

Report subject	<b>Members Allowances Scheme</b>
Meeting date	10 December 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report seeks Council's approval of the Scheme of Allowances for 2025-2026 Municipal Year and incorporates the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on their review of the Members' Scheme of Allowances for 2025/26.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p><b>Council considers the attached report and Appendix 1 and its recommendations and adopts the proposed Scheme of Members' Allowances for BCP Council as set out in Appendix 2, subject to any amendments Council may wish to agree.</b></p>
Reason for recommendations	To ensure that BCP Council has an appropriate Scheme of Members' Allowances as required by the relevant legislation.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Millie Earl, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Sarah Culwick, Deputy Head of Democratic Services
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

## Background

1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowance) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) require a relevant authority to make a scheme providing for the payment of a basic allowance (BA) to each member of that authority. The BA must be the same for each member of the authority.
2. The Scheme may make further provision for the payment of special responsibility allowances (SRA) for specific roles and payments to co-optees on specific committees.

3. The mechanism with which Councils consider allowances is by way of appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel. This Panel considers the level of Member Allowances to be operated by a Council under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2003.
4. A panel was appointed for these purposes in order to recommend a scheme of allowances for the new BCP Council.
5. On the 23 July 2024 the Council considered and approved an interim report from the Independent Remuneration Panel, as part of these recommendations, it was acknowledged that a full review would be required during the autumn 2024.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

6. A questionnaire was sent to all Members, inviting comments in respect of the current scheme of Members allowances.
7. In addition, the Independent Remuneration Panel interviewed 14 Members of BCP Council and two Officers.
8. Full details of the consultation undertaken are contained in the Report attached at Appendix 1.

### **Options Appraisal – Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel**

9. The Panel's recommendations are detailed in the attached report at Appendix 1. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the proposed recommendations and any changes to the existing Scheme of Allowances. The existing allowances are shown in *[italicised square brackets]*:

- (a) **the basic allowance be increased to £16,000 per annum [£14,458]**
- (b) **that the following special responsibility allowances be paid in recognition of the additional workload and levels of responsibility and accountability placed upon members appointed to these roles:**
  - i. **Leader - £40,000 [£31,320]**
  - ii. **Cabinet Members (including Deputy Leader) - £25,000 [£20,880]**
  - iii. **Lead Members - £12,200 [£11,566]**
  - iv. **Chair of the Council - £12,200 [£11,566]**
  - v. **Vice-Chair of the Council - £3,600 [£5,784]**
  - vi. **Chair of Audit & Governance Committee - £12,200 [£11,566]**
  - vii. **Chairs of Area Planning Committees - £9,000 [£8,674]**
  - viii. **Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Board - £9,000 [8,674]**
  - ix. **Chair of Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee - £9,000 [£8,674]**
  - x. **Chair of Environment and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee - £9,000 [£8,674]**
  - xi. **Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee - £9,000 [£8,674]**

- xii. Chair of Licensing Committee - £9,000 [**£11,566**]
  - xiii. Chair of Appeals Committee - £9,000 [**£3,471**]
  - xiv. Chair of Standards Committee - £9,000 [**£3,471**]
  - xv. Group Leaders - £3,600 [**£3,471**]
- (c) No SRAs be paid to vice-chairmen of committees (with the exception of the vice-chairman of Council);
  - (d) members may not receive more than one SRA (*and may elect which SRA to receive*) with the exception that a Group Leader's SRA can be payable as a second SRA;
  - (e) with effect from 2025 the BA and the SRAs be increased in line with the Employees' National Salary Award, if such pay award is expressed as a fixed amount, the average pay award for BCP employees shall be applied for this purpose;
  - (f) the proposed increases in BA and SRAs be effective from the date of the resolution to adopt the revised scheme;
  - (g) the travel allowances continue to be paid to members and that these should reflect those allowances paid to officers and should include travelling to the BCP Councils offices for meetings and official business;
  - (h) subsistence allowances be paid to members in the event of an absence not involving an absence overnight from the usual place of residence, and that these reflect those payable to officers of the council;
  - (i) carers' allowance be paid to recompense the actual cost expended as set out within paragraph 13 of the appended report (and is not payable to a member of the claimant's own household subject to the Monitoring Officer having the discretion to approve claims on a case-by-case basis); and
  - (j) an allowance of £1,200 [**£1,158**] per annum be paid to co-optees and independent members as set out in paragraph 14 of the appended report.

### Summary of financial implications

10. The table below illustrates the impact of the proposed changes to the allowances upon the full year budget for 2024/25 if the changes were backdated to May 2024. To clarify, the recommendation of the IRP is to apply the changes from 10 December 2024.

Allowance	Current Allowance	Recommended Allowance	Increase / Decrease
Basic Allowance	£14,445	£16,000	<b>£1,555 x 76 = £118,180</b>
Leader	£31,320	£40,000	<b>£8,680</b>
Cabinet Members (including Deputy Leader)	£20,880	£25,000	<b>£4,120 x 9 = £37,080</b>
Lead Members	£11,566	£12,200	<b>£634 x 2 = £1,268</b>
Chair of the Council	£11,566	£12,200	<b>£634</b>
Vic-Chair of the Council	£5,784	£3,600	<b>-£2,184</b>

<b>Allowance</b>	<b>Current Allowance</b>	<b>Recommended Allowance</b>	<b>Increase / Decrease</b>
Chair of A&G	£11,566	£12,200	£634
Chairs of Area Planning Committees	£8,674	£9,000	£326 x 2 = £652
Chair of O&S Board	£8,674	£9,000	£326
Chair of Children's Services O&S Committee	£8,674	£9,000	£326
Chair of E&P O&S Committee	£8,674	£9,000	£326
Chair of H&ACS O&S Committee	£8,674	£9,000	£326
Chair of Licensing Committee	£11,566	£9,000	-£2,566
Vice-Chair of Licensing Committee	£2,892	REMOVE ALLOWANCE	-£2,892
Chair of Appeals Committee	£3,471	£9,000	£5,529
Chair of Standards Committee	£3,471	£9,000	£5,529
Group Leaders	£3,471	£3,600	£129 x 5 = £645
Co-opted and Independent Members	£1,158	£1,200	£42 x 8 = £336

11. The budget projection for the members allowances scheme for 2024/25 included a 5% projected increase. If the recommendations are approved as set out, with an effective date of 10 December 2024, the additional allowances for the current financial year can be contained within the existing approved budget.
12. However, applying the proposed allowances for the subsequent full year, would require a projected budget growth for 2025/26 of £77,400 over and above the anticipated inflationary increase of 2.5%. An additional growth in the budget for 2026/27 for the increases in basic and SRA will also be required in-line with previous forecasting.

### **Summary of legal implications**

13. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2003 govern the establishment of the Scheme necessary to determine the operation of Members allowances.
14. The process undertaken, and the proposed Scheme accords with the requirements of the legislation.

### **Summary of human resources implications**

15. There are no specific Human Resources implications arising from the report.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

16. There are no specific issues arising in respect of this report.

**Summary of public health implications**

17. There are no specific issues arising in respect of this report.

**Summary of equality implications**

18. The needs of councillors with dependents, including those who are carers, have been considered and taken account of through the process and inclusion of specific allowances.

**Summary of risk assessment**

19. There are no specific risks arising from this report.

**Background papers**

None

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Appendix 2 – Schedule of Members Allowances for 2025/26