

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (MEMBERS ALLOWANCES) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2003

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

PUBLICATION OF THE PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to the above Regulations, the report of the Independent Panel regarding the City Council's Members' Allowances Scheme has been received. The main features of the Panel's recommendations are set out below. The proposed implementation date for the updated Scheme is 1 April 2015 and if the index is used, it would apply from the Annual Council meeting on 20 May 2015. The Panel's recommendations will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 3 December 2014, The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 December 2014 and Council on 7 January 2015 which will decide whether to implement them. Copies of the Panel's report are available for inspection by the public, during normal office hours, at the City Offices, Colebrook Street, Winchester, or on the Council's website at www.winchester.gov.uk. Copies may also be purchased for a fee of £10.

Post	Basic Allowance	Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)
Basic Allowance		
All Members	£5,580	-
Band One		
Leader	£5,580	£16,734
Band Two		
Deputy Leader with a Portfolio	£5,580	£9,129
Band Three		
Deputy Leader without a Portfolio	£5,580	£7,605
Cabinet Member with a Portfolio	£5,580	£7,605
Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£5,580	£7,605
Chairman of Planning Committee	£5,580	£7,605
Leader of Principal Opposition Group	£5,580	£7,605
Band Four		
Chairman of Personnel Committee	£5,580	£3,042
Chairman of Licensing & Regulation Committee	£5,580	£3,042
Band Five		
Chairman of the Council	£5,580	£2,280
Chairman of Audit Committee	£5,580	£2,280
Other Opposition Group Leaders	£5,580	£2,280
Vice Chairman of Planning Committee	£5,580	£2,280
Band Six		
Chairman of Winchester Town Forum	£5,580	£1,521
Scrutiny Leads	£5,580	£1,521
Chairman of Standards Committee	£5,580	£1,521
Chairmen of Task & Finish &/or Ad Hoc Working Groups/Panels with Significant Impact	£5,580	£1,521
Group Managers	£5,580	£1,521

The 2014 Independent Members' Remuneration Panel took account of the current economic situation. The Panel also continued to be mindful that the proposed allowances must be retained at a reasonable level, to ensure that potential candidates for elected office are not prevented from standing, because of the impact that Council work may have on their income. In making its recommendations, the Panel was keen to ensure that they would have widespread acceptance, both within the Council and in the communities that the Members serve. Consequently, financial concerns have been given primacy in this review.

For this reason, the Panel is generally recommending that the existing scheme should be re-adopted. The only significant change is that following the Localism Act 2011, the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Independent Chairman (Band 5 – (£3,024) is formally deleted as the post no longer exists and replaced by an SRA at Band 6 (£1,521) for the Councillor Chairman. The lower rate is due to the changes in responsibility and lower workload.

The Panel endorsed the principle that no Member should receive more than one SRA and that the total number of SRAs available should not exceed 50% of the Council's membership (i.e. 28).

The Panel also recommended that the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances, Co-optees' Allowances, Dependant Carers' Allowance and Subsistence Allowances be indexed to the local government staff annual percentage increase, as agreed by the National Joint Councils for Local Government Staff Service (NJC), in the event that the Council decides that there are no material issues to require a further report of the Panel in a particular year. Mileage rates should be indexed to Inland Revenue rates. In general the Panel's recommendations reflect rates used for the Basic Allowances and SRA Bands in 2014/15. The Council will need to consider whether the NJC index in the Scheme should be applied at 2.2% for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

It is some time since there has been an increase in the main allowance rates in Winchester. In 2009/10, the Council agreed to adopt a lower RPI inflationary index figure which, unusually, was a negative value – minus 1.2%. For 2010/11, the Council decided for budgetary reasons not to increase any of the allowances and instead, resolved that reduction of 5% be applied from 1 April 2010 to all allowances. There has been no general increase since those decisions. The only exception was to index mileage rates to HMRC rates in 2013/14 and 2014/15. This is now 45p per mile.

The Panel also recommended the following allowances set out below:-

Dependants' Carers' Allowance

Actual and reasonable costs up to £8.08 per hour

Co-opted and Independent Members

Independent Members and Parish Representatives on the Standards Committee - £255 pa.

Travel and Subsistence

All travel allowances, including those for co-opted representatives, Independent Members and Parish Representatives, to be paid at the following rates:-

Cars and Vans - 45p per mile (plus 5p per passenger up to 4 max.)

Motor Cycles - 24p per mile

Bicycles - 20p per mile

Public transport may also be used in appropriate circumstances at actual cost

Subsistence rates as follows – only payable for duties outside the Council's area:-

Breakfast	£5.17	Overnight stay (outside the district)	£86.03
Lunch	£7.13	Overnight stay (London)	£98.11
Tea	£2.79		
Evening Meal	£8.82		

The Travel and Subsistence rates within the Scheme are also recommended for use by Parish Councils who wish to adopt them.

Stephen Whetnall
Chief Operating Officer

26 November 2014