

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

2017 REVIEW

1 Introduction

1.1 This report has been produced by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) made up of members drawn from the local community. The Panel is independent of the Council and its role is to make recommendations on the level of allowances paid to councillors. The object being to promote access to all in our diverse community who may wish to stand for election to serve that community via the democratic process.

1.2 The members of the Panel:

- Richard Blamey Former head of pensions with a large multi-national industrial gas company. Currently a pensions trustee and appointed chair of the Tewkesbury IRP. Also serves as treasurer and member of his local parish council.
- Philip Lowery A former adviser to the Social Services Committee. Member of the IAG to the Gloucestershire Constabulary.
- Fiona Miles Former Clinical Nurse Specialist in Respiratory Medicine. Former Treasurer and Secretary to play groups and the Royal College of Nursing Specialist Group. Former Trustee of Gloucestershire Chest Fund and former school governor. Involved in Gloucestershire Girl Guiding and a parish councillor.
- Quentin Tallon Former Secretary of Cheltenham and District TUC. Involved with the voluntary sector.

1.3 The Panel's recommendations are in keeping with the following statutory provisions:

- 1.3.1 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government Act 2006
- 1.3.2 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ('The Allowances Regulations')

2. Review process

- 2.1 The Panel met on 31 May 2017 to consider any implications arising from the May 2017 election. The Chairman met with leaders of the main parties in June. The Panel interviewed seventeen members (including fourteen new members) over 3 days in October, and met again on 19 October 2017, to study data, and to prepare the 2017 report.
- 2.2 The interviews provided a valuable insight into the work of members. The Panel was particularly pleased that most of the new members accepted invitations to be interviewed. Although not strictly within the remit of the Panel, we include some of the views expressed by members:
- a) Induction programme – Comprehensive but so much to take in as newly elected members. Would be helpful if some of the sessions on the basics of being a councillor could be repeated.
 - b) Members' technology – The new iPads are ideal (although many were disappointed with lack of printing options). Much better than the previous laptops provided, in particular, the system for accessing committee papers was praised. Some members experienced problems with emails and were frustrated with the loss of access and the requirement for multiple passwords. Many members serving on district councils were disappointed that they could not use one device for both councils.

3. Allowances

- 3.1 The Panel's recommendation to freeze the basic allowance and review the special responsibility allowances after the election was supported by the County Council on 15 February 2017. The current allowances' scheme is shown at Appendix A.
- 3.2 The Panel noted that the Council no longer ran its own Adoption Panel as the process was now run regionally through Adoption West. The special responsibility allowance for members of the Adoption Panel had therefore ended.
- 3.3 Following the May 2017 election, a majority administration replaced the minority administration. Special responsibility allowances were no longer paid to Political Group Spokespersons, commonly referred to as 'Shadows'. The savings achieved had been used to cover the cost of the special responsibility allowance for a new Cabinet Member: Economy, Skills and Growth.
- 3.4 At the request of the Panel, Democratic Services had undertaken a review of allowance schemes for the other 27 county councils in England. On examining the data we find that the current special responsibility allowance for committee

chairs is low in comparison with other councils. We also see that the special responsibility allowance for scrutiny chairs is extremely low by comparison. The size of this role is broadly in line with a political group leader and the Panel believe that both roles should be paid at the same rate.

- 3.5 The other area which Gloucestershire is out of line is the special responsibility allowance of the Leader of the Council. It is significantly lower than the majority of other county council leaders. We believe that this should be addressed but we are not making a formal recommendation as we are aware of the reluctance of the current Leader of the Council to accept an increase.
- 3.6 The basic allowances were increased to £10,000 for the two year period 2016-2018 and we do not wish to see the Council falling behind other county councils again. Accordingly, we are recommending some modest increases. Although not linking these to any increases staff may receive, we are nonetheless mindful of the wider pay environment.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 To increase the special responsibility allowance for committee chairs and group leaders to £6,000 for the 2018-19 financial year.
- 4.2 To increase the basic allowance from £10,000 to £10,100 (1%) for the 2018-19 financial year.
- 4.3 To increase all other special responsibility allowances by 1% in line with the recommendation for the basic allowance.
- 4.4 To note the revised members' allowances scheme for 2018-19 at Appendix B to the report.

Richard Blamey

Chairman, Independent Remuneration Panel for Gloucestershire County Council

Allowances for 2017-18

Basic allowance payable to all 53 members: £10,000

Special responsibility allowances (SRA)	Positions	Allowance
Leader of the Council	1	£27,300
Group leader (5 or more members) (Not paid to Leader of the Council)	1	£ 5,850
Cabinet member	8	£18,200
Scrutiny chair	5	£ 5,460
Audit and Governance Committee chair	1	£ 5,460
Planning Committee chair	1	£ 5,460
Pensions Committee chair	1	£ 5,460
Chair of Council	1	£ 9,100
Vice-chair of Council	1	£ 2,730
Fostering Panel member	1	£ 5,460
Adoption Panel member	2	£ 5,460
Political Group Spokesperson	14	£ 1,500

APPENDIX B

Allowances for 2018-19

Basic allowance payable to all 53 members: £10,100

Special responsibility allowances (SRA)	Positions	Allowance
Leader of the Council	1	£27,570
Group leader (5 or more members) (Not paid to Leader of the Council)	1	£ 6,000
Cabinet member	8	£18,380
Scrutiny chair	5	£ 6,000
Audit and Governance Committee chair	1	£ 6000
Planning Committee chair	1	£ 6,000
Pensions Committee chair	1	£ 6,000
Chair of Council	1	£ 9,190
Vice-chair of Council	1	£ 2,750
Fostering Panel member	1	£ 5,510