

Meeting: Council Date: 22 February 2024

Wards affected: All Wards

Report Title: Members' Allowances Scheme – Recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel

When does the decision need to be implemented? 9 May 2023

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Cabinet Member for Tourism, Culture and Events and Corporate Services, Councillor Jackie Thomas (Jackie.thomas@torbay.gov.uk)

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To ensure that Members receive allowances which reflect the level and time commitment required to fulfil their roles and that the scheme complies with relevant legislation and guidance.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1 To ensure the Members' Allowances Scheme is up to date and to respond to the Independent Remuneration Panel's report.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1 that the Council considers the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel which are set out in paragraph 6 (a) to (v) of Appendix 1.
- 3.2 that in light of the decision made in respect of 3.1 above, the Head of Governance Support is requested to bring the Members' Allowances Scheme up to date; and
- 3.3 that the Monitoring Officer be requested to update the Council's Constitution to reflect the changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme.

Appendices

Appendix 1: A Review of Members' Allowances for Torbay Council – The Report of the Torbay Independent Remuneration Panel dated October 2023.

Background Documents

None.

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The current Members' Allowances Scheme came into force in May 2019 following a review of the Independent Remuneration Panel upon the introduction of a new system of governance with the removal of a directly elected Mayor and Executive and the introduction of a Leader and Cabinet model.
- 1.2 Since the last Review in 2019 there have been further changes with the creation of two Scrutiny Sub-Boards relating to Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny and Children's and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny respectively. The role of Scrutiny Leads and associated Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) required further review to identify whether the SRA presented a true reflection of those specific roles, responsibilities and associated workload.
- 1.3 In terms of overall allowances, where an authority has regard to an index for the purpose of annual adjustment of allowances it must not rely on that index for longer than a period of four years before seeking a further recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 1.4 Therefore in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 it is a statutory requirement that a review should be undertaken in 2023.
- 1.5 During its review the Independent Remuneration Panel took into account the existing Basic Allowance and SRA's and compared those with other Authorities both nationally and across the South West.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 Council accepts and implements all recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in the Report shown at Appendix 1.

- 2.2 An alternative option is that Members' Allowances remain at the current level as set out in the existing Scheme or that Council chooses to adopt some of the recommendations of the Independent Review Panel and not others.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 The recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel place a financial commitment on the Council for 4 years. Council has the discretion to adopt or amend the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications.

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel was provided with benchmarking information from other local authority allowances' schemes. The Panel also heard evidence from Members on the current Scheme and suggested variations to a future Scheme.

6. Associated Risks

- 6.1 The Council is required (under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003) to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to keep the Members' Allowances Scheme under review and make recommendations to the Council regarding the Scheme.
- 6.2 This review has been completed and therefore there are no risks unless members fail to determine the matter.

7. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact
Older or younger people			No differential impact
People with caring Responsibilities			No differential impact
People with a disability			No differential impact
Women or men			No differential impact

People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)			No differential impact
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)			No differential impact
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual			No differential impact
People who are transgendered			No differential impact
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership			No differential impact
Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave			No differential impact
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)			No differential impact
Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)			No differential impact
