

Independent Remuneration Panel

Constitution Committee – 16 January 2023

1 Introduction

1.1 This report has been produced by the 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 Former adviser to the Social Services Committee. Member of the Independent Advisory Group to the Gloucestershire Constabulary.
- Fiona Miles Former Clinical Nurse Specialist in Respiratory Medicine. 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 IRP's recommendations are in accordance 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 Interviews were held with councillors over three dates in November/December 2022, all of which took place in-person in Shire Hall. The Panel welcomed the opportunity to speak to a range of members across all political groups. The interviews provided a valuable insight into the work of councillors.

- 2.2 It remains evident from the interviews that there is a strong sense of commitment to their local communities amongst county councillors in Gloucestershire.
- 2.3 The Panel met on 20 December 2022 to study data and to consider its recommendations for 2023-24.

3 Allowances

- 3.1 Last year, the Council accepted the Panel's recommendation to increase the Basic Allowance from £10,500 to £10,750, and for the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) to be maintained at their current levels. The current allowances are shown at Appendix A.
- 3.2 At the request of the Panel, Democratic Services undertook a review of allowance schemes for all county councils in England. Basic allowances together with SRA's have increased substantially over the last year or so with the average basic allowance standing at more than £11600.
- 3.3 The staff pay settlement for 2022-23 agreed in November 2022 (effective 1 April 2022) was a flat rate increase of £1,925, roughly equivalent to an increase of 6%. The Panel feels it is appropriate to apply a similar percentage increases to all allowances effective from April 2023.
- 3.4 The Panel became aware during the interview sessions, that several councillors are not claiming their travel expenses. The panel feels it is important to remind councillors to claim all legitimate travelling expenses.

4 Recommendations for the 2023-24 financial year

- 4.1 To increase the Basic Allowance from £10,750 to £11,395.
- 4.2 To increase the Special Responsibility Allowances by broadly 6% in line with the recommendation for the Basic Allowance.
- 4.3 To note the revised Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023-24 at Appendix B to the report.

Richard Blamey - Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Gloucestershire County Council

Allowances for 2022-23

Basic Allowance payable to all 53 members: £10,750

Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA)	Positions	Allowance
Leader of the Council	1	£34,170
Group leader with 5 or more members (not Leader of the Council)	2	£ 6,360
Group leader with less than 5 members (0.2 per group member – min 2 members)	1	£ 5,088
Cabinet member	9	£19,130
Scrutiny chair	7	£ 6,360
Audit and Governance Committee chair	1	£ 6,360
Planning Committee chair	1	£ 6,360
Pensions Committee chair	1	£ 6,360
Chair of Council	1	£ 9,570
Vice-chair of Council	1	£ 2,860
Fostering Panel member	2	£ 5,730

APPENDIX B

Proposed Allowances for 2023-24

Basic Allowance payable to all 53 members: £11,395

Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA)	Positions	Allowance
Leader of the Council	1	£36,200
Group leader with 5 or more members (not Leader of the Council)	2	£ 6,740
Group leader with less than 5 members (0.2 per group member – min 2 members)	1	£ 5,390
Cabinet member	9	£20,250
Scrutiny chair	7	£ 6,740
Audit and Governance Committee chair	1	£ 6,740
Planning Committee chair	1	£ 6,740
Pensions Committee chair	1	£ 6,740
Chair of Council	1	£ 10,140
Vice-chair of Council	1	£ 3,030
Fostering Panel member	2	£ 6,070