a wider demographic of people to be councillors taking into account childcare costs and working councillors.
Reputational risk to the council of adopting a Scheme of Allowances which is disproportionate or without having regard to the IRP	Unlikely (2)	Noticeable (2)	
Not having a lawful scheme of allowances	Unlikely (2)	Noticeable (2)	The Council reviews its allowance scheme at least every 4 years in line with statutory requirements

## 7. Consultations

- 7.1 The IRP has undertaken an extensive review exercise including conducting a survey for all members, holding workshops, interviewing members and officers, and considering the schemes operated by other similar local authorities.

## 8. Equality Analysis

- 8.1 The recommended changes to the scheme of allowances are most likely to have a positive equality impact, for example by introducing a parental leave scheme that will hopefully attract more people into becoming councillors. A full EQIA is attached at Appendix D.

## 9. Links to the Corporate Plan

- 9.1 This decision will support the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities by helping to ensure that our communities are democratically represented and that we have sufficient councillors to fill our decision-making structures.

## 10. Environmental Implications

- 10.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

## 11. APPENDICES

Title	Location
(A) Independent Remuneration Panel report	Attached
(B) Terms of Reference	Attached
(C) Summary of recommendations	Attached
(D) Equality Impact Assessment	Attached
(E) Summary of Councillor Questionnaire	Attached
(F) Amendments from cross party Task Group	Attached

## 12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12.1 Existing Babergh District Council Scheme of Member Allowances.

[BDC Members Allowance Scheme](#)

12.2 Report and Minutes to Council 21 March 2021 Appointment of An Independent Remuneration Panel.

[Report of Appointment of IRP](#)

[Minutes IRP](#)