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**The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel  
appointed to review the allowances paid to Councillors  
of Cambridge City Council**

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February 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the 2003 Regulations"), as amended, require all local authorities to appoint an independent remuneration panel (IRP) to advise on the terms and conditions of their scheme of councillors' allowances.

1.1.2 Cambridge City Council formally appointed the following persons to undertake this process and make recommendations on its future scheme.

Jane Phillips – Local resident
Rob Bennett - Independent Person
Mark Palmer – Director: Development & Governance, South East Employers,
Representing the East of England LGA, (Chair)

1.1.3 Our terms of reference were in accordance with the requirements of the 2003 Regulations, together with "Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances" issued jointly by the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Inland Revenue (July 2003). Those requirements are to make recommendations to the Council as to:

- (a) the amount of basic allowance to be payable to all councillors;
- (b) the level of allowances and whether allowances should be payable for:
 - (i) special responsibility allowances;
 - (ii) travelling and subsistence allowance;
 - (iii) dependants' carers' allowance;
 - (iv) parental leave and any
 - (v) co-optees' and Independent Persons allowance.and the amount of such allowances.
- (c) whether payment of allowances may be backdated if the scheme is amended at any time to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made.
- (d) whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years before its application is reviewed.

2. CURRENT SCHEME

2.1.1 The last review of councillors' allowances was undertaken by the IRP in November 2021 and the current scheme came into effect from April 2022.

2.1.2 The Scheme currently provides that all councillors are each entitled to a total basic allowance of **£6,690 per annum**. Councillors also receive a Stationery Allowance of £75 per annum. In addition, some councillors receive special responsibility allowances for undertaking additional duties.

2.1.3 Councillors may also claim the cost of travel and subsistence expenses and for expenditure on the care of children or dependants whilst on approved duties.

3. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING OUR REVIEW

3.1 The Public Service Principle

- 3.1.1 This is the principle that an important part of being a councillor is the desire to serve the public and, therefore, not all of what a councillor does should be remunerated. Part of a councillor's time should be given voluntarily. The consolidated guidance notes the importance of this principle when arriving at the recommended basic allowance.¹ Moreover, we found that a public service concept or ethos was articulated and supported by all the councillors we interviewed and in the responses to the questionnaire completed by councillors as part of our review.
- 3.1.2 The principle of public service had been formally recognised in the last review. However, to provide transparency and increase an understanding of the Panel's work, we will recommend the application of an explicit Public Service Discount (or PSD). Such a PSD is applied to the time input necessary to fulfil the role of a councillor. Further explanation of the PSD to be applied is given below in section 4.

3.2 The Fair Remuneration Principle

- 3.2.1 Alongside the belief that the role of the elected Councillor should, in part, be viewed as unpaid voluntary service, we advocate a principle of fair remuneration. The Panel in 2024 continues to subscribe to the view promoted by the independent Councillors' Commission:

Remuneration should not be an incentive for service as a councillor. Nor should lack of remuneration be a barrier. The basic allowance should encourage people from a wide range of backgrounds and with a wide range of skills to serve as local councillors. Those who participate in and contribute to the democratic process should not suffer unreasonable financial disadvantage as a result of doing so.²

- 3.2.2 We are keen to ensure that our recommended scheme of allowances provides reasonable financial compensation for councillors. Equally, the scheme should be fair, transparent, logical, simple, and seen as such.
- 3.2.3 Hence, we continue to acknowledge that:
- (i) allowances should apply to roles within the Council, not individual councillors;
 - (ii) allowances should represent reasonable *compensation* to councillors for expenses they incur and time they commit in relation to their role, not *payment* for their work; and
 - (iii) special responsibility allowances are used to recognise the *significant* additional responsibilities which attach to some roles, not merely the extra time required.
- 3.2.4 In making our recommendations, we have therefore sought to maintain a balance between:

¹ The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, and HM Revenue & Customs, *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraph 68.

² Rodney Brooke and Declan Hall, *Members' Remuneration: Models, Issues, Incentives and Barriers*. London: Communities and Local Government, 2007, p.3.

- (i) the voluntary quality of a councillor's role;
 - (ii) the need for appropriate financial recognition for the expenses incurred and time spent by councillors in fulfilling their roles; and
 - (iii) the overall need to ensure that the scheme of allowances is neither an incentive nor a barrier to service as a councillor.
- 3.2.5 The Panel is also keen to ensure that the scheme of allowances is understandable in the way it is calculated. This includes ensuring the bandings and differentials of the allowances are as transparent as possible.
- 3.2.6 In making our recommendations, we wish to emphasise that any possible negative impact they may have is not intended and should not be interpreted as a reflection on any individual councillor's performance in the role.

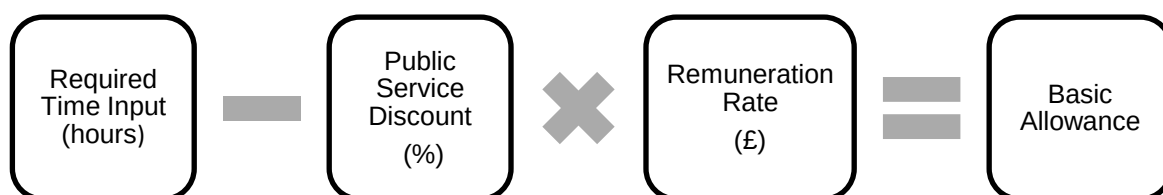
4. CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Basic Allowance

- 4.1.1 A Council's scheme of allowances must include provision for a basic allowance, payable at an equal flat rate to *all* councillors. The guidance on arriving at the basic allowance states, *"Having established what local councillors do, and the hours which are devoted to these tasks the local authorities will need to take a view on the rate at which, and the number of hours for which, councillors ought to be remunerated."*³
- 4.1.2 In addition to the regular cycles of Council and committee meetings, a number of working groups involving councillors may operate. Many councillors are also appointed by the Council to a number of external organisations.
- 4.1.3 We recognise that councillors are responsible to their electorate as:
- Representatives of a particular ward;
 - Community leaders;
 - Decision makers for the whole Council area;
 - Policy makers for future activities of the Council;
 - Scrutineers and auditors of the work of the Council; and
 - Regulators of planning, licensing and other matters required by Government.
- 4.1.4 The guidance identifies the issues and factors an IRP should have regard to when making a scheme of allowances.⁴ For the basic allowance we considered three variables in our calculation: the time required to execute the role effectively; the public service discount; and the rate for remuneration.

³ The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, and HM Revenue & Customs, *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraph 67.

⁴ The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Department for Communities and Local Government, and Inland Revenue, *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraphs 66-81.



4.1.5 Each of the variables is explained below.

Required Time Input

4.1.6 We ascertained the average number of hours necessary per week to undertake the role of a councillor (with no special responsibilities) from the questionnaire and interviews with councillors. In addition, we considered information about the number, range, and frequency of committee meetings.⁵

4.1.7 Discounting attendance at political meetings (which we judged to be centred upon internal political management), we find that the average time commitment required to execute the role of a councillor with no special responsibilities is **11** hours per week.

Public Service Discount (PSD)

4.1.8 From the information analysed, we found councillors espoused a high sense of public duty. Given the weight of evidence presented to us concerning, among other factors, the levels of responsibility, the varied nature of the role, the need for learning and development, and the increasing accessibility and expectations of the public, we continue to recommend a Public Service Discount of **40 per cent** to the calculation of the basic allowance. This percentage sits within the top range of PSDs applied to basic allowances by councils.

Remuneration Rate

4.1.9 After establishing the expected time input to be remunerated, we considered a remuneration rate. We came to a judgement about the rate at which the councillors ought to be remunerated for the work they do.

4.1.10 To help identify an hourly rate for calculating allowances, we utilised relevant statistics about the local labour market published by the Office for National Statistics. We selected the average (median), full-time gross⁶ wage per hour for the Local Authority area of Cambridge City **£22.23**⁷.

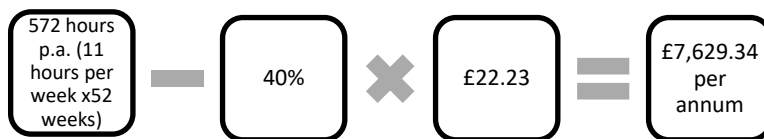
Calculating the basic allowance

4.1.11 After determining the amount of time required each week to fulfil the role (11 hours), the level of PSD to be applied (40%) and the hourly rate to be used (£22.23), we calculated the basic allowance as follows:

⁵ The summary responses to the questionnaires are available on request.

⁶ The basic allowance, special responsibility allowance, dependants' carers' allowance, and co-optees' allowance are taxable as employment income.

⁷ The Nomis official labour market statistics: Hourly Pay – Gross median (£) For full-time employee jobs by place of residence: UK December 2024.



4.1.12 The gross Basic Allowance before the PSD is applied is **£12,715.56**. Following the application of the PSD this leads to a basic allowance of **£7,629.34** per annum.

4.1.13 This amount is intended to recognise the overall contribution made by councillors, including their work on council bodies, ward work and attendance on external bodies.

4.1.14 We did also note the levels of basic allowance currently allocated by other benchmarked city, district and borough councils (see table below).

Council	Hampshire district/borough Councils: Basic Allowances (£) 2024
Cambridge City Council	6,690
Exeter City Council	6,798
Ipswich Council	4,813
Lincoln City Council	5,290
Oxford City Council	5,826
Norwich City Council	7,937
Average	6,226

4.1.15 The Panel wished to ensure the level of basic allowance does not constitute a barrier to candidates from all sections of the community standing, or re-standing, for election as councillors and was also mindful of the Council's financial constraints. The Panel was of the view that this review has continued to make recommendations to ensure that the current basic is in accordance with the principle of fair remuneration.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the Basic Allowance payable to all members of Cambridge City Council be £7,629 per annum. This allowance is subject to an annual indexation.

4.1.16 The Council currently makes an annual payment of £75 per annum for a 'Stationery Allowance' to each Councillor. The Panel is of the view that this annual payment should be withdrawn.

WE RECOMMEND that the 'Stationery Allowance' payment of £75 per annum for each Councillor be withdrawn.

4.2 Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)

- 4.2.1 Special Responsibility Allowances are awarded to councillors who perform significant additional responsibilities over and above the roles and expenses covered by the basic allowance. These special responsibilities must be related to the discharge of the council's functions.
- 4.2.2 The 2003 Regulations do not limit the number of SRAs which may be paid, nor do they prohibit the payment of more than one SRA to any one councillor. They do require that an SRA be paid to at least one councillor who is not a member of the controlling group of the Council. As the guidance suggests, if the majority of councillors receive an SRA, the local electorate may rightly question the justification for this.⁸
- 4.2.3 We conclude from the evidence we have considered that the following offices bear *significant* additional responsibilities:
- Leader of the Council
 - Deputy Leader
 - Executive Members (7)
 - Chair of the Council
 - Leader of the Main Opposition Group
 - Minority Group Leaders
 - Scrutiny Committee Chair (2)
 - Scrutiny Committee Vice Chair (2)
 - Scrutiny Opposition Spokespersons
 - Minority Spokespersons
 - Planning Committee Chair
 - Planning Committee Vice Chair
 - Planning Committee Member
 - Licensing Committee Chair
 - Licensing Committee Member
 - Joint Development Committee Chair and City Spokesperson
 - Civic Committee Chair (Audit and Standards)
 - Area Committee Chair
 - Cabinet Advisory Group (Housing) Chair
 - Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Board Member
 - Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Assembly Member
 - Combined Authority Cabinet Member
 - Combined Authority Committee Members
 - Police and Crime Panel Members

One SRA Only Rule

- 4.2.4 To improve the transparency of the scheme of allowances, we feel that no councillor should be entitled to receive at any time more than **one SRA for any internal Council role**. The Panel further recommends that a Councillor may receive 'one additional SRA' when representing the Council on any external organisation or body. If a councillor can receive more than one SRA for any internal Council role, then the public

⁸ The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, and HM Revenue & Customs, *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraph 72.

are unable to ascertain the actual level of remuneration for an individual councillor from a reading of the Scheme of Allowances.

- 4.2.5 Moreover, the One SRA Only Rule avoids the possible anomaly of the Leader receiving a lower allowance than another councillor. If two or more allowances are applicable to a councillor, then the higher-valued allowance would be received. The One SRA Only Rule is common practice for many councils. Our calculations for the SRAs are based on this principle, which should be highlighted:

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that that no councillor shall be entitled to receive at any time more than one Special Responsibility Allowance for any internal Council role and that this One SRA Only Rule be re-adopted into the new Scheme of Allowances.

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND that a Councillor may receive up to 'one additional Special Responsibility Allowance when representing the Council on any external body or organisation.

Calculating SRAs

- 4.2.6 The Panel supports a formula for calculating the Leader of the Council allowance based on a multiplier of the Basic Allowance, this role carries the most significant additional responsibilities and is the most time consuming.
- 4.2.7 We applied a multiplier of the basic allowance to establish the Leader's SRA. Other SRAs are then valued downwards as a percentage of the Leader's allowance. This approach has the advantage that, when future adjustments to the SRAs are required, changing the Leader's SRA will have a proportionate and easily calculable effect on the other SRAs within the scheme.

We grouped together in Tiers those roles that we judged to have a significant level of responsibility. The rationale for these thirteen tiers of responsibility is discussed below.

Leader of Council (Tier One)

- 4.2.8 The Council elects a Leader who is ultimately responsible for the discharge of all executive functions of the Council. The Leader is the principal policy maker and has personal authority to determine delegated powers to the rest of the Executive. The Leader is also responsible for the appointment (and dismissal) of members of the Executive and their respective areas of responsibility.
- 4.2.9 The multiplier we applied to calculate the Leader's SRA is 300% (3 x times) the basic allowance. If the recommended option of a basic allowance with a PSD of 40% is adopted, this results in a Leader's Allowance of £22,887.

WE RECOMMEND that the Leader of the Council receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 300% of the basic allowance, £22,887.

Deputy Leader (Tier Two)

- 4.2.10 The Deputy Leader usually acts on the Leader's behalf in their absence. From the information we gathered, we continue to consider this additional responsibility should be reflected in the level of allowance. Therefore, we recommend the Deputy Leader's SRA be set at 75% of the Leader's SRA. If our recommendations concerning the basic allowance and the Leader's SRA are adopted, this results in an allowance of £17,165.

WE RECOMMEND that the Deputy Leader receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 75% of the Leader's Allowance, £17,165.

Executive Member (Tier Three)

- 4.2.11 From the evidence gathered, including questionnaire response and the face-to-face interviews, we consider the members of the Executive should receive an allowance of £13,732, 60% of the Leader's Allowance.
- 4.2.12 The responsibility of the members of the Executive for many of the Council's functions, Members of the Executive will hold considerable responsibility for their respective portfolios. In addition, the time commitment for the role will be significant.

WE RECOMMEND that the Executive Members receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 60% of the Leader's Allowance, £13,732.

Leader of Main Opposition Group (Tier Four)

- 4.2.13 The Panel recognise the importance of the role of the Leader of the Main Opposition Group. The Leader has a key role in motivating and co-ordinating Group activities, ensuring accountability and constructive challenge of the Executive.
- 4.2.14 The Panel is therefore of the view that the Leader of the Main Opposition Group should receive an allowance of £8,010, 35% of the Leader's Allowance.

WE RECOMMEND that the Leader of the Main Opposition Group receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 35% of the Leader's Allowance , £8,010.

Chair of the Scrutiny Committee and Planning Committee Chair (Tier Five)

- 4.2.15 The Panel is of the view that the role of scrutiny and accountability are a growing and important role and recent Government Statutory Guidance (2024) promoted the scope and responsibilities of the overview and scrutiny function. The two Scrutiny Committee Chairs will lead their respective work programmes and hold to account the Executive. We therefore recommend that the role be recognised as a Tier Five allowance and receive an allowance of £6,866, 30% of the Leader's Allowance.
- 4.2.16 The Panel was of the view that the role of the Chair of the Planning Committee has a high impact and profile across the Council. The Panel was of the view that the allowance should reflect the considerable responsibility undertaken both during and between the committee meetings. We therefore recommend that the role be recognised as a Tier Five allowance and receive an allowance of £6,866, 30% of the Leader's Allowance

WE RECOMMEND that the Chair of the Scrutiny Committees and the Planning Committee Chair should receive an allowance of 30% of the Leader's Allowance, £6,866.

Combined Authority Cabinet Member (Tier Six)

- 4.2.17 The Council nominates a Councillor to represent its interests as part of the Combined Authority Cabinet. The Panel was of the view that this continued to be a role of significant responsibility and impact. The Panel is of the view that the role of Combined Authority Cabinet Member should receive an allowance at Tier Six, 25% of the Leader's Allowance, £5,722.

WE RECOMMEND that the role of Cabinet Member on the Combined Authority

should receive a Tier Six allowance, 25% of the Leader's Allowance, £5,722.

Minority Group Leader(s), Joint Development Control Chair and City Spokespersons, Chair of the Cabinet Advisory Group for Housing, Vice Chair of the Planning Committee, Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committee Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Board Member and the Chair of the Civic Affairs Committee (Tier Seven)

- 4.2.18 The Panel was of the view that the role of Minority Group Leader was a role of special responsibility should be reflected in the Members' Allowance Scheme. The Panel recommends that the Minority Group Leader should receive an allowance of 15% of the Leader's Allowance, £3,433.
- 4.2.19 The Panel further recommends that for a group leader to qualify for this allowance then the group should comprise of at least 10% of total Council Members (4 Councillors in the group).
- 4.2.20 The Panel also recommends that the Chair and City Spokesperson on the Joint Development Control Committee should receive an allowance of 15% of the Leader's Allowance, £3,433.
- 4.2.21 The Cabinet Advisory Group for Housing is a new Group established to give space outside of cabinet to discuss and take forward policy development and implementation in respect of housing. The Panel will report to the Executive and currently it is not anticipated that the Chair of the Advisory Group will be an Executive Member.
- 4.2.22 The Panel recommends that the Chair of the Cabinet Advisory Group for Housing should receive an allowance of 15% of the Leader's Allowance, £3,433.
- 4.2.23 The Panel is of the view that the Vice Chair of the Planning Committee continues to be a role of significant responsibility and we recommend an allowance of 50% of the Chair of the Planning Committee, £3,433.
- 4.2.24 The Panel has recommended a new allowance for the two Scrutiny Committee Chairs and the Panel further recommends that the two Scrutiny Committee Vice Chairs should receive an allowance of 50% of the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees, £3,433
- 4.2.25 The Panel recommends that the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Board Member should receive an allowance of 15% of the Leader's Allowance, £3,433.
- 4.2.26 The Civic Affairs Committee acts as both the Councils audit committee and standards committee. Government advice and guidance from the Local Government Association has recognised the growing importance of the audit role and function. The Panel therefore recommends that the Chair of the Civic Affairs Committee should receive an allowance of 15% of the Leader's Allowance, £3,433.

WE RECOMMEND that the Minority Group Leader(s), the Chair and City Spokesperson on the Joint Development Control Committee, the Chair of the Cabinet Advisory Group for Housing, the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Board Member and Chair of the Civic Affairs Committee should each receive a Tier Seven Allowance, 15% of the Leader's Allowance, £3,433.

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND that the Vice Chair of the Planning Committee and the Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees should both receive a Tier Seven Allowance of 50% of the Chair of the Planning Committee and 50% of the Chair of the Scrutiny Committees, £3,433.

Chair of the Licensing Committee, Chair of Council, Scrutiny Opposition Spokespersons, Minority Group Spokespersons and Chair of the Employment Committee (Tier Eight)

- 4.2.27 The Panel was of the view that the Licensing Committee Chair continues to be an evolving role based on the frequency of meetings and the changing demands based on the legislative requirements and recommend an allowance of 10% of the Leader's Allowance, £2,289.
- 4.2.28 The Panel also recommend that the Chair of Council continues to be a role of Importance chairing the Council Meetings and should receive a Tier Eight allowance, 10% of the Leader's Allowance, £2,289.
- 4.2.29 The Panel acknowledged based on responses during the interviews and through analysing the responses to the questionnaire that Councillors valued the role of the Scrutiny Opposition Spokespersons and the Minority Group Spokespersons. These are not common roles within most Councils but within Cambridge City Council are seen as roles that meet the requirement of a *Special Responsibility Allowance*.
- 4.2.30 The Panel recommends that the Scrutiny Committee Opposition Spokespersons and Minority Spokespersons should receive an allowance of 10% of the Leader's Allowance, £2,289.
- 4.2.31 The Employment Committee is a new committee and we recommend that it should also receive an allowance of 10% of the Leader's Allowance, £2,289.

WE RECOMMEND that the Chair of the Licensing Committee, Chair of the Council, Scrutiny Opposition Spokespersons , Minority Spokespersons and Chair of the Employment Committee should each receive a Tier Eight Allowance, 10% of the Leader's Allowance, £2,289.

Planning Committee Member (Tier Nine)

- 4.2.32 The Panel was of the view that the Planning Committee Member was a role that required a significant time commitment and also was a complex role. The Panel recommends that the role should receive a Tier Nine Allowance, 30% of the Planning Committee Chairs Allowance, £2,060.

WE RECOMMEND that the Planning Committee Members should receive a Tier Nine allowance 30% of the Planning Committee Chairs Allowance, £2,060.

Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Board Assembly Member, Police and Crime Panel Members, Area Committee Chairs and Independent Person (Tier Ten)

- 4.2.33 The Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Board Assembly Member continues to undertake a role of responsibility that should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. The Panel recommends that the Assembly Member should receive an allowance of 5% of the Leader's Allowance, £1,144.
- 4.2.34 The Panel also recommend that the Police and Crime Panel Members should receive an allowance of 5% of the Leader's Allowance, £1,144.
- 4.2.35 The Panel recommends that the four Chairs of the Area Committees should receive an allowance of 5% of the Leader's Allowance, £1,144.
- 4.2.36 The Panel was of the view that the Independent Person provides external challenge

and advice in relation to standards issues. The Panel recommends that the Independent Person receive an allowance of 5% of the Leader's Allowance, £1,144.

WE RECOMMEND that the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Assembly Member, Police and Crime Panel Members, Area Committee Chairs and the Independent Person should all receive an allowance of 5% of the Leader's Allowance, £1,144.

Panel Member Rob Bennett as a designated Independent Person for the Council did not participate in the recommendation relating to the Independent Person.

Joint Development Control Members (Tier Eleven)

- 4.2.37 The Panel recommend that the role of Joint Development Control Member should receive an allowance of 30% of the Chair of the Joint Development Control Committee, £1,030.

WE RECOMMEND that the Joint Development Control Members should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 30% of the Chair of the Joint Development Control Committee, £1,030.

Licensing Committee Member (Tier Twelve)

- 4.2.38 The Panel recommend that the Licensing Committee Member should receive an allowance of 30% of the Chair of the Licensing Committee, £687.

- 4.2.39 The Panel further recommends that to be eligible for this allowance the Licensing Committee Member will have to attend and participate on four or more Licensing Sub Committee hearings.

WE RECOMMEND that the Members of the Licensing Committee should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 30% of the Chair of Licensing, £687.

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND that to be eligible for this allowance the Licensing Committee Member should attend and participate on four or more Licensing Sub Committee hearings.

Deputy Independent Person of the Council (Tier Thirteen)

- 4.2.40 The Panel recommends that the Deputy Independent Person of the Council should receive an allowance of 50% of the Independent Persons allowance, £572.

WE RECOMMEND that the Deputy Independent Person should receive an Allowance of 50% of the Independent Persons Allowance, £572.

Panel Member Rob Bennett as a designated Independent Person of the Council did not participate in the recommendation relating to the Deputy Independent Person.

4.3 Travelling and Subsistence Allowance

- 4.3.1 A scheme of allowances may provide for any councillor to be paid for travelling and subsistence undertaken in connection with any of the duties specified in Regulation 8 of the 2003 Regulations (see paragraph 5.10). Similarly, such an allowance may also be paid to co-opted and Independent Persons of a committee or sub-committee of the

Council in connection with any of those approved duties, provided that their expenses are not also being met by a third party.

WE RECOMMEND that travelling and subsistence allowance should be payable to councillors and any co-opted/Independent Persons in connection with any approved duties in accordance with the HMRC recommendations. We propose no changes to the current travel and subsistence allowances.

4.4 Members Child Care and Carers' Allowance

- 4.4.1 The child care and carers' allowance should ensure that potential candidates are not deterred from standing for election and should enable current councillors to continue despite any change in their personal circumstances. The current scheme awards reimbursement at cost for actual expenditure incurred and will be paid for care of dependents for children below school age during school hours, a child under fourteen outside of normal school hours and elderly people or people with disabilities while the Councillor is undertaking Council business where an annual allowance or travel and subsistence is payable.
- 4.4.2 The Panel is of the view that no changes should be made to the Members Child Care and Carers' Allowance. However, we would like to clarify that reference to the 'Living Wage' as the minimum rate of reimbursement to a carer refers to the 'Real Living Wage' as recommended annually by the 'Living Wage Foundation' and not the Government Living Wage rate.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the Members Child Care and Carers' Allowance should continue as outlined in the current Scheme of Allowances.

WE ALSO RECOMMEND that the Council should actively promote the allowance to prospective and new councillors both before and following an election. This may assist in supporting greater diversity of councillor representation.

4.5 Leave Policy For Councillors

- 4.5.1 There is no uniform national policy to support councillors who require leave for maternity, paternity, or adoption leave. According to the Fawcett Society (Does Local Government Work for Women, 2018) a *'lack of maternity, paternity provision or support'* is a real barrier for women aged 18-44 to fulfil their role as a councillor.
- 4.5.2 We are of the view that support should be provided for leave although we do not wish to stipulate an exact policy/procedure. The Panel is aware that the Local Government Association (Labour Group) has developed a model policy that has been adopted by a growing number of councils.
- 4.5.3 The Panel recognises that Cambridge City Council Civic Affairs Committee developed and introduced a Leave Policy for Councillors in February 2023 following a motion at Council in October 2021 that adopts the LGA Labour Groups model policy.

WE RECOMMEND that the current Leave Policy for Councillors continues to be adopted and implemented. The policy on Leave for Councillors should be actively promoted to prospective and current Councillors alongside the Members Childcare and Carers' Allowance.

This should form part of an approach by the Council with the support of the political groups to enhance and increase the diversity of councillor representation.

4.6 Indexing of Allowances

- 4.6.1 A scheme of allowances may make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances in line with a specified index. The present scheme makes provision for the basic allowance, the special responsibility allowances and Independent Persons allowance to be adjusted annually in line with the staff salary . The Co-Optee's allowance is indexed in line with the 'Real Living Wage' as recommended by the 'Living Wage Foundation'.
- 4.6.2 The Panel is of the view that the indexation should continue to be linked to staff salary increases. This is the most common approach to indexation and ensures that Councillor allowances will not increase at a percentage rate higher than those of Council Officers.

WE RECOMMEND that the basic allowance, each of the SRAs and the Independent Persons Allowance be increased annually in line with the percentage increase in staff salaries based on that applied to Spinal Column Point 56 of the Council's pay scale. This should be implemented from April 2025 (2.5% based on most recent pay award) for a period of up to four years. After this period, the Scheme should be reviewed again by an independent remuneration panel.

4.7 Revocation of current Scheme of Allowances / Implementation of new Scheme

- 4.7.1 The 2003 Regulations provide that a scheme of allowances may only be revoked with effect from the beginning of a financial year, and that this may only take effect on the basis that the authority makes a further scheme of allowances for the period beginning with the date of revocation.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the new scheme of allowances to be agreed by the Council be implemented with effect from the beginning of the 2025-26 financial year, at which time the current scheme of allowances will be revoked.

4.8 Review of the Scheme of Allowances

- 4.8.1. The Panel was aware that for a number of new roles we were making recommendations for roles that at the time of the review had not been formally approved and were not yet in position. These roles included the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees, Chair of the Employment Committee and Chair of the Cabinet Advisory Group for Housing. In respect of these roles the Panel would like to review the recommendations for these roles by not later than end of March 2026. The review will include an interview with each of the postholders.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the recommended allowances for the Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs, the Chair of the Employment Committee and the Chair of the Cabinet Advisory Group for Housing should be reviewed by no later than the end of March 2026.

5. OUR INVESTIGATION

5.1 Background

- 5.1.1 As part of this review, a questionnaire was issued to all councillors to support and inform the review. Responses were received from 19 of the 42 current councillors **(45% response)**. The information obtained was helpful in informing our deliberations.
- 5.1.2 We interviewed *two*/ve current councillors using a structured questioning process. We are grateful to all our interviewees for their assistance.
- 5.1.3 We should also like to thank Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager, Aiesha Feldwick, Project Manager - Transformation and Tom Lewis, Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer for the assistance and support during the review.

5.2 Councillors' views on the level of allowances

- 5.2.1 A summary of the councillors' responses to the questionnaire are attached as Appendix 2.

6. APPROVED COUNCILLOR DUTIES

- 6.1.1 The Panel reviewed the recommended duties for which allowances should be payable and recommend that no changes be made.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND: That no changes are made to the Approved Duties as outlined in the Members' Allowance Scheme.

**Mark Palmer (Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel)
Director: Development and Governance, South East Employers
February 2024.**

Appendix 1: Summary of Panel's Recommendations

Allowance	Current Amount for 2024-25	Number	Recommended Allowance (40% PSD)	Recommended Allowance Calculation
Basic (BA)				
Total Basic:	£6,690	42	£7,629	

Special Responsibility:				
Leader of the Council	£20,070	1	£22,887	300% of BA
Deputy Leader	£16,725	1	£17,165	75% of Leader's Allowance
Executive Members	£13,380	7	£13,732	60% of Leader's Allowance
Leader of Main Opposition Group	£6,690	1	£8,010	35% of Leader's Allowance
Minority Group Leaders	No SRA	1	£3,433	15% of Leader's Allowance
Scrutiny Committee Chairs	£2,676	2	£6,866	30% of the Leader's Allowance
Scrutiny Committee Vice-Chairs	No SRA	2	£3,433	50% of Chair's Allowance
Scrutiny Opposition Spokesperson	£2,676		£2,289	10% of the Leader's Allowance
Minority Spokespersons	£2,007		£2,289	10% of Leader's Allowance
Planning Committee Chair	£6,690	1	£6,686	30% of Leader's Allowance
Planning Committee Vice Chair	£3,345	1	£3,433	50% of Chair's Allowance
Planning Committee Member	£2,007		£2,060	30% of Chair's Allowance
Licensing Committee Chair	£1,672.50	1	£2,289	10% of Leader's Allowance
Licensing Committee Member	£501.75		£687	20% of the Chair's Allowance
Joint Development Control Chair and City Spokesperson	£3,345	1	£3,433	15% of the Leader's Allowance
Joint Development Control Members	£1,338		£1,030	30% of the Chair's Allowance
Civic Affairs Committee Chair	£1,672.50	1	£3,433	15% of the Leader's Allowance
Chair of the Council	£1,672.50	1	£3,433	15% of the Leader's Allowance

Area Committee Chairs	£1,338	4	£1,144	5% of the Leader's Allowance
Employment Committee Chair	No SRA	1	£2,289	10% of the Leader's Allowance
Cabinet Advisory Group Housing- Chair	No SRA	1	£3,433	15% of the Leader's Allowance
Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Board Member	£3,345		£3,433	15% of the Leaders Allowance
Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Board Assembly Member	£1003.50		£1,144	5% of the Leader's Allowance
Combined Authority Cabinet Member	£6,690	1	£5,722	25% of Leaders Allowance
Combined Authority Committee Members	£1,338		£1,144	20% of Combined Authority Cabinet Member
Police and Crime Panel Members	£1003.50		£1,144	5% of the Leader's Allowance
Independent Person	£1000	1	£1,144	5% of the Leader's Allowance
Deputy Independent Person Allowance	£500	1	£572	50% of the Independent Person
Co-Optees Allowance	£12.21		£12.60	Real Living Wage

