

Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Review of Members' Allowances for South Ribble Borough Council

April 2022

MEMBERS OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Peter Hyett: Retired , Former Group Finance Director of UCLAN	Charles Hadcock: Contemporary Sculptor and Director at Roachbridge Mill
Jeremy Hartley: Group Managing Director, Eric Wright Group	David Holmes: Operations and Technology Director, Air Sector, BAE Systems

CONTENTS

	Page Number
1. Purpose of the Independent Panel	2
2. The Panel	2-3
3. Terms of Reference	4
4. Background	4
5. Current Members' Allowance Scheme	5
6. The Evidence	6
7. Methodology	6
8. Meetings of 22 October 2022, 19 November 2022 and 26 April 2022	6-10
9. Findings and Conclusions	10-13
10. Recommendations	13
i) Annual Basic Allowances	
ii) Special Responsibility Allowances	
iii) Co-optees Allowances	
iv) Dependents Carers' Allowance	
v) Travel and Subsistence Allowances	
vi) Green Travel Allowance	
vi) Suspension of a Councillor	
viii) Other Recommendations	
11. Comments of the Panel	
12. Implementation	
13. Thanks of the Panel	
14. Appendices	
Appendix 1 - Data from Lancashire authorities including comparative allowances data from Chorley, West Lancs and Wyre (similar populations), with the allowances averaged	
Appendix 2 - Report of the previous Panel in September 2015	
Appendix 3 - Current Member Allowances Scheme (2022/23)	
15. Supporting Documents (available from Democratic Services)	

1. Purpose of the Independent Remuneration Panel

The Independent Remuneration Panel was established under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to formulate and recommend to the Council a revised scheme of allowances for elected members that would reflect their duties and responsibilities under the Council's Constitution.

2. The Panel

Peter Hyett: Peter is retired, and formerly a Group Finance Director at UCLan. He was previously Finance Director at Liverpool John Moores University. He has also worked in Local Government, the NHS and a New Town Development Corporation. He held board level positions in local, regional and national HE related companies/charities. He represented HE/FE on LCC Pension Committee.

Since retiring he has been made an Honorary Fellow of Uclan, been on the board of trustees of a number of education related charities in the north west and sits as an independent adviser on the Finance and the Investment committees of the Lancaster RC Diocese.

Charles Hadcock: Contemporary Sculptor and Director Roachbridge Mill Limited

Charles Hadcock is a contemporary sculptor. He has lived in Lancashire for the last 20 years having relocated from London. He specialises in making large scale, cast metal sculpture. His work features in collections around the UK, Europe and internationally.

In 2001 Charles purchased the ex-North West Water Authority building in Preston to house his sculpture studio and in the surplus space he designed and built the award winning Watermark Art and Design complex. In 2004 he built a second office complex, The Benchmark, which is adjacent to The Watermark.

In April 2007 he was a recipient of the Queens Award for Enterprise Promotion.

Charles is a director of Designbit Ltd t/a Roach Bridge Tissues. Together with his wife, Camilla, in 1999, they set up a specialist wrapping tissue paper printing company to continue her family's tradition of paper manufacture and merchandising, based at Roach Bridge Paper Mill, Samesbury since 1875. They continue to supply luxury and prestigious branded tissue paper to many of the high street shops across the country.

Charles is the Development Director of Edenbrace Ltd which owns the Roach Bridge Mill site. Taking advantage of the 18th century infrastructure already in place at Roach Bridge Mill, he developed and project managed the successful installation of a 230 KWH hydro electricity generating plant which has the capacity to supply power to the whole Roach Bridge Mill complex, allowing the products produced on site to have truly green credentials.

In 2019 Charles and Camilla set up a development company Mill Court (RoachBridge) Limited to build 8 homes on land opposite the Mill. The homes will complement the long term development plans for the Roach Bridge Mill site which include a multi occupancy office building and further workshops and industrial units.

The stone built homes are of a traditional character and will be constructed using local and Made in Britain manufactured materials and products.

From 2003 - 2018 Hadcock was the **Chairman of Creative Lancashire**, a public and private sector initiative to encourage and support all the creative industries in Lancashire.

In 2014 he was commissioned as a Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire and in 2018 he was Appointed Honorary Colonel of the Lancashire Army Cadet Force.

Jeremy Hartley: Eric Wright Group

Jeremy was appointed as managing director in 2011. He has 24 years' experience working for the Group, having previously been group finance director with responsibility across the entire portfolio. He spent his earlier career in senior roles with PWC. Jeremy is a director of all three Eric Wright Group NHS LIFTCos; a director of the Blackpool Local Education Partnership and Relationship director for the Lancashire County Council Regeneration Property Partnership. In addition to this he sits on the board of divisions within the Group which undertake the following:

- Construction
- Civil Engineering
- Water Infrastructure
- Facilities Management
- Commercial and Residential Property Development
- Health and Care Partnerships

Jeremy is involved in all aspects of the Group's activities supporting development of the business and heads up an experienced cross divisional management team. He manages the relationship with the Eric Wright Charitable Trust, which owns the Group, ensuring that the business achieves its wider objectives to support the Trust's strategy.

His skills and experience include public and private sector partnering under long term agreements; knowledge of a range of complex procurement procedures and commercial structures; understanding of changes in funding markets and ability raise funds at competitive rates; successful leadership of business development into new areas or via more complex JV partnering arrangements.

David Holmes: Operations and Technology Director, Air Sector, BAE Systems

Dave started his career with British Aerospace in 1984 as an Apprentice, has been with the Company for over 30 years and has undertaken a variety of roles across a number of sites in the United Kingdom (UK) and worked with international partners, suppliers and customers across the globe.

Currently, Dave is the Operations and Technology Director for the Air Sector within BAE Systems. This role covers the functional responsibility for Operational activities (Manufacturing, Quality, SHE and Facilities Management) within the Air Sector spanning people, process, systems, governance and physical activities.

In conjunction with academic institutes and Government bodies, Dave also leads the businesses undertaking in transitioning Air Sector technology from development through to deployment across the business for the next generation of BAE Systems air vehicles and services.

In 2010 Dave received the Be Inspired Business Award (BIBA) Business Person of the Year award, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) North West award for Design & Innovation and the North West Regional Development Agency award for Best Practice, the latter two being for the site master plan and developments at BAE Systems Samlesbury site.

Additionally, Dave represents the business on a number of external forums including the local Chamber of Commerce and Economic Partnership Board, as well as being the President of The Welding Institute. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society, Fellow of the Institution of Engineering and Technology, Fellow of the Society of Operations Engineers, Fellow of The Welding Institute and a Fellow of the Institution of Plant Engineers.

Moreover, Dave was awarded an OBE for Services to Manufacturing in the Aerospace Sector in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2020.

Assisted By:

Darren Cranshaw – Scrutiny and Democratic Services Shared Services Lead
Clare Gornall – Democratic and Member Services Officer

3. Terms of Reference

To propose a scheme of members' allowances that is simple to operate and easy to understand by the public, and in particular to make recommendations on the following:

1. The amount of basic allowance which should be paid to members of the council.
2. The duties in respect of which members should receive a special responsibility allowance, and the amount of such an allowance.
3. The amount of travelling and subsistence allowance and whether the scheme should include allowances for arranging the care of members' children or dependants, and the amount.
4. Any other relevant elements of the scheme.
5. When the scheme should be reviewed.

4. Background

The Council is required under paragraph 20 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to appoint and maintain an Independent

Remuneration Panel, to review and make recommendations to the Council on the Members' Allowances Scheme.

The Council can choose whether or not to implement those recommendations.

The members of the Independent Remuneration Panel were appointed by the Council in July 2021.

The current Members' Allowance Scheme was approved at the Council in September 2015. A review of the scheme should be undertaken every four years. The review has been delayed due to the COVID pandemic.

5. Current Members Allowance Scheme 2022/23 (as of April 2022)

The existing Scheme (as of April 2022**) can be summarised as follows:-

ANNUAL ALLOWANCE	£
Basic	4,911.01
Travel and Subsistence	407.57

Annual Special Responsibility Allowances

The following are specified as the special responsibilities in respect of which special responsibility allowances are payable, and the amounts of those allowances:

BODY	OFFICE*	ALLOWANCE
		£
Council	Leader	15368.83
Council	Deputy Leader	4,948.75
Cabinet (5 members)	Member	6,412.27
Scrutiny Committee	Chairman	3,753.72
Planning Committee	Chairman	5,495.76
Standards Committee	Chairman	572.55
Licensing and Public Safety Committee	Chairman	3,491.85

My Neighbourhood Area	Chairman	3,753.72
Governance Committee	Chairman	3,753.72
Minority Group	Leader of largest Opposition Party	4,948.74

* When a member holds more than one of the offices under the existing scheme, he or she is entitled to receive the allowance for each of the offices held.

** Please note that the above reflect the updated figures following the recently agreed National Joint Council Pay Award for employees which had also been applied to councillor allowances in accordance with Scheme. Throughout the course of the review, the Panel have used the 2021/22 Scheme as a comparator with other authorities.

6. Evidence

During the course of the review we gathered a range of evidence which consisted of the following:

- Current Scheme for the payment of members' allowances
- The council's decision making structure
- The roles and responsibilities of councillors
- Interviews with the Council's three Group Leaders
- Comparative information with various Lancashire authorities
- The current Scheme of members' allowances compared to the average cost of allowances of the three Lancashire authorities with a similar population size (Chorley, West Lancs and Wyre).
- Interviews with the three recently created Lead Member posts

The three Leaders of the Political Groups on the Council were invited to make representations to the Panel on the roles and responsibilities of elected members and those roles attracting a Special Responsibility Allowance.

The three Lead Members were also invited to make representations to the Panel on their recently created and evolving role.

7. Methodology

The Panel met three times during the period from October 2021 to April 2022. Our meetings were held in private session so as to enable the Panel to hold discussions and interviews in confidence. As the 2015 review had been extensive and wide ranging we decided not to take an overly prescriptive approach to this review but to examine the current Scheme's fitness for purpose and if any roles and responsibilities had changed, or been added, since the previous review. The information and evidence gathered could then be taken as a sound basis on which to base this Panel's recommendations.

Our activity fell into five parts:

- Examination of the previous Panel's report to Council
- Review of the current allowances scheme
- Analysis of allowances paid in other comparator local authorities and other relevant information
- Interviews with Group Leaders
- Interviews with Lead Members
- Formulation of conclusions and recommendations.

It is from these processes and deliberations that we arrived at the recommendations set out in this report.

8. Meetings of 22 October 2021, 19 November 2021, and 26 April 2022

Meeting of 22 October 2021

At our first meeting, we considered our approach to the review. As indicated above it was noted that the 2015 review had been extremely robust and comprehensive, with a number of recommendations to amend the Scheme to bring it in line with other comparative local authorities. We therefore felt confident that the report of that review and its findings was an extremely useful benchmark for the purposes of the present review.

We examined a copy of the 2021-22 Allowances Scheme, which of course had been updated in accordance with the annual updated payments for the basic allowance, travel and subsistence allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances in accordance with the Scheme approved in 2015.

We also noted that at its meeting on 27 January 2021, the Council agreed an amendment to the current Member Allowances Scheme i.e. a Special Responsibility Allowance of £1500 for specified lead member roles, subject to approval by the Independent Remuneration Panel. The Panel noted that this recent amendment would also form part of its wider review of the Scheme.

Following discussions of the information presented at our initial meeting, we also requested the following information and actions:-

1. Comparative data from Lancashire authorities to include updated allowances data from Chorley, West Lancs and Wyre, with averaged figures
2. To explore the feasibility of using the Scheme to promote the green agenda and incentivise electric car use via two tier travel allowance
3. To include data from other Local Authorities for comparative roles to Lead Members
4. Role descriptions for Cabinet and Chairs responsibilities
5. Which of the above roles have changed / stayed the same
6. Calendar of Meetings 2021/22 and comparative frequency of meetings for each Committee attracting a Special Responsibility Allowance
7. To hold interviews with the three Group Leaders
8. To hold interviews with the three Lead Members

Meeting of 19 November 2021

The Panel interviewed each of the three Group Leaders were separately –

Councillor David Howarth – Liberal Democrat Group Leader

Councillor Paul Foster – Leader of the Council and Labour Group Leader

Councillor Karen Walton – Conservative Group Leader and Leader of the Opposition

Summary of Key points made by Group Leaders at Interview

The key messages from those interviews were:-

Basic allowance

- The current rate is not really acting as an incentive to become a councillor, however neither should it be a disincentive. At the moment it can discourage some potential candidates e.g. if in receipt of welfare benefits (such as working tax credits) - it may be deducted if you receive an allowance for being a councillor.
- It is difficult to attract single mothers, working families, (due to caring responsibilities), younger people and generally more diverse sections of the community to ensure they are represented. Tends to be retired, affluent people who stand for election.
- Employees are entitled to time off for duties but it depends on how supportive an employer is in this regard. One comment was that it was only possible to fulfil their role because they were running their own business.
- Support for increase in line with staff pay increase (currently in the Scheme).

Special Responsibility Allowances –

- Stacking (claiming multiple SRAs) is allowed under the current Scheme but not all groups encourage this. Group leaders decide who is most appropriate to appoint in terms of capability. Appointments are politically motivated; opposition groups are not normally granted Chairmanships. However, it was felt that Chairs do take their role and responsibilities very seriously.
- A lot of work in between meetings for Planning and Licensing Committee Chairs. Due to the recent changes to Scrutiny there is an increased number of meetings.
- The Panel may wish to consider paying a meeting day rate to Vice Chairs of Committees who are required to Chair on occasion. If the Panel were to consider an SRA for Committee Vice Chairs – perhaps this should be the same as Lead Members.

Leader of the Opposition

- Attends Council and Cabinet meetings in the role to hold administration to account

- Regular briefings with Chief Executive on business of the Council, read reports, asks questions of council officers
- Is required in Civic offices most days.
- It was noted by the Panel that currently the Deputy Leader of the Opposition does not receive an allowance, but would be expected to deputise for the above duties as and when required.

Group Leaders Allowance

- At present only the Leader and Opposition Leader receive an allowance. Leaders of smaller groups do not. In the case of the current political circumstances where there is a “confidence and supply” arrangement between the ruling group and a smaller group, the Leader of the smaller group spends increased time and resources as part of that collaborative arrangement e.g. attending meetings, policy briefings etc.
- This view was not unanimous, for example the current Leader of a Small Group already receives an SRA for being Scrutiny Chair. There was support for Leader of Small Groups receiving an allowance but must be proportionate.

Lead Members

- The figure £1500 has been calculated using the formula Cabinet allowance divided by 3. The lead members do get officer support, but more officer resource allocated for members of Cabinet.
- An example of the work of Lead Members was the recent annual report of Cllr Alty, the Lead Member for Equality and Social Justice
- The intention is for Lead Members to ‘gain momentum’ – each is mentored by a Cabinet Member. Ideally the appointed members to retain their roles for the time they remain on the Council.
- Each Lead Member influences policy and feeds into the Corporate Priorities of the Council.
- Distinct difference compared to Member Champions – the Member Champions are appointed as the Council rep on an existing group/organisation
- Not all Group Leaders felt the allowance for Lead Members is justified. They are valuable roles, however other members volunteer for example to be on Scrutiny Task Groups for no extra money.

Carers / dependants allowance –

- To make the allowances more inclusive i.e. carers of dependants with special needs or elderly relatives.

- Need to be mindful of an ageing society – there will be more people looking after elderly relatives – need to be considering how we respond to this social change – future proofing.
- It was noted currently there are no childcare facilities in the Civic Centre Offices.
- Feel there is a lack of support for childcare/ dependants. The Council does try to have meetings in the evening, but that creates issues too.
- Early in the pandemic, Government changed legislation to allow Local Authority meetings to be held virtually / hybrid. In May 2021 this capability was removed*. Feel this should be re-introduced.

*i.e. members of the decision-making body must attend in person in order to vote

Travel Allowance

- Group leaders had varying views on this. One group had no issues and felt it was greener to walk or cycle to the Civic Centre for meetings. Others felt the current flat rate put members travelling to the Civic Centre from wards farther away in the borough at a financial disadvantage.

Meeting of 26 April 2022

The Panel held interviews with the three Lead Members:-

Cllr Keith Martin – Lead Member for Climate Change

Cllr Matthew Trafford – Lead Member for Youth and Mental Health Awareness

Cllr Jacky Alty – Leader Member for Social Justice and Equality

Each member had a different approach to their respective Lead Member roles, however each brought their unique passion and enthusiasm to the individual portfolios.

All the Lead Members were expected to conduct extensive reading and research specific to their area of responsibility, be fully briefed by officers internally and keep up to date with policy developments at a local, regional and national level. It requires a very broad range of knowledge, as the areas of responsibility often cut across several issues, and there is a very strong educational aspect to all the roles, communicating with a wide range of audiences, including other Council members, officers and members of the public. It also involves working with other local Councils.

Meetings are held regularly between the Lead Member and officers and also their relevant mentor within the Cabinet.

Aspects of the role described above often require attention on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

Each Lead Member produces an annual report to Cabinet on their work over the last twelve months, which is often a rolling programme and includes monitoring of relevant performance indicators which are linked to the Corporate Plan.

Lead Members are therefore be in a position to speak with authority on the subject area and have a strong advisory role in actually influencing policy development via liaison with Cabinet Members and formal reporting to Cabinet meetings.

9. Findings and Conclusions

Lead Members

The Panel felt that the evidence given by the interviews with Lead Members showed that the roles required extensive reading and research, regular attendance at meetings, were subject to performance monitoring via reporting to Cabinet, the Corporate Plan and similar action plans, and performed a strong advisory role in influencing policy development.

The Panel concluded that the areas of responsibility were wide ranging, challenging, and very relevant to society both in the present and in the future. The roles were therefore sufficiently robust and would continue to remain relevant for years to come.

The Panel noted that the Special Responsibility Allowance had been set at £1500 and that it represented one third of the Cabinet Member allowance. The figure was closely aligned to the equivalent role at Chorley Borough Council, one of three key authorities the Panel used a benchmark for comparison.

Members agreed that this figure was a reasonable amount for the work undertaken by Lead Members.

Vice Chairs of Committees

The Panel considered whether it was appropriate to introduce a Special Responsibility Allowance for Vice Chairs of Committees. The Panel considered the evidence given by Group Leaders, at which there was some support in principle for Vice Chairs receiving an allowance. However, as part of those same discussions no issues were raised in terms of Committee Chairs being unable to attend meetings and that in practice Vice Chairs had rarely been called upon to Chair meetings. Therefore, the Panel concluded that there was no evidence which justified the introduction of an allowance.

Leader of Small Groups

The Panel considered whether it was appropriate to introduce a Special Responsibility Allowance for Leader of Small Groups. The Panel considered the evidence given by Group Leaders, at which there was support in principle for the introduction of an allowance. It was noted that at present the Leader of the Small Group was also the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee which also attracted a Special Responsibility Allowance.

The matter was examined carefully by the Panel and the evidence given regarding workload, number of meetings and influence on policy arising from the present political arrangements at South Ribble.

They concluded that, whilst acknowledging the the point made about the potential to attract two Special Responsibility Allowances as with the current postholder, this would not always be the case. The Panel recognised that the two roles of Chair of the Scrutiny Committee and the Leader of Small Group were distinct and attracted different workloads.

It was noted that Chorley Borough Council did pay an allowance of £1040.25 for the equivalent role. However, at Chorley a small group was defined as 2- 5 members (Chorley has 42 Council members in total). The Panel were concerned that at South Ribble, with 50 council members, this was not proportionate and in future years may give rise to anomalies. The Panel therefore recommended the introduction of an allowance of £1000 for Leader of a Small Group, which was comparable to the Chorley's, however that a Small Group be defined as 10% or greater of the total number of councillors (currently this is 5).

Deputy Leader of the Opposition

During its analysis of the comparative data the Panel noted the lack of an allowance paid to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The role of the Leader of the Opposition, which would sometimes need to be deputised, was substantial and discussed in depth at the interview with the Opposition Group Leader. The Panel noted in its analysis that the Deputy Leader did not attract an allowance and that this represented an anomaly within the Scheme.

The Panel felt that for the reasons explained above this anomaly within the Scheme should be addressed and therefore recommend that an allowance of £1500, comparable with equivalent role at Chorley and West Lancs, be introduced.

Licensing and Public Safety Committee

The Panel noted during their analysis of the current Member Allowances Scheme that there was a slight anomaly in that the allowance for Chair of the Licensing and Public Safety Committee was slightly less than that of other Chairs such as Governance Committee, Scrutiny Committee and My Neighbourhood Hubs. The Panel noted that Licensing was a regulatory function and evidenced from the data regarding the the number of meetings held in recent years, the number of meetings in this area of responsibility, (including that of the Licensing Panel for example) had increased. The Panel therefore concluded that in order to ensure parity with other Committee Chairs and to ensure this responsibility is recognised, this allowance be increased to £3,753.72.

Carers' Allowance

It was noted that payment of a carers / dependents allowance was payable under the current Scheme, but that arising from discussions with Group Leaders, members

were not necessarily aware of it. The Panel therefore concluded that this be made visible within the Scheme and that awareness be raised with members.

Green Agenda – Travel Allowance

Mindful of the Climate Change agenda, the Panel wanted to explore the feasibility of using the Scheme to promote the and incentivise electric car use via two tier travel allowance.

Upon further investigation, it emerged that due the flat rate nature of the existing travel allowance, this could not easily be incorporated into the Scheme.

However, members noted that with the recent COP26 and climate change policies emerging in many public sector organisations, it may be possible for the Lead Member for Climate Change to help develop a policy in future years, which can incorporated into the Scheme, prior to the next review. If that were possible, the Panel would recommend that such an amendment to the Scheme be recommended to Council.

Basic Allowance

The Panel considered the current level of the basic allowance. The Panel felt that, having analysed the comparative data particularly with Chorley, West Lancs and Wyre, that the basic allowance had kept in line with other authorities following the introduction of updating in line with National Joint Council Pay Award for employees in the 2015 review.

It was noted that currently the basic allowance at South Ribble was one of the highest, however this was for the reason mentioned above especially as a national pay award had recently been agreed for employees and subsequently uprated for 2022/23 Scheme. In the Panel's view, this could be subject to change in current economic climate and therefore concluded that the basic allowance remain unchanged.

10. Draft Recommendations

i) Annual Basic Allowances

That the basic allowance for Members should be £4,911.01.

ii) Special Responsibility Allowances

That there should be Special Responsibility Allowances for the following roles at the level of remuneration indicated:

:

BODY	OFFICE*	ALLOWANCE
		£
Council	Leader	15368.83

Council	Deputy Leader	4,948.75
Cabinet	Member	6,412.27
Scrutiny Committee	Chairman	3,753.72
Planning Committee	Chairman	5,495.76
Standards Committee	Chairman	572.55
Licensing and Public Safety Committee	Chairman	3,753.72
My Neighbourhood Area	Chairman	3,753.72
Governance Committee	Chairman	3,753.72
Minority Group	Leader of largest Opposition Party	4,948.74
Deputy Leader Minority Group	Deputy Leader Largest Opposition Party	£1500
Leader of Small Group	Small Group = 10% of total no. of councillors	£1000
Lead Member	Roles as agreed by Council	£1500

iii) Co-Optees Allowances

That Co-optees should not be paid an allowance, but be paid reasonable out of pocket expenses.

iv) Dependents Carers' Allowance (Children Or Dependents)

To retain the arrangements under the current Scheme, which are that a dependent carers' allowance be paid when expenditure is actually incurred for attendance at Council and Committee meetings and the allowance be actual cost up to a maximum of the Carers Allowance. The allowances are only payable subject to the production of receipts and where care is provided by a registered social care provider, nursery or childminder.

That all members of the Council should be made aware of this aspect of the Scheme and clearly visible within the Scheme.

v) Travel & Subsistence Allowances

That an annual allowance of £ 407.57 be paid for out of pocket expenses which is uprated in accordance with the Consumer Price Index as per the current Scheme.

vi) Green Travel Allowance

That the Lead Member for Climate Change be requested to explore the possibility of incorporating an incentive into the Scheme to promote “green” travel. The Panel supports and endorses such amendment to the Scheme and that it be recommended to Council for approval prior to the next review.

vii) Suspension of a Councillor

That in the event of a Councillor being suspended the payment of the allowance should be suspended for the same period.

viii) Other Recommendations

- a) That the Basic Allowance and the Special Responsibility Allowances continue to be updated in line with National Joint Council Pay Award for employees and that the Travel and Subsistence Allowances be uprated on an annual basis with effect from 1st April in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as published for the preceeding February.
- b) That the Lead Member allowance be backdated to the date of Council the roles were first created;
- c) That an Independent Remuneration Panel be convened every four years to coincide with Council’s electoral cycle in order that it can advise on any necessary changes to the Scheme or on those occasions when there are any substantial changes to the Council’s decision making structure.

11. Comments of the Panel

The Panel makes these recommendations based on what it considers to be fair and proportionate under the current Scheme.

The Panel were mindful in their deliberations of the current economic climate and the challenges ahead for local government and for their residents in terms of the increasing cost of living.

In respect of the total cost to the Borough of the proposed new scheme given that the recommendations add to the cost of member allowances, however, the Panel’s terms of reference did not include an explicit need for a consideration of costs and therefore it did not consider the cost implications of the recommendations because affordability of the Scheme was a matter for the Council.

12. Implementation

We noted that under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 there is provision for the backdating any amendment of the scheme to the beginning of the year in which it is implemented. However, we believe that the timing of the implementation of any of the Panel's recommendations is wholly a matter for the Council and therefore we make no recommendations on it.

13. Thanks of the Panel

We ask that our thanks be expressed to all those who have assisted us gathering together the evidence necessary for us to reach our conclusions.

14. Appendices / Supporting Documents

Appendix 1 Comparative data with Lancashire authorities including with Chorley, West Lancs and Wyre

Appendix 2 The Report of the previous Panel

Appendix 3 The current Members Allowances Scheme

15. Supporting Documents available from Democratic Services

Roles and responsibilities of Committees and Cabinet

Roles and responsibilities of Lead Members

Frequency of meetings held 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22

Calendar of Meetings 2021-22

Comparative Information with various Lancashire Authorities