

Report for: FULL COUNCIL

Date of Meeting:	18 December 2024
Subject:	Independent Remuneration Panel Report
Responsible Officer:	Director of Legal, People & Governance and Monitoring Officer
Exempt:	N/A
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: IRP Report Appendix 2: Draft Members Allowances Scheme 2025 - 2028

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To receive a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel to determine the Members' Scheme of Allowances for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028.

Recommendation:

That the Members' Allowances Scheme in Appendix 2 be adopted for the period 01 April 2025 to 31 March 2028.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council is required to consider its Members' Scheme of Allowances taking account of a relevant report of its Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) before making any changes to the allowances for the following financial year.

- 1.2 Council requested at their meeting in December 2023 that the IRP undertake a Fundamental Review of Members' Allowances during 2024 with a view to recommending a revised Scheme of Allowances in December 2024.
- 1.3 Accordingly, the Panel convened in early 2024 and began the process of a Fundamental Review. This began with an indepth survey seeking the views and opinions of all Members regarding their allowances.
- 1.4 In addition, interviews were held with several Members holding a variety of roles within the administration.
- 1.5 The IRP also received benchmarked data from other similar councils across the South West, published Government guidance and information pertaining to the cost of living pay award agreed for 2023/2024 for MDDC employees.
- 1.6 The Panel's full report is included in Appendix 1 and Members of Council are encouraged to read the rationale for each of their recommendations.

2.0 Recommendations

A draft Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2025 – 2028 which incorporate all of the IRP's recommendations is attached at Appendix 2.

- 2.1 The IRP proposed amendments to the current scheme are as follows:

- a. **The Basic Allowance** of £6,000 p.a. be increased by the median (average) % of the cost of living pay rise awarded across the workforce of MDDC employees for a period of 3 years from 1 April 2025 until 31 March 2028. (NB: the % rise for 2024/2025 is 4%).

The Basic Allowance from 1st April 2025 would therefore be recommended as being £6240 p.a. until the next staff pay award where upon the Panel's recommendation would apply with whatever the median % rise is at that time.

- b. **Special Responsibility Allowances** be paid to the following Members at the levels indicated:

Position		Current Council approved weightings	Recommended SRA (based upon BA of £6240)
Leader of the Council		2.00	£12,480
Deputy Leaders		1.00	£6,240
Cabinet Member		1.00	£6,240
Scrutiny Committee Chair		1.00	£6,240
PDG Chair		0.50	£3,120
Audit Committee Chair		0.50	£3,120
Planning Committee Chair		1.00	£6,240
Licensing/Regulatory Chair		0.25	£1,560
Standards Chair		0.25	£1,560
Chairman of the Council		0.50	£3,120

- c. No Member should be entitled to claim more than **one** Special Responsibility Allowance.
- d. Carers' allowances be calculated on the current basis namely, the actual expenditure up to the National Living Wage of a person over 25.
- e. That travel allowances be linked to HMRC rates and calculated at the national levels indicated, currently:
- 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles
 - 25p per mile thereafter
 - 5p per mile per passenger carried (up to a maximum of 4 passengers, payable to the driver)
 - 24p per mile for motorcycles
 - 20p per mile for push bikes

f. That subsistence allowances be linked to those of the staff, currently these are as follows in each case up to a maximum of:

- One meal (5 hour) ceiling Upper limit £5
- Two meal (10 hour) ceiling Upper limit £10
- Three meal (12 hour) ceiling Upper limit £15
- 24 hour ceiling Upper limit £20

g. That **all** claims for travel and subsistence reimbursement be accompanied by an appropriate receipt.

h. That the wording in the scheme regarding parental leave and SRA's also will apply to prolonged illness and Vice Chairs:

“Councillors entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) will continue to receive this in full subject to:

(a) Where a replacement is appointed to cover the period of leave, that person will receive an SRA on a pro rata basis for the period of the temporary appointment;

(b) The payment of SRA's (to the primary SRA holder or replacement), shall continue for six months, until the date of the next Annual Council Meeting or the date when the Councillor is up for election (whichever is the earliest);

(c) At that point, the position will be reviewed, and will be subject to a possible extension for a further six-month period; and

(d) Should another Councillor appointed to replace the Councillor on leave already hold an SRA position, the ordinary rules relating to one SRA payment apply.”

Financial Implications: If the increase in the Basic Allowance is approved from £6000 to £6240 p.a. there will be a corresponding increase in the amount of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA's) paid. This is because SRA's are based upon a multiplier of the Basic Allowance.

- Basic Allowance (BA) increase, 42 Members x £240 (based on 4% increase) = £10,080
- Special Responsibility Allowances increase, (based on weightings applied to the BA) = a total of £3,840

This would result in a total overall increase of circa £13,920 for next year.

The recommendations do not propose any other financial increases – therefore there are no additional financial implications for the Council other than those which may be incurred as a result of the link with the average staff percentage increase in pay.

Legal Implications: None beyond those covered in this report.

Risk Assessment: The Council must take account of the IRP's report to avoid potential successful challenge of its Scheme.

Impact on Climate Change: N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment: None beyond those issues identified in this report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: N/A

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leburne
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 10/12/24

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford
Agreed on behalf of the Chief Executive
Date: 10/12/24

Performance and risk: Steve Carr
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager
Date: 06 December 2024

Cabinet member notified: (yes/no)

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Maria De Leburne
Email: mdeleburne@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 234210