

22/23-97a

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT PARISH
REMUNERATION PANEL ON THE REVIEW
OF PARISH MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES
FOR 2023-2027
FOR
THE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS WITHIN
THE ROTHER DISTRICT**

INTRODUCTION

1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) provide all parish councils with the discretion to introduce allowances schemes whereby a parish basic allowance plus travelling and subsistence allowances can be paid to their elected Members whether or not that election was contested. Further, a travelling allowance and a subsistence allowance, but not a parish basic allowance, can be paid to co-opted Members of Parish Councils.
2. The setting of the levels of the allowances is open to Parish Councils to determine after first considering the recommendations of the Parish Independent Remuneration Panel (PIRP). This is in line with the Government's view that the allowances system provides for clear and transparent local accountability as parish councils, like other local authorities, will be both accountable and answerable to their local communities in terms of the allowance payments made to their Members.
3. The PIRP has completed its work on the review of allowance matters which fall to it under the 2003 Regulations. This report sets out the recommendations of the PIRP which must be considered by parish councils when they determine whether to continue to pay allowances or introduce allowance schemes for the first time and, where appropriate, the levels of the allowances to be paid.
4. The PIRP last made recommendation on allowances in November 2019 on the understanding that a further review by the PIRP would take place in 2022 to take effect for the new civic term 2023-2027.

COMPOSITION OF INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

5. In accordance with the 2003 Regulations the following persons were appointed to comprise the PIRP:
 - Hazel Bentall, MRCVS, veterinary consultant, regulator
 - Clive Mills, MIHM, retired Public Services Senior Manager (previous Member)
 - Ruth Wilson, local authority HR Manager Recruitment and Reward
6. The members of the IRP have between them considerable experience in local government as officers / managers, advisors and members of remuneration panels for other county, district and borough local authorities.
7. Mrs Lisa Cooper, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Rother District Council provided the IRP with the information required for them to undertake their task, together with administrative support and assisted in the compilation of this report.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

8. The Terms of Reference accord with the provisions of Regulation 28 which provide that the Panel must produce a report and recommendations on:
 - (a) the amount of parish basic allowance payable to the elected Members of Parish Councils;
 - (b) the amount of travel and subsistence allowance payable to Members of Parish Councils;
 - (c) whether the parish basic allowance should be payable only to the chairman of the Parish Council or to all of its elected Members;
 - (d) whether, if a parish basic allowance is to be made to both the Chairman and other elected Members, the allowance payable to the Chairman should be set at a higher level than that of the other elected Members and if so, the higher amount which should be payable;
 - (e) the responsibilities and duties in respect of which Members of Parish Councils should receive travel and subsistence allowances.
9. In the interests of economy and administration, the PIRP were requested to make recommendations on allowances for the four year period (2023-2027).

THE PROCESS AND INFORMATION CONSIDERED

10. The PIRP met on 21 December 2022 to consider its recommendations.
11. The Panel was provided with the following information and gave due consideration thereof in coming to the recommendations within this report:
 - the PIRP's December 2018 report; and
 - information obtained from the Parish and Town Councils across the District.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Basic Allowance

12. The Panel noted that where a Parish or Town Council proposes to pay Parish Basic Allowance to its Members, then the Regulations required that Council to have regard, in settling the level of the Allowance, to the recommendations made in respect of it by a Parish Remuneration Panel.
13. It was not for the PIRP to take a view on whether such an Allowance should be payable, this being solely a matter for the Parish or Town Council itself to decide upon.
14. The PIRP therefore proceeded to take a view on the appropriate level of the Allowance, should a Parish or Town Council be contemplating making payment of parish basic allowance to its Members.
15. A recent survey of the Parish and Town Councils across the district showed very little take up of the basic allowance. The Panel felt that the current £233 basic allowance that had been recommended at the previous review should be subject to a 5% increase in line with the increase being recommended for

the District Council Basic Allowance. This would result in an increase to £245, with this allowance applying until April 2027.

Recommendation: That the recommended level of Basic Allowance, should a Parish or Town Council decide to pay a Basic Allowance should be set at £245 and that there be no distinction between that paid to the Chairman and all other Parish / Town Councillors.

CONCLUSION

16. The Panel confirms that the foregoing views are those of the members of the Panel and that this report concludes the task allotted to.

Parish Independent Remuneration Panel Members:

Ruth Wilson
Hazel Bentall
Clive Mills

January 2023